

From: Jay Byrne
 To: Diane Wray-Cohen@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - May 31, 2018
 Date: Thursday, May 31, 2018 11:51:32 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included U.S. Right to Know allegations that corporations funded front groups to spin bad news and defend biotechnology.

- The U.S. Right to Know's Stacy Malkan claimed that emails obtained via the Freedom of Information Act show that Monsanto and other biotech companies funded groups such as Academics Review and the International Food Information Council. Malkan said the groups helped counteract bad news such as the International Agency for Research on Cancer's ruling that glyphosate is a potential carcinogen and helped promote GMOs to schoolchildren. **See more**
- Gene editing developments included talks about mitigating climate change and a partnership that seeks to reduce stress in dairy cows. The National Institute of Agricultural Technology's scientific leaders met yesterday, and Argentina's Santiago del Solar discussed using gene editing to mitigate climate change's impact on crops and livestock. Canadian farming news site *Farmtario* reported Semex, a farmer-owned company, and genetic engineering firm Recombinetics will partner to produce gene-edited, hornless dairy cows. The hornless cows save farmers time and money because they do not have to de-horn the cows, which prevents pain and stress for the livestock. **See more**

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For a more extensive compilation of recent biotech items, **click here**.

North America

News: Canadian farming news site reports on partnership between Canadian dairy genetics company Semex and Minnesota-based Recombinetics for research on using gene editing to breed polled dairy cattle, with goal of reducing stress on young calves

News release: University of Essex, University of Illinois scientists publish study in Plant Biotechnology Journal which finds that by increasing a naturally occurring protein in plant leaves they can boost yields of major food crops by almost 50 percent

News release: National Pork Board promotes participation of Minnesota pork producer in gene editing panel at CRISPRcon (June 4-5), notes Health and Mother Earth Foundation's Nnimmo Bassey to also attend

Commentary: Alexis Baden-Mayer and Ronnie Cummins of Organic Consumers Association warn about negative impact of the 2018 Farm Bill on the organic industry, criticizing the House bill for undermining power of the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB)

Commentary: Natural News' Mike Adams accuses Whole Foods of betraying its customers in delaying its promise to label all foods containing GMOs in 2018, describes Whole Foods as "just as evil as Monsanto and Google" and "the Enron of the grocery industry"

Commentary: Byron Wien of investment firm The Blackstone Group examines potential threat to U.S. economic leadership posed by China's rapid technological advances, highlights China's advances in

biotech and gene editing in medical and agricultural research[More North America items](#)**Africa**

Commentary: Writing for the Genetic Literacy Project, science journalist reports Ugandan scientists are striving to use biotech to solve ag, health and environmental challenges

Commentary: Editorial in Afrik promotes Slow Food's partnership with Burkinabe NGO Collectif Citoyen pour l'Agroécologie (CCAÉ) to fight against GMOs in Burkina Faso, highlights protest march in Ouagadougou on June 2, points to health and environmental risks

News release: African Centre for Biodiversity voices deep concern at Parliamentary Select Committee's approval of "draconian corporate seed bills," claims they will threaten biodiversity and criminalize saving, exchanging, and selling of farm-saved seed

Commentary: Editorial in Afrik promotes Slow Food's partnership with Burkinabè NGO Collectif Citoyen pour l'Agroécologie (CCAÉ) to fight against GMOs in Burkina Faso, highlights protest march in Ouagadougou on June 2, points to health and environmental risks

[More Africa items](#)**Asia**

Commentary: Takshashila Institution research analyst Shambhavi Naik writes for India's The Wire, examines several potentially beneficial applications of gene editing in India, emphasizes importance of policies that promote research and ensure safety

News: World-Grain.com reports Golden Rice completes third positive food safety evaluation from US FDA, notes this comes on the heels of FSANZ and Health Canada safety and nutrition approvals earlier this year,

Commentary: Third World Network amplifies article in Southwest Farm Press reporting on increasing bollworm resistance to Bt cotton in Texas, notes that while experts recommend pesticides, bollworms have demonstrated chemical resistance as well

[More Asia items](#)**Europe**

Commentary: German anti-GM NGO biologist says Bayer-Monsanto merger will place majority control of seed trait business under German companies Bayer, BASF; predicts companies will not stray from "ecologically questionable, industrial agriculture"

News release: Germany's Gen-ethical network promotes its contributions to newly-launched German Center for Genetic Engineering and Environment (FGU), a new support group for NGOs in genetic engineering processes

News: U.K.-based Farmers Guardian contributor reports University of Hertfordshire researchers say an important source of gene resistance against one of the leading pathogens of oilseed rape is becoming less effective, which could lead to substantial losses to the OSR breeding industry and to arable farmers in the UK

[More Europe items](#)**Latin America**

News release: Argentina's Ministry of Agribusiness announces conclusion of MACS-G20 meeting, Ministry Chief of Staff Santiago del Solar emphasized importance of investing in ag technology to

mitigate effects of climate change

News: Mexico news agency reports UNAM ecologist warns against transgenic corn adoption, arguing it discards 500-year development of native corn, presents health risks; urges skepticism of science backed by economic interests

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

There were no noteworthy biotechnology developments in Oceania during today's monitoring. Click the link below for the latest items.

[More Oceania items](#)

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<p>Stakeholder database</p> <p>More information on the people and organizations influencing food and agriculture issues.</p>	<p>Events calendar</p> <p>See where news could be happening next. Or let allies know about an upcoming event.</p>	<p>Bonus Eventus community</p> <p>Connect with academic experts and researchers, journalists and agriculture allies.</p>
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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology developments included a new report quantifying the economic costs of China's delays in approving biotechnology events.

