

"The Congress shall have the power...
to promote the progress of Science and
useful Arts, by securing for limited Times
to Authors and Inventors the exclusive
Right to their respective Writings and
Discoveries."

- *The United States Constitution, Article I,
Section 8*

Happy 4th of July



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IP NEWS WEEKLY

Wednesday, July 2, 2009

The Week's Top News, Reports, & Editorials

Obama Rural Tour Kicks Off

“President Barack Obama says a series of meetings has been scheduled to find out from farmers, ranchers and rural communities how to revitalize rural America. Administration officials want to find out whether programs are working... The president said his plan for rural America includes economic development, conservation and renewable energy. Biofuels will be a critical part of improving American agriculture's profitability. ‘I think there's huge potential around biofuels,’ Obama said.” – [The Marion Star](#), July 1, 2009

Also: [Biotechnology](#), [Trade](#), [Keys for Wheat](#)

“The adoption of biotechnology, export expansion, and supplier reliability are crucial components to further bolster the U.S. wheat industry — a \$16.5 billion economic powerhouse in 2008.” (Delta Farm Press, July 1, 2009)

Research News

[Celiac Disease Making Inroads in U.S.](#)

“According to a report in the July issue of Gastroenterology, the disease is four times more prevalent in the United States today than in the 1950s. In addition, the researchers found that the death rate was four times higher during the 45 years of the study among people who had the disease but did not know it than it was among those who did not have celiac disease.” (HealthDay News, July 1, 2009)

[Heart Stem Cells from Human Embryo ‘Hot Spot’ May Fix Damage](#)

“Stem cells found in the forming hearts of human embryos may help doctors repair damaged organs and understand life-threatening birth defects, Harvard University scientists said.” (Bloomberg, July 1, 2009)

[Gene Variations Hinder Mental Illness Tests](#)

“As many as 30,000 different gene variations may underlie schizophrenia and bipolar disease, meaning any kind of quick test to predict either disease is a long way off, scientists said on Wednesday.” (Reuters, July 1, 2009)

[Los Angeles Billionaire Donates 100 Million for Genomic Research](#)

“The payment to the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard, a newly established permanent nonprofit organization, was the first installment of a 400-million-dollar endowment pledged by the Eli and Edyth Broad Foundation to the institute.” (Xinhua, July 2, 2009)

[Researchers Race to Unravel Genome of Bluefin Tuna](#)

“The agency hopes to use the information to produce a fast-growing bluefin tuna that is disease-resistant within the next 10 years, which is suitable for breeding, after identifying relevant genes.” (Daily Yomiuri, July 1, 2009)

[Swine Flu 'Shows Drug Resistance'](#)

Experts have reported the first case of swine flu that is resistant to tamiflu - the main drug being used to fight the pandemic. Roche Holding AG confirmed a patient with H1N1 influenza in Denmark showed resistance to the antiviral drug. David Reddy, company executive, said it was not unexpected given that common seasonal flu could do the same. (BBC, June 29, 2009)

Healthcare Reform

[Obama Presses Case for Health Reform](#)

“President Barack Obama pitched his health reform proposal Wednesday at a town hall meeting in Annandale, Va., asking the public and Congress to deliver on health care reform.” (Kaiser Daily Health Policy Summary, July 1, 2009) **Also:** [Key Senate Democrats trim cost of health care bill](#) (AP); [Rangel: Drug firms have been 'stealing'](#) (AP)

[To Fix Health Care, Some Study Developing World](#)

“Cost-Effective Medical Practices Deployed in Poor Nations Deliver Good Results, but Can They Work in the U.S.?” (Wall Street Journal, July 2, 2009)

[The Patients Doctors Don't Know](#)

“Medical resident training programs that receive Medicare money should be required to demonstrate that their trainees are competent in geriatric care.” *New York Times*, July 1, 2009

[CDC: Private Health Care Coverage at 50-Year-Low](#)

