

PRESS RELEASE

Biotechnology industry welcomes calls by EU leaders to act now to deliver sustainable, secure and competitive biofuels

Brussels, 8 March 2007

The European biotech industry strongly supports EU initiatives to boost the use of biofuels and calls on EU leaders to act now to deliver sustainable, secure and competitive energy.

The biotech industry underlines the value of supporting not just the current generation of biofuels but very importantly the so called second generation biofuels (1). We believe there is ample evidence that the available land needed to grow the current generation of biofuels is adequate to meet today's targets and still be in balance with food needs. More advanced technologies producing second and subsequent generation biofuels make use of the agricultural residues (biomass) left over from current food crops as well as dedicated energy crops. This can be converted into biofuels thanks to industrial biotechnologies. Industrial biotech or the so called white biotech industry uses enzymes that can breakdown the cellulosic matter of crops like corn and wheat and convert the stalks, straw and corn stover with the help of microorganisms into ethanol. In the longer term, dedicated energy crops will be needed – developed using several innovative technologies like modern breeding methods and biotechnology - to yield not only excellent food and feed resources but also to maximize productivity of agricultural land use, and thereby protecting natural areas from development. Advanced technologies can ensure that crops and crop residues are used to maximum effect to deliver highly efficient biofuels.

The European biotech industry is developing a policy document setting out a uniquely European approach to growing our energy needs.

Dirk Carrez, Public Policy Director at EuropaBio – the EU association for bioindustries - and Manager of its Biofuels Task Force stated: “The challenges of CO₂ emissions, climate change, increasing fuel import and higher energy prices all send clear signals that using (transport) fuels from fossil resources alone is untenable in the long term. Biofuels and in particular second generation biofuels are a very attractive and sustainable replacement.”

EuropaBio supports the various EU initiatives to boost the use of biofuels and advocates a step by step approach from the current first generation to more advanced biofuels. Specifically, the industry

- calls upon the EU Heads of State to adopt the principle of binding targets for the blending of biofuels with gasoline and diesel,
- supports the change of the fuel standards to permit higher blends of biofuel into gasoline and diesel,
- advocates performance based regulation that encourages efficient delivery of biofuels which are most effective in reducing green house gas emissions.

In order to harvest the full potential of biofuels, EuropaBio encourages European legislators to follow the same line as the USA and China and initiate policy measures which will allow second and subsequent generation biofuels to become a viable, commercial and competitive business within the next 4-6 years. EuropaBio also encourages European legislators to establish a certification system for sustainable production and use of biofuels and its

respective crops which meets with existing international standards and agreements. This will ensure that biomass production always complies with good agricultural and labour practices, and will establish a good balance between food and non-food applications.

“Biotechnology’s clean, energy-efficient processes and innovative bio-based products can create a sustainable industrial base to ensure Europe’s future prosperity. But, without active political encouragement and incentives, the full benefits will not be achieved, and other trading partners will reap the rewards,” said Kirsten Birkegaard Staer, Chair of EuropaBio’s Biofuels Task Force.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

(1) Second generation biofuels include bioethanol which is produced from lingo-cellulosic biomass (wood, straw and energy-plants) and biodiesel which is produced from biomass gasification (bioconversion of biomass to mixed alcohol fuels).

EuropaBio Fact Sheet on BioFuels - <http://www.europabio.org/documents/biofuel.pdf>

European Biofuels Technology Platform: <http://www.biofuelstp.eu>

More about the bio-based economy – click here <http://www.bio-economy.net>

About Industrial Biotechnology

Industrial Biotechnology, in Europe also known as White Biotechnology, is the modern use and application of biotechnology for the sustainable processing and production of chemicals, materials and fuels. Biotechnological processing uses enzymes, micro-organisms and plants to make products in a wide range of industrial sectors including chemicals, pharmaceuticals, food and feed, paper and pulp, textiles, energy, materials and polymers. Mankind has already benefited from biotech for a long time, but with the evolution of new technologies and a much deeper understanding of cell metabolism and materials science, many new opportunities have been identified, and others are continuing to emerge.

About EuropaBio

EuropaBio, the European Association for Bioindustries, has 78 direct members operating Worldwide, 12 associate members and 5 bioregions as well as 25 national biotechnology associations representing some 1800 small and medium sized enterprises involved in research and development, testing, manufacturing and distribution of biotechnology products. <http://www.europabio.org>