- A new report from Informa Business Consulting Group and CropLife International highlighted the costs of China's slow biotechnology approval process, estimating that U.S. businesses had lost over \$7 billion. *Reuters* reported that U.S. Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross was expected to visit Beijing this week and noted that U.S. businesses were also concerned about intellectual property theft. Additional reporting on the study from *Agri-Pulse* and *Feedstuffs* noted that trade officials were expected to raise the issue in upcoming talks. [See more](#)
- The Seattle law firm Marler Clark's Food Safety News, quoting a USDA economic analysis, reported that U.S. GMO labeling regulations are expected to cost companies between \$600 million and \$1.3 billion in the first year of implementation. Editor-in-chief Dan Flynn noted that the costs come despite international scientific consensus on GM crop safety. The comment period on the proposed labeling closes July 3. [See more](#)

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North America

News: Reuters reports CropLife International report says China's delays in approving biotech crops costs U.S. \$7 billion over last 5 years, theft of intellectual property also an issue; notes commerce secretary set to visit Beijing

News: Agri-Pulse amplifies Informa study, says China's "deliberately slow biotech approval process" costs U.S. farmers, exporters, seed companies, others billions in lost sales; notes China is only country insisting on asynchronous biotech approval process, Ag Secretary Perdue plans negotiations on the issue

News: Food Safety News reports GM labeling program will cost food industry, consumers \$600 million to \$3.5 billion per year, potentially more than U.S. spends on food safety, even though NAS study shows GE food safe to eat and is good for the environment

Audio: USDA's Rod Bain examines potential of GE food in the developing world, Margaret Zeigler of Global Harvest Initiative explains GE applications to boost nutrient content, Tom Sleight of U.S. Grains Council calls for education of regulators and consumers

News: AgNet West reports on California Department of Food and Agriculture's approval of \$3.4 million in funding for six research projects related to Pierce's Disease (PD), and nine projects for other viruses, including breeding of PD-resistant wine grapes

Campaign: Organic-oriented National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition announces National Institute for Food and Agriculture offers funding to research long-term agricultural sustainability, says projects sought to address climate change, diminishing land and water resources, pests and disease, health challenges

Commentary: In Wisconsin State Farmer, National Pork Board promotes upcoming CRISPRcon presentation by former National Pork Producers Council president, Randy Spronk, highlights potential of CRISPR to protect pigs from Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome

Commentary: University of Amsterdam psychology professor Bastiaan T Rutjens writes for Aeon, analyzes research by Stephan Lewandowsky and Sydney Scott showing that distrust of genetic modification is not correlated with political ideology

Commentary: Common Dreams says corporations win as Bayer's Monsanto purchase gains approval from Trump's Department of Justice; Friends of Earth calls it "toxic mega merger," classifies divestiture requirements as weak

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Nigerian news site Daily Trust reports country's biotech agency seeks Interpol collaboration to ensure the agency is alerted when biotech crops enter country without biosafety permit to determine country of origin and those involved

News: Nigerian business news site reports biofortified crops can help fill in nutritional gap missing in poor people's diet; notes study shows biofortified foods dramatically improve vitamin A intake

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Xinhua reports Brazilian cooperative Terra Livre exhibits organic and environmentally friendly products that avoid pesticide use, genetic modifications at largest Chinese food innovation fair in Shanghai

Commentary: Science academy president, former Higher Education Commission chair editorializes on Pakistani news site that country should transition to knowledge economy, says first step is focus on agricultural biotech and genomics to increase crop yields, create crops resistant to diseases, drought, salt

News: Indian news site reports Indian farmers group using social media to demand GM seeds, share knowledge of GM crops as government cracks down on use of unapproved varieties

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: French blogger warns GMOs used in candy targeted at children, alerts readers to Greenpeace list of GM candy from 2017

News: French news site reports Monsanto's \$125 million deal with Pairwise will produce GM strawberries, wheat, other products, claims GMOs are heavily criticized for "potential health risks"

News release: NGO France Nature Environnement criticizes French food bill, saying small advances, such as stronger GM food labeling requirements, do not make up for bigger failures, such as failing to ban glyphosate and ban on pesticide application near residential areas

Announcement: FAO Director Jose Graziano calls for transformation in how we produce food, based on sustainable systems that produce safe, nutritious food while safeguarding biodiversity

News release: EU Green Party complains GM crops enter EU as "flawed authorization process" is undergoing reform; MEP Pascal Durand wants GMO decision making to be "more transparent and democratic"

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Chile BIO notes experiments show GM algae in outdoor ponds can be modified to produce anything from cattle feed to airplane fuel, notes University of California - San Diego researchers working to make process less expensive

Commentary: Environmental analyst writing for Mexico's Animal Politico examines 2018 presidential candidates environmental agendas, notes none of the candidates address transgenics, which she finds surprising given 90 percent of Mexican tortillas are said to be "contaminated" with GMOs

Announcement: Latin American NGO Semillas de Identidad notes during Latin American Agroecological Movement meeting group commit to defend agroecology, food sovereignty, urge peace between Colombian government and FARC

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

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 Date: Tuesday, May 29, 2018 9:04:53 PM

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Global biotechnology developments over the past two days included news that the U.S. Department of Justice officially approved Bayer's takeover of Monsanto. An amendment to France's food law adopted on Monday would require labeling when animals were fed GMOs.