“The percentage of Americans with private health insurance has hit its lowest mark in 50 years, according to two new government reports” (AP, July 1, 2009)

[Study: The Effect of Medicare Part D on Drug and Medical Spending](#)

“Enrollment in Medicare Part D was associated with increased spending on prescription drugs. Groups that had no or minimal drug coverage before the implementation of Part D had reductions in other medical spending that approximately offset the increased spending on drugs, but medical spending increased in the group that had more generous previous coverage.” (New England Journal of Medicine, July 2, 2009)

[Medicare May Shuffle the Deck on Doctor Payments](#)

“The agency that runs Medicare today suggested making an obscure accounting change that could make it easier for Congress to change how Medicare pays doctors.” (Wall Street Journal, July 2, 2009)

[AMA Open to Government-Funded Health Insurance Option](#)

“The new president of the American Medical Association, which represents the interests of the nation's doctors, said Wednesday the group is open to a government-funded health insurance option for people without coverage.” (CNN, July 1, 2009)

Follow-on Biologics

[Public Lacks Knowledge about Generics According to Survey](#)

“According to a survey done by Prescription Solutions, a pharmacy benefit management company, almost one third of Americans don't understand that FDA approved generic drugs have the same effectiveness as the brand names.” (Miami Healthcare Examiner, July 2, 2009)

[BIO Comments On White House Letter on Biosimilars](#)

“As we have consistently said, any pathway to biosimilars should provide a fair period of time for innovators to protect their proprietary data from competitors in order to promote the continued development of breakthrough medicines, therapies and cures.” (Medical News Today, June 26, 2009)

International Focus

[Chinese Patent Law Reform: Sharpening the Dragon's Teeth](#)

“As China has continued to grow as a major contender in the world economy, the Chinese have become more aware of the need to strengthen their system for intellectual property rights (IPR).” (WTN News, July 2, 2009)

[Kenya Pressured To Implement Anti-Counterfeit Law Despite Access Fears](#)

“An influential manufacturers' lobbying group in Kenya is pushing the government to start enforcing an anti-counterfeiting law within weeks, despite fears from public health advocates that the new rules will impede access to generic drugs and set an unwanted precedent in East Africa.” (IP Watch, July 1, 2009)

BIO EVENTS & NEWS

Second meeting of the WHO Expert Working Group on R&D Financing

Geneva, 1 July 2009

The Expert Working Group (EWG) held its second meeting this week. In its meeting, the Group continued its discussions on current financing and coordination of R&D, including the review of the results of the report on Global Funding of Innovation for Neglected Diseases (G-Finder), and it further reviewed the outcomes and findings of other ongoing relevant international initiatives on financing, such as those of Working Group 2 of the High Level Task Force on innovative financing for health systems and The I-8 Group / L.I.F.E. (Leading Innovative Financing for Equity).

The EWG also discussed innovative frameworks for financing R&D as well as examining the coordination of R&D. It reviewed in detail the contributions from its members. The EWG members had received and examined the contributions from member states and also those from other stakeholders that had been solicited through the public hearing. The EWG then further elaborated a process for extended analysis of current R&D financing mechanisms which would include the submitted proposals and other key financing proposals in circulation.

This process will envisage the opportunity for inputs from a wider interested public including member states, individuals, civil society groups, government institutions, academic and research institutions, the private sector and other interested parties. In addition, the EWG plans to provide updates on the work in progress from time to time.

The EWG also discussed a framework for its final report to be presented to the Director-General which would adhere strictly to the mandate established in accordance with the Resolution WHA 61.21 on *Global strategy and plan of action on public health, innovation and intellectual property*.

Additional:

1. [Civil Society letter to Members of the WHO Expert Working Group on R&D Financing](#) (Knowledge Ecology International Blog)
2. [Health R&D Experts Conclude Meeting With Few Details But Signal More Openness](#) (IP Watch)



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