



PRESS RELEASE
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Cultivation of GM crops increases worldwide, but Europe is missing out

Brussels, 23 February 2010

More than ever, farmers around the world are turning to GM crops, recognizing the range of benefits that they offer.

According to figures released today by the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications (ISAAA)¹, in 2009, 14 million farmers planted 134 million hectares (330 million acres) of biotech crops in 25 countries, up from 13.3 million farmers and 125 million hectares (7 percent) in 2008.

Record cultivation figures were reported for all four major biotech crops. For the first time, biotech soybean occupied more than three-quarters of the 90 million hectares of soybean globally, biotech cotton almost half of the 33 million hectares of global cotton, biotech maize over one-quarter of the 158 million hectares of global maize and biotech canola more than one-fifth of the 31 million hectares of global canola.

Notably, 13 of the 14 million farmers, or 90 percent, were small and resource-poor farmers from developing countries. Burkina Faso's biotech cotton area soared from 8,500 hectares to a substantial 115,000 hectares, or from 2 percent to 29 percent of the country's total cotton area – the largest percentage growth on record at 1,350 percent

Willy de Greef, Secretary General of EuropaBio, commented “These new figures show that the technology is proving itself yet again. Every year more and more farmers around the world are choosing to grow GM crops in recognition of the very real benefits they offer. In the developing world especially, small farmers are turning to this technology in greater numbers. It is clear that as the rest of the world progresses, Europe is missing out on the benefits once more. When are we going to learn?”

Notes to Editors

¹ For the ISAAA executive summary and press release of the report, visit www.isaaa.org.

For further information, please contact:

Joseph Buxton

Tel: +32 2 739 11 62

GSM: +32 473 330064

Email: j.buxton@europabio.org

About EuropaBio

EuropaBio's mission is to promote an innovative and dynamic biotechnology based industry in Europe. EuropaBio, (the European Association for Bioindustries), has 69 corporate and 7 associate members operating worldwide, 4 Bioregions and 26 national biotechnology associations representing some 1800 small and medium sized enterprises. <http://www.europabio.org/>