- The Antritrust Division of the U.S. Department of Justice announced today that it had approved Bayer AG's purchase of Monsanto Co., emphasizing the seed and chemical divestitures required in order to approve the takeover. A Department of Justice news release noted that this was the largest asset sale ever required by the agency. In separate reports, the European Commission announced that it had officially approved BASF as the buyer of seed and chemical assets being sold by Bayer and Monsanto. **See more**
- On Monday, French news outlets reported that the country's National Assembly had approved an amendment to the country's food and agriculture bill that would require foods to be labeled for "environmental" concerns. Specifically, by 2023, food companies would be required to disclose whether animals had eaten genetically-modified feed and to disclose the number of pesticide applications used on fruits and vegetables. **See more**
- Media outlets continued to amplify a U.S. Food and Drug Administration statement affirming the safety of "Golden Rice" variety GR2E. Writing for the Cornell Alliance for Science, science communicator Mark Lynas highlighted the potential applications in Bangladesh and the Philippines. Commentary in India's *The Print* accused campaigners against the rice variety of being both misinformed and politically motivated. **See more**

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North America

News release: Bayer announces U.S. Department of Justice grants conditional approval of Monsanto acquisition, Bayer expects to receive any outstanding approvals shortly, CEO Werner Baumann noted Bayer is closer to goal of creating a leading ag company

Commentary: FDA's Director of Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition's Office of Food Additive Safety, Dennis M. Keefe writes letter to International Rice Research Institute, stating that FDA has no further questions about human or animal food derived from golden rice

Commentary: Mark Lynas writes for Cornell Alliance for Science, welcomes U.S. FDA's approval of golden rice, International Rice Research Institute Director General Matthew Morell noted the positive assessment brings golden rice closer to reaching those who need it most

News release: Recombinetics announces partnership with Canadian-based cattle genetics organization Semex to launch precision breeding program to develop hornless dairy cattle, with goal of improving animal health and well-being

Commentary: Astrobiologist David Warmflash writes for Genetic Literacy Project, poses question of why new breeding techniques like CRISPR are banned from organic farming in spite of improved sustainability, amplifies Italian research paper on the subject

Commentary: Jon Fingas of Engadget examines recent study demonstrating potential of CRISPR to boost rice grain production by 25-31 percent, notes researchers still must determine whether it will work in varieties favored by farmers, and that concerns must be addressed

Campaign: Friends of the Earth urges supporters to tell USDA they want clear, on-package GMO labels, voices objections to use of terms "BE" and "bioengineered," arguing that consumers will not recognize them

More North America items

Africa

News: Nigerian Tribune reports on National Biosafety Management Agency's goal of collaborating with Interpol and International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB) to boost capacity for ensuring safe application of modern biotech

News release: Nigeria's National Biosafety Management Agency (NBMA) announces signing of training agreement with Italy-based International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB) to boost staff capacity for biotech regulation

News release: Health of Mother Earth Foundation voices opposition to President Muhammadu Buhari and former President Olusegun Obasanjo's agreement that Nigeria should adopt modern biotech, claims GMOs will worsen economic, health and environmental problems

Commentary: African Centre for Biodiversity and PELUM Swaziland criticize Swaziland Environmental Authority's (SEA) authorization of importation and commercial release of Bt cotton, highlights ACB's warnings at recent National Biosafety Indaba

News release: Burkina Faso's National Biosafety Agency participated in recent biotech and biosafety workshop organized by Open Forum on Agricultural Biotechnology in Africa, speakers addressed biotech applications, Target Malaria project and regulatory issues

News: Kenya's Daily Nation reports farmers hope for lifting of ban on GMO cotton so they can plant Bt varieties that promise better yields, would help Kenyan producers access more of U.S. market

News: Farmers Review Africa reports on assessment by Kenya's Cereals Growers Association (CGA) researcher James Njiru that GM seeds may provide a viable solution to fall armyworm attack, noting no pesticides have proven effective

Commentary: Jeffrey Gogo of Zimbabwe's The Herald examines various solutions to fall armyworm invasion, notes companies like Monsanto have escalated their push for GM crops, highlights health risks of glyphosate, promotes push-pull intercropping technology

News: Uganda's New Vision reports experts in food risk assessment want government to include measures in biotechnology and biosafety bills to assure public foods produced through biotech safe for human consumption; GM crops now in confined field trials will be ready for farmers when bill becomes law

Commentary: University of Cape Town honorary research associate David Fig writes for The Conversation, calls on South Africa to reverse "corporate capture" of ag policy, claims use of GMOs and pesticides harms the environment, promotes agroecology

More Africa items

Asia

News: India's Economic Times reports on farmer-led 'Agitation for Freedom to use Technology' in Maharashtra, as farmers indicate they will use illegal herbicide-tolerant Bt cotton seeds, farmers' group Shetkari Sangathana passed a resolution to support their decision

Commentary: India's Down To Earth writer reflects on court ruling Monsanto's GM cotton seeds can't be patented, argues revocation of patent doesn't help farmers let down by Bollgard II technology, now seen as useless as resistant pink bollworm ravages county's cotton fields

News: India's The Hitavada reports on Maharashtra Gov't order allowing only 370 Bt cotton varieties from 42 companies to be sold in the state in 2018, following widespread pest attacks in 2017, and revelation that Bt cotton seeds were sold under multiple brand names

Commentary: Canadian anti-glyphosate activist Tony Mitra posts "rant" against other anti-GMO activists, including Jeffrey Smith, Vandana Shiva, Steve Druker; alleges mass glyphosate poisoning is underway in India

News: Food Navigator reports on Food Safety and Standards Authority of India's (FSSAI) plans to finalize its new food labeling regulations within two to three months, Coalition for a GM-Free India objects to its GMO labeling measure, noting GM foods are illegal

Commentary: Sandhya Ramesh of India's The Print promotes golden rice as a tool to help solve vitamin-A deficiency in Asia, highlights U.S. FDA's recent approval, notes the campaign against golden rice was partly misinformed and partly politically motivated

News: The Manila Times reports GM Golden Rice expected to reach consumers soon after food regulators including FDA, Health Canada found it fit to eat; after approval it will be accessible to the estimated 250 million preschool-age children with Vitamin A deficiency

