ISAAA Global Status of Commercialised Biotech/GM Crops released

The International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA) has released its latest Global Status of Commercialized Biotech/GM Crops: 2005 report by Dr Clive James.

Findings include:

- Farmer demand has driven increases biotech crop adoption.
- In 2005, four new countries and a quarter million more farmers planted biotech crops.
- There has been an 11 percent increase in global biotech crop area.
- Since initial commercialisation in 1996, global planted area of biotech crops has soared by more than fifty-fold from 1.7 million hectares in six countries to 90 million hectares in 21 countries in 2005.
- 8.5 million farmers planting biotech crops in 2005.
- 1 billionth cumulative acre, or 400 millionth hectare, was planted in 2005.
- Herbicide-tolerant soybeans continue to be the most widely adopted trait, accounting for 60 percent of the total global area. Varieties with stacked traits are growing in popularity, accounting for 10 percent of the global area. In 2005, 100 million “trait hectares” were planted, which better quantifies those hectares planted to varieties with multiple biotech enhancements.
- There has been an increase in the number of countries growing biotech crops with both Iran and the Czech Republic adoption biotech crops.
- Two-thirds or 14 of the 21 countries growing biotech crops achieved “mega-country” status by planting 50,000 hectares or more in 2005.
- Brazil experienced the most significant growth, increasing its biotech soybean area by 88 percent to reach a provisional 9.4 million hectares in 2005.
- India displayed the largest proportional growth, nearly three-fold, by planting 1.3 million hectares of Bt cotton in 2005 compared to 500,000 hectares in 2004.
- When biotech crops were first commercialized, critics suggested the technology would never be valuable in the developing world. Now, resource-poor farmers in developing countries account for 90 percent of the 8.5 million growers who benefit from biotechnology, while developing nations represent more than one-third of 2005 global biotech area.

ISAAA projects the global value of the biotech crop market to increase from $5.25 billion in 2005 to $5.5 billion in 2006.

Further information:
ISAAA release: [http://www.isaaa.org/kc/bin/briefs34/pr/index.htm](http://www.isaaa.org/kc/bin/briefs34/pr/index.htm).