BIOTECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY ORGANIZATION

News Release

1201 Maryland Avenue, SW • Suite 900 • Washington, DC 20024-2149 • (202) 962-9200 • Fax: (202) 488-6301 • www.bio.org

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Contact: Karen Batra
202/449-6382 or kbatra@bio.org

More Farmers Choosing Biotech Crops

Report Findings Represent Biotechnology's Role in Sustainable Agriculture

WASHINGTON, D.C. (February 11, 2009) – Farmers around the world continue to enthusiastically embrace genetically engineered (GE) crops according to a report released today by the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications (ISAAA).

The ISAAA report, *The Global Status of Commercialized Biotech/GM Crops: 2008,* says a record 13.3 million farmers in 25 countries are using agricultural biotechnology today. Ninety percent (12.3 million) of these are resource-poor farmers in 15 developing countries.

Sharon Bomer Lauritsen, Executive Vice President, Food and Agriculture for the Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO), issued the following statement in response to the report's findings:

"The ISAAA report further illustrates what we have known all along, that biotechnology is a key component contributing to sustainable agriculture. Ag biotech provides solutions for today's farmers in the form of plants that yield more per acre, resist diseases and insect pests and reduce farmers' production costs, and 'inputs'.

"When you look at the rising number of acres of biotech crops planted each year (309 million in 2008 compared with 282 million in 2007) and the increasing number of farmers who have chosen this technology (13.3 million in 2008 compared with 12 million in 2007), it's obvious that biotech crops are delivering value to more and more growers around the world.

"In the United States more than 154 million acres of biotech crops were planted in 2008, up from 143 million acres in 2007. The primary biotech crops grown in the United States are corn, cotton, canola and soybeans, but also squash, papaya, alfalfa, and sugarbeet.

"At a time when the United States and the world are looking for science-based solutions to help feed a growing population, agricultural biotechnology is able to deliver heartier crops that produce more food, often in areas with less-than-perfect growing conditions.

(more)

"Ag biotechnology also has environmental benefits because biotech crop varieties require less cultivation and fewer pesticide applications, thereby saving fuel and reducing carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions into the air. This also improves soil health and water retention.

"The trends we see today will likely continue. The next generation of biotech crops with resistance to additional diseases and increased tolerance for environmental stresses like drought and flooding will boost productivity even more. And we'll see increased demand for biotech foods that have been nutritionally enhanced or engineered to help combat human disease.

"The findings of this report prove that the United States and countries around the world are turning to science and technology to meet today's challenges in agriculture, food and energy production. The biotechnology industry is committed to providing solutions to enlist in that effort."

* The International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications (ISAAA) report, *Global Status of Commercialized Biotech/GM Crops: 2008* and accompanying materials are posted at www.isaaa.org.

About BIO

BIO represents more than 1,200 biotechnology companies, academic institutions, state biotechnology centers and related organizations across the United States and in more than 30 other nations. BIO members are involved in the research and development of innovative healthcare, agricultural, industrial and environmental biotechnology products. BIO also produces the BIO International Convention, the world's largest gathering of the biotechnology industry, along with industry-leading investor and partnering meetings held around the world.

Upcoming BIO Events

BIO CEO & Investor Conference 2009
February 9-11, 2009
New York, New York

BIO-Europe Spring
March 16-18, 2009
Milan, Italy

BIO Windhover 2009
April 13-15, 2009
New York, New York

2009 BIO International Convention
May 18-21, 2009
Atlanta, Ga.

BioEquity Europe
June 9-10, 2009
Munich, Germany

World Congress on Industrial Biotechnology & Bioprocessing
July 19-22, 2009
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

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