News: United News of Bangladesh amplifies IRRI news release announcing world's three leading regulatory agencies, including U.S. FDA, give safety and nutrition approvals for Golden Rice; Bangladesh and Philippines at forefront of releasing first Golden Rice variety, pending Bangladesh regulatory approval

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News release: French farmers' union Coordination Rurale applauds new law that will require labeling of GMOs, farming methods, geographical origin for animal food, starting in 2023; complains that commitments to protect French consumers, farmers don't go far enough

Commentary: NGO France Nature Environnement applauds own role in campaign demanding lawmakers make environmental labeling of food mandatory; amendment adopted to take effect Jan. 1, 2023, will require labeling of foods from animals fed with GMOs, treatments with plant protection products

News: French media report National Assembly adopts amendments to national food-ag bill, introduce labels on products from animals fed GM feed, listing pesticide treatments on produce

Event: Germany's Leibniz Institute for Plant Genetics and Crop Plant Research (IPK) and National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina to host June 4 public lecture by Julius Kuhn Institute on topic of "Organic and green genetic engineering - is that possible?"

Commentary: Ollie Wright of The Conservative Woman (U.K.) praises reports that gene edited crops will be grown in Britain, believes it will help the U.K. develop a competitive advantage over anti-GMO EU member states, notes GMO opposition has little to do with science

Commentary: Giovanni Cervi Ciboldi of Italy's Mondo Padano amplifies ISPRA report showing that pesticide pollution in water, air and soil has significantly lessened, and that GM seeds can allow for another leap forward, criticizes alarmism and decontextualized data

News: Norwegian news source reports biotechnology council's deadline for inclusion in new genetic engineering law expires; animal breeding groups deliver consultation statement calling for law that allows use of new technologies safely, labeling of CRISPR-produced foods as GE instead of GMO

Commentary: Writing in New Eastern Outlook, author F. William Engdahl says Austria's new coalition

government betrays voters on CETA, calls it major betrayal of future of EU sovereign national laws; claims CETA would allow unlabeled GMO salmon from Canada to be sold across Europe

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Argentina's Agrovoy highlights Bayer's ongoing purchase of Monsanto, compares upcoming explosion in agricultural innovations to discovery of computing, rise of Internet in global economy, calls expected deal major event in history of global agri-food production

Interview: Argentina's Pagina 12 interviews Marie-Monique Robin, director of "Roundup Facing its Judges" documentary, she notes that Monsanto and its lawyers reviewed her book, "The World According to Monsanto," and could not find anything to bring her to trial

Commentary: ETC Group's Silvia Riveiro writes for Mexico's La Jornada, warns about potential dangers of CRISPR, highlights Australian research team's discovery of new DNA structures, and Swiss researchers' inadvertent creation of a new pathogenic virus

More Latin America items

Oceania

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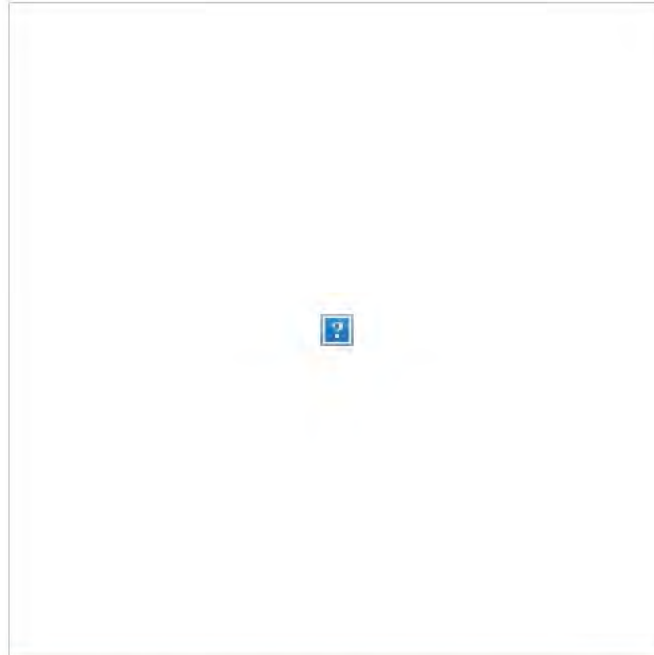
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[BIOTECH UPDATES](#)

Snapshot delivery will resume tomorrow.

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Caitrin.Martin@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - May 28, 2018
 Date: Monday, May 28, 2018 4 05:18 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Caitrin,

This week's Favorable Outcomes newsletter highlights commentary on variety of current food and agriculture topics, including the use of CRISPR to fight a critical citrus disease, discussion of how organic farms could harm the environment, reaction to the selection of a new leader by the International Agency for Research on Cancer and criticism of Scotland's policy against GMOs.

Other items offer praise for U.S. regulators' GMO labeling proposal and favorable review of Golden Rice.

To view items on this newsletter, log in on the [Bonus Eventus Community](#) page. To create an account, fill out the Request Membership form on the front page of the site. To share articles, click on the Twitter icon.

Please [contact us](#) if you have any questions.

In This Issue

[Stakeholder Spotlight](#)
[Stories Worth Sharing](#)
[What's Trending?](#)
[Calendar highlights](#)

Stakeholder Spotlight: Made Safe



Made Safe, also known as Nontoxic Certified, is a registered non-profit involved in advocacy against endocrine-disrupting chemicals and pesticides in North America.

It offers a "made safe" certified seal tied to the for-profit consultancy Veritey Consulting, which is run by the same co-founders, Amy Ziff and Adrienne

Stories Worth Sharing

[Mark Lynas: Scotland's stance against GMOs a "travesty" for science, with trickle-down effect in other countries](#)

[Yi Li: CRISPR technique offers potential solution to citrus greening](#)

[Robert Paarlberg: Increasing organic food production could harm environment by destroying wildlife habitat](#)

[Amanda Zaluckyj: USDA's proposed GMO labeling guidelines are brilliant, casting bioengineered foods in a positive light](#)

[Henry Miller: European neonic ban based on fabricated studies, rigged regulatory review](#)

[Louis Auge: Selection of Weiderpass as IARC leader dashes optimism agency would change its ways](#)

[ACSH: Golden Rice gets favorable evaluation from U.S. regulators](#)

[Alex Berezow: Betty Crocker stands up to hysteria, proclaims "GMOs are safe"](#)

[Tom Whipple: Scientists skeptical of claims "obesogen" chemicals cause obesity](#)

[Joseph Opoku Gakpo: Mozambique citizens seem ready to accept GMOs](#)

Peres.

Made Safe just released its Hazards List, which says GMOs, high-risk pesticides and endocrine disruptors, as well as numerous other chemicals, materials and ingredients, are excluded from being in any product it certifies. It noted it follows Pesticide Action Network's list of highly hazardous pesticides.

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about the Made Safe.

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Scientists debunk claims GMOs are causing cancer in Ghana

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BONUS EVENTUS MONITORING**

What's Trending?

National Assembly's consideration of food bill revives demands for France to end glyphosate usage within three years

Dalhousie University survey finds most Canadians want GMO labeling but don't understand whether GMOs are in their food

Thailand decides against ban on glyphosate, chlorpyrifos and paraquat but may pursue limits

Washington Post: Analysis sparks conversation over use of pesticides in organic farming

U.S. survey finds managed bee colony losses rose to 40 percent last year

Calendar highlights

May 29-30	May 29-30	May 31 - June 2
EU Food & Farm Forum	Horizon 2020 workshop - "Advancing Assessment of Chemical Mixtures and Their Risks for Human Health and the Environment"	Brazil National Meeting of Agroecology
May 31	June 1	June 4-7
Showing of Stephane Horel documentary "Endoc(t)rinement" at Friends of the Louvre EDC conference	Utrecht University obesogens researcher lecture: "Are Chemicals Making Us Fat?"	Biotechnology Innovation Organization international convention

CLICK HERE TO ACCESS FULL EVENTS CALENDAR

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More information on the people and organizations influencing the food and agriculture debate

Monitoring portal

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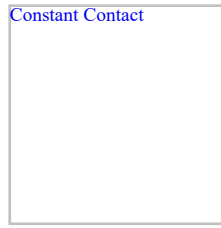
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A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Global biotechnology developments over the weekend included news that tests showed non-Bt cotton varieties in Pakistan now have the Bt gene. A news report indicted Organic Trade Association officials are troubled over the U.S. Department of Agriculture's attitude regarding organics.

- A Pakistani news site reported the Central Cotton Committee learned test results show all 15 widely cultivated non-Bt cotton varieties in the country now contain the Bt gene. The concern is that yields will drop due to growing resistance to the Bt toxin. *GMWatch* said this could be hindering output. [See more](#)
- *Politico* reported the OTA is moving on to an industry-driven project after the USDA eliminated the organic checkoff program. *Politico* noted OTA officials were upbeat about taking on the program but added, "it's clear that organic industry leaders are more than a little concerned about USDA's apparent change in course on organic policy." The article noted the Senate Appropriations Committee approved an agricultural spending bill that would include increased funding for agricultural research, including efforts to fight citrus greening. [See more](#)

Due to the U.S. Memorial Day holiday, your next Global Biotech Snapshot will be sent on Tuesday, May 29. Please check the monitoring portal for updates in the meantime.

Reminder: to access the full text, archives and monitoring dashboard resources you need to log in to the [Bonus Eventus community portal](#) using your email address and personal password. Please contact us if you need any assistance or support.

For a more extensive compilation of recent biotech items, [click here](#).

North America

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project's Marc Brazeau contends organic proponents' focus on pesticides distracts from more problematic ag impacts like land use, water use, greenhouse gas emissions, water pollution, says biotech led to rise in glyphosate use that decreased use of more toxic options

Commentary: Sustainable Pulse promotes new RT Documentary, "The Peril on Your Plate," which examines negative impact of GM crops in India, and health risks associated with glyphosate

News: Digital Trends reports on developments in CRISPR, highlights recent study by Purdue University and Chinese Academy of Sciences researchers which used CRISPR to boost rice grain yield by 25-31 percent

Commentary: Alex Berezow of American Council on Science and Health points out flaws in recent Science Advances study predicting that rising CO2 levels will result in a rice nutrition crisis, highlights efforts to develop GM rice with enhanced iron and zinc levels

News: Food & Environment Reporting Network reports Organic Trade Association shifts to private sector initiatives after USDA setbacks, noting plans to pilot project to prevent fraud in organic supply chain

News: Progressive Farmer's Washington Insider reports President Trump is pushing China to boost imports of U.S. ag products by \$25 billion, USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue noted talks include issues such as streamlining biotechnology approvals

Commentary: American Council on Science and Health reports US FDA approves Golden Rice, notes Greenpeace, NRDC fight Golden Rice approvals globally; notes IRRI working on healthier rice varieties

News: Politico Pro U.S. Morning Agriculture roundup reports Senate Appropriations Committee moves USDA-FDA spending bill to full chamber; bill to increase research investment in National Organic Program, citrus greening disease, geneticist for Atlantic salmon breeding program

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Kenyan news site says government is pressured to accept GM seeds to help farmers battle fall armyworm, note GM maize trials in Uganda have been successful

