



Media Release

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GM crops continue to grow globally

The production of genetically modified (GM) crops continued to grow in 2002, with the total global area reaching 58.6 million hectares, according to a new report released today.

“The report shows that farmers around the world are continuing to adopt GM crops as a result of the agronomic, social and economic benefits,” said Paula Fitzgerald, Executive Manager, Agrifood Awareness Australia.

“The global area of GM crops increased by 12 per cent or six million hectares in 2002,” she said.

“Nearly six million farmers in 16 countries chose to plant GM crops in 2002, up from five million farmers in 13 countries in 2001,” she said.

The International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA), a not-for-profit organisation which aims to alleviate hunger and poverty by increasing crop productivity and income generation, particularly for resource-poor farmers, released its annual global biotechnology report today.

The report states GM cotton maintained its global area of 6.7 million hectares, while other GM commodities grew, with corn increasing 27 per cent to 12.4 million hectares, canola up 11 percent to 2.9 million hectares and soybean increasing by 10 per cent to 36.5 million hectares.

“The ISAAA report also shows that GM crops are contributing to a reduction in pesticide usage,” she said. “Insect resistant cotton alone is estimated to reduce current pesticide use by 40 percent worldwide,” she said.

“The United States, Argentina, Canada and China continued to be the leading growers of GM crops with more than half of China’s 2002 cotton crop genetically modified,” she said.

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