

New Studies Find Significant Benefits From Biotech Crops

Independent Research Shows Plant Biotechnology Can Help Meet Food Security and Climate Change Challenges

Brussels, Belgium — 13 February 2014

This week, two independent reports published by the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications (ISAAA) and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) confirmed the positive benefits plant biotechnology has on farmers worldwide, and the potential impact it can have on helping farmers adapt to and mitigate climate change conditions in 2050.

“Farmers in 27 countries are already enjoying increased crop productivity and quality, individual and community socioeconomic improvements, and environmental benefits of sustainable agriculture enabled through plant biotechnology,” said Denise Dewar, Executive Director for Plant Biotechnology at CropLife International. “As growing conditions become more extreme due to climate change, models have shown that farmers in Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia will only continue to benefit from innovative biotech traits, such as drought- and heat-tolerant and nitrogen-use efficient seeds.”

According to ISAAA’s annual global biotech crop acreage report, which was released today in Beijing, more than 18 million farmers are planting biotech crops on 175 million hectares. ISAAA reported that smallholder farmers in developing countries can especially benefit from plant biotechnology as they face the most extreme food security and productivity challenges. Of the farmers planting biotech crops, more than 90 percent, or 16.5 million, are small-scale and resource-poor farmers. Of the 27 countries planting, 19 are developing countries.

This week, IFPRI published a first-of-its-kind study that closely examines the impact of 11 agricultural technologies on crop productivity, food prices, and natural resources in 2050 under climate change conditions. The study found that farmers will need to integrate multiple technologies into their cropping systems in order to produce the largest yields at the lowest prices to consumers. IFPRI concluded that when fully adopted by farmers:

- No-till farming, which has been enabled through plant biotechnology, has the potential to increase maize yields by 67 percent on irrigated hectares.
- Heat-tolerant wheat varieties could increase yields by 23 percent on irrigated hectares.
- Nitrogen-use efficient traits could increase rice crop yields by 22 percent on rainfed hectares.

“For nearly two decades, the plant science industry has been committed to developing and commercializing innovative products and traits that benefit farmers, consumers, and the environment,” said Dewar. “As farmers face the daunting challenge of feeding the world’s largest population under tough climate and growing conditions, new biotech traits that maintain and increase crop productivity under heat and drought conditions, as well as help crops more efficiently use nitrogen, will be crucial to achieving food security.”

A full copy of the IFPRI report, *Food Security in a World of Natural Resource Scarcity: The Role of Agricultural Technologies*, is available online at <http://www.ifpri.org/publication/food-security->

[world-natural-resource-scarcity](#) . More information about the ISAAA report is available online at www.isaaa.org.

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Note to Editor:

CropLife International is the voice of the global plant science industry. It champions the role of agricultural innovations in crop protection and plant biotechnology in supporting and advancing sustainable agriculture; helping farmers feed a growing population while looking after the planet; and progressing rural communities. The world needs farmers, and farmers need plant science. CropLife International is proud to be at the heart of helping farmers grow.