News: EnviroNews Nigeria reports Health of Mother Earth Foundation founder challenges former Nigeria president's endorsement of biotech at OFAB program, argues GMOs won't ensure food security, compound health, environmental and socio-economic problems

Letter to the editor: Andrew Ibanda Waiswa writes to Uganda's Daily Monitor, calls on Parliament to pass the Biosafety Bill, notes farmers are losing crops to fall armyworm attack while being denied access to Bt corn technology

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Filipino news site reports USDA approves Golden Rice in safety evaluation; announcement follows FSANZ and Health Canada approval, could pave way for worldwide commercialization

Commentary: Indian novelist Manu Joseph writes for Mint, examines Mark Lynas' shift from anti-GMO activism to GMO supporter, highlights scientific consensus on safety, argues the successful defamation of GMOs comes down to activists being better storytellers

Letter to the editor: General physician writing to northeast India news site notes prevalence of glyphosate use since introduction of GM crops, cites Tony Mitra claims, IARC review, several studies to warn of negative health impacts from glyphosate exposure, stresses need to end use, switch to organic practices

News: Pakistani news site reports High Court directs Punjab gov't to produce resolution asking it to pass breeders' rights bill; counsel claims bill was passed without cabinet approval as required

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Report: INRA releases analysis of glyphosate including research director Gérard Pascal stating human health risks "not scientifically established," suggesting calls for removal of glyphosate based on anti-GMO perception, not scientific evidence

Commentary: France's Alerte Environnement examines French organic sector's dependency on pesticide use, highlights Socialist MEP Eric Andrieu's complaint that France surpasses other EU member states in requests for exemptions from pesticide restrictions

Commentary: Spanish news site claims scientists still know little about the genome, so it's arrogant to claim GMOs safe, quotes Salk Institute's David Schubert and from Steven Druker's book to claim assumptions GMO producers make are based on invalid assumptions, and do harm human health

Commentary: Paleontologist Jelle Reumer writes for Dutch news site, notes fall armyworm, highly destructive to crops, is approaching Europe and worrying farmers; notes some biotech crops are resistant to the pest, but points out EU is resistant to GM crop

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Mexican political news site reports scientist Francisco Bolívar Zapata presented his book at National Autonomous University of Mexico, says it shows GM crops present great benefits without harming the environment or human health

News: Brazil TV station reports Brazil's Indatubá municipality releases 100,000 GM mosquitoes to reduce cases of dengue, zika and chikungunya; results to be monitored, released in 18 months

News: Mexican health food news site claims GMOs are hidden dangers because they cross-bred with organic crops; claims pesticides used on GM crops kill bees, butterflies, and birds, destroys their habitat, and pollutes water

News: Agencia EFE reports Monsanto official says Latin American agriculture's future linked to innovation; notes Mexican farmers' cotton yields exceeds U.S. farmers, shows what they can achieve using technology

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: New Zealand news site reports Federated Farmers drops lawsuit against regional GM regulation despite the central government's responsibilities to regulate biotechnology

More Oceania items

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Stakeholder database

More information on the people and organizations influencing food and agriculture issues.

Events calendar

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Today's global biotechnology developments included coverage of a study by Dalhousie University on GMOs and GMO labeling in Canada. An Italian university filed a lawsuit against a Vatican newspaper, saying its statement that corporate money influenced a scientific study on GMOs is defamatory.

- Canadian press reported a Dalhousie University study shows most Canadians are uncertain whether they eat GM food and uncertain whether GMOs are healthy but want GM food labeling. The study's lead author, dean of management Sylvain Charlebois, said it's unlikely most Canadians have eaten GM food but aren't sure because the country has no labeling requirements. Charlebois said GMOs are safe but should be labeled for transparency. **See more**
- An Italian University, the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies, filed a defamation lawsuit against the Vatican newspaper *Osservatore Romano*, for claiming its study on GM corn was influenced by money from a corporation. A university official acknowledged the right to criticize and offer opposing scientific arguments "is sacrosanct." However, rector Pierdomenico Perata said alluding that scientific results are influenced by money from a multinational company is a defamation and must be prosecuted. **See more**

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North America

Commentary: AgriNews editorial warns about danger of allowing China to take the lead in ag research, lamenting stagnating ag research funding in the U.S., believes land grant institutions should be involved in gene manipulating technology

News: Food Navigator reports GE crops designed to produce omega 3 will ease pressure on fish stocks, but notes not all omega 3s are equal; professor believes biotech will have huge impact on industry

Commentary: American Council on Science, Health fellow applauds Betty Crocker for standing up to ignorance on GMO food safety, responding to complaint of company use of GMOs with tweet, "GMOs are safe"

News: New Scientist notes newer GM foods with consumer health benefits coming to market, including healthier potato and GM crops with omega 3; questions if new "superfoods" will win consumers over

News: Popular Science tells what to expect from federal GM labeling program, says studies show GMOs are safe, but people may avoid for other reasons; says labeling is at least step towards transparency

Commentary: Edsel Cook of Natural News accuses biotech and agrochemical companies of seeking to take over the world's food supply, warns about negative health and environmental risks of Enlist Duo

Commentary: Farmer's Daughter Amanda Zaluckyj praises USDA's draft GMO labeling rules, welcomes use of the term "bioengineered" and the positive labels, laments that companies can still label products as non-GMO without a GM counterpart

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Kenyan news site reports government starts Bt cotton trials, official predicts the variety will boost cotton yields up to eight times current levels

News: Nigerian news site reports Nigerian ex-president says biotech agriculture, other innovations needed to boost crop yields to sustain growing world population, address world hunger; notes if crop yields remain same, we'd need to cultivate 82 percent of the world's land by 2050

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Financial Express reports Gujarat, India success in managing pink bollworm Bt cotton resistance sparks home Maharashtra where cotton groups are proactively campaign to educate farmers on bollworm management

News: English language South Korean news site reports activists demonstrations during March against Monsanto in Seoul protest use of GMOs, demand GM food labeling

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: U.K. news site reports Mark Lynas criticizes Scotland's GM ban, says it harms poorest people in the world in countries where anti-GMO campaigners use Europe's anti-biotech stance to claim GMOs are harmful

News: Deutsche Presse-Agentur reports CRISPR can help change future of food and people through agriculture and medicine, but it comes with risks that scares some

Commentary: GMWatch's Claire Robinson notes GM potato field trial in Ireland find both GM and non-GMO, blight resistant potatoes reduced fungicide use 80 to 90 percent, says there's no need for the GM potato

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Brazilian news site reports Oxitec to begin releasing GM mosquitoes May 23 in trial test to reduce cases of dengue fever

Commentary: Mexican news site reports biotech research in Mexico held back due to interests of large corporations, but Universidad Michoacana will train socially responsible biotechnologists

Commentary: Glenn Makuta of Slow Food Brasil voices opposition to "poison package" bill, warns about negative impact of pesticide use on transgenic crops on human health and the environment, advocates promotion of agroecology

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

There were no noteworthy biotechnology developments in Oceania during today's monitoring. Click the link below for the latest items.

[More Oceania items](#)

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<p>Stakeholder database</p> <p>More information on the people and organizations influencing food and agriculture issues.</p>	<p>Events calendar</p> <p>See where news could be happening next. Or let allies know about an upcoming event.</p>	<p>Bonus Eventus community</p> <p>Connect with academic experts and researchers, journalists and agriculture allies.</p>
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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Today's global biotechnology developments included news that a GM beet field trial in Germany had been vandalized. Media outlets in the U.K. reported on a planned field trial of gene-edited canola. The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced final implementation guidelines for the National Environmental Policy Act.

- European wire services reported that a field trial of GM beets in Bavaria had been destroyed. Local police report the vandalism could have taken place anytime between May 2-22 and requested anyone with information on the destruction come forward. **See more**
- Media outlets *The Telegraph* and *Daily Mail* reported on Rothamsted Research's recently announced field trials of GMO and gene-edited camelina plants. The reports noted activist group GM Freeze criticized regulators for offering a "free pass" to gene-edited crops without assessing their impacts on health and the environment. **See more**
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) announced the final guidelines for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act, noting that the rules included some exemptions for genetically engineered organisms. **See more**

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For a more extensive compilation of recent biotech items, **[click here](#)**

North America

News: Reuters reports U.S. seeking better access into China market for GM crops, says two sides are nearing trade deal that could mean China buying more U.S. farm products; currently country allows import only of GM feed

News release: USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) publishes final rule amending its National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Procedures, new categorical exclusions are available for extending deregulations for GE organisms

Commentary: New Scientist notes several GM products that feature consumer benefits such as non-browning Arctic apple, bruise-resistant potato that's healthier when fried, pink pineapples with lycopene

News: Futurism reports on collaborative study by Purdue University and Chinese Academy of Sciences researchers using CRISPR/Cas9 to develop rice plants capable of producing 25 to 31 percent more grain, highlights USDA's recent statement on gene editing

Commentary: Bryan Kittman of San Diego Entertainer magazine examines pros and cons of GMOs, highlights environmental benefits such as reduced pesticide use, points to links to increased allergenicity and antibiotic resistance, criticizes corporate control

News: Food & Wine reports on Whole Foods' decision to delay policy requiring suppliers to label products containing GMOs by Sep. 1, 2018; citing anticipated standards by USDA, Whole Foods will continue to require third-party certification for non-GMO claims

More North America items**Africa**

News: Nigerian news site reports former Nigerian president says during OFAB address the country must adopt innovative approaches such as agricultural biotech to have chance at ending world hunger in face of rapidly growing population

News: EnviroNews Nigeria reports Catholic Medical Practitioners of Nigeria chairman says precautionary approach needed for GMOs because food safety certification takes several decades since effects take place "at molecular genetic level"

Commentary: African journalist writes for Cornell Alliance for Science, reports Mozambique residents look forward to adopting GM crops such as water-efficient maize, notes they already eat imported GMOs from South Africa; shopkeeper says they are more worried about having something on their plates

More Africa items**Asia**

Commentary: SEARCA reports Filipino legislators urge continued biotech advancement during opening of biotech exhibit, as House speaker says biotech crops will help alleviate food security, poverty, climate change issues; legislator says farmers in poor areas telling GM crop success stories

News: Pakistani news site reports biotech experts says country must align its biotechnology regulations according to Convention on Biological Diversity standards, including Cartagena and Nagoya protocols, to prevent impact on grain trade, technology introduction

News: Indian financial news site reports Maharashtra state government approves licenses for 370 varieties of Bt cotton, urges farmers to buy from the license companies in crackdown against illegal Bt cotton seed sales; licenses from up to 74 companies were not approved

More Asia items**Europe**

News: Deutsche Presse-Agentur reports test field for genetically engineered plants destroyed in Germany, suspects not identified

News: German news site reports police investigating destruction of genetically modified beet field in trial study near Remlingen, Germany, affecting about 1,000 square meters

News: U.K.'s Daily Mail reports "scientists exploit legal loophole" to grow gene-edited camelina to produce Omega 3; reports experts say GM crops could lead to biodiversity loss; DEFRA minister says regulation not needed when crop could be attained with convention methods

News: U.K.'s The Telegraph reports scientists "exploit legal loophole" to field test gene-edited camelina plants adapted to produce Omega 3; critics claim DEFRA's decision pre-empts EU Court of Justice opinion, GM Freeze official says agency handed out free pass rather than put health, environment first

Announcement: Slow Food announces Slow Food Russia founding; official says they will protect Russian food heritage by publishing "Russian Ark of Taste" catalog and establishing Golden Snail Awards for clean products

Announcement: Netherlands-based Good Manufacturing Processes company wants feedback on proposed new standard for non-GMO feed that will enable companies to comply with market demand

Event: Spanish calendar site notes Vandana Shiva to speak on women for biodiversity and challenges presented by climate change at event in San Sebastian, Spain

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Agencia EFE reports European honey distributor association warns Mexico to put halt to GM soy cultivation, says it will harm the country's honey quality and impact exports to Europe; says GMOs and pesticides also present threat to bees

News: English language, Latin American news site reports European honey distributor warns Mexico on World Bee Day that planting GM soy and using pesticide in Yucatan could affect area's honey quality and exports to Europe

News release: Brazil's Landless Workers Movement (MST) announces Curitiba will host 17th Conference on Agroecology from June 6-9, 2018, organized by over 40 popular movements and entities from Paran i, with goal of creating awareness about agroecology

Commentary: Ecuadoran news site editorial notes that labels stating products do not contain GMOs, preservatives, aspartame, or other ingredients play on our emotions, do not help us choose healthier products but entices us to believe those products are unhealthy

Commentary: Costa Rican university site contributor says agronomist Jaime Garcia Gonzalez claims GMOs promoted with misleading propaganda, says studies show they present risks to human health

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News release: New Zealand Education Minister Chris Hipkins announces gov't partnership with University of Waikato to invest \$13 million in new research program in Tauranga to tackle ag challenges, biotech expert Marie Magnusson will set up the program

[More Oceania items](#)

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Today's global biotechnology developments included news that the Competition Commission of India has approved Bayer AG's purchase of Monsanto Co. Science communicators in Ghana refuted claims linking GM crops to cancer.

- India's fair trade regulator announced that it had approved Bayer's takeover of Monsanto, according to reports by *Reuters* and *Press Trust of India*. The news was announced via Twitter, with limited additional details. However, the government statement noted that the CCI had imposed unspecified conditions on the approval. [See more](#)
- Alliance for Science Ghana issued a statement refuting a local researcher's claims that GM foods were a leading cause of premature death. The group noted that the researcher's claims relied on a retracted and discredited French study, as well as a debunked internet hoax. Alliance for Science Ghana also criticized the Peasant Farmer Association of Ghana for amplifying these and other unfounded claims. [See more](#)
- German environmental NGOs, with the financial support of the federal agency for conservation, launched the Fachstelle Gentechnik und Umwelt (Center for Genetic Engineering and the Environment). The self-described advisory body will operate as a "clearinghouse" of information on regulatory and scientific developments in biotechnology, and it explicitly aims to include civil society perspectives on biotechnology and new plant breeding techniques. [See more](#)

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North America

News: The New Food Economy reports Whole Foods notifies its suppliers it will pause GMO food labeling requirements set to take effect Sept. 1, 2018; Whole Foods officials say suppliers concerned about complying with both company's requirements and newly proposed USDA rules

Commentary: University of Connecticut plant scientist Yi Li writes for The Conversation, describes his team's development of technique using CRISPR to create non-GMO citrus greening-resistant citrus trees using Agrobacterium

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science posts Mark Lynas blog amplifying study by Irish and Dutch researchers finding GE potato carrying gene to resist blight could help farmers cut use of fungicide sprays up to 90 percent, pointing out anti-GMO activists tried to stop trials

Commentary: The Farmer's Daughter USA criticizes fear-based marketing that tells consumers to avoid products because brands use pesticides, GMOs, chemicals; emphasizes companies' failures to tell consumers what's good about their own brand

Commentary: National Hog Farmer blog applauds Betty Crocker for defending use of GM ingredients in its food products, wonders how food conversation would change if all food companies supported farmers' use of technology, calls GMO disclosure "refreshing"

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: John Awuku Dziwornu of Alliance for Science Ghana responds to Peasant Farmers Association of Ghana's (PFA) recent warnings about health risks of consuming GM foods, explains why PFA's statements are completely false

News: Ghana's Joy reports on Alliance for Science Ghana's statement debunking recent claim by Dr. Nkosana Nartey that GMOs are cancer activators, AfS Ghana noted that cancer rates in the U.S. are lower than in Europe, where GM crops have not been adopted

Commentary: Canary Mugume of Uganda's NilePost examines debate surrounding GMO adoption and the nation's biosafety bill, highlights banana farmer Ann Sarah Igeme's struggles to control bacterial wilt, summarizes objections from various NGOs

News: Nigerian Tribune reports many studies prove GM crops to be better for environment than conventional crops, contrary to claims by anti-GMO activists; report notes some GM crops developed to resist weeds, insect pests, reducing need for sprays of pesticides

Commentary: United Nations Environment Programme celebrates International Biodiversity Day, highlights recent passage of Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Press Trust of India reports fair trade regulator CCI approves Bayer acquisition of Monsanto subject to compliance of "certain modifications"; deal would create world's largest seeds and pesticides firm; Monsanto has sold GM cotton seeds in India for more than decade

News: Reuters reports India's fair trade regulator CCI approves Bayer purchase of Monsanto, subject to compliance of "certain modifications"; CCI launched public consultation process this year to determine whether deal would have adverse impact on competition in India

News: Times of India reports the large quantity of illegal herbicide-tolerant Bt cotton seeds seized by Maharashtra's ag department will be burned, Maharashtra Hybrid Seed Company (Mahyco) claimed ownership, noted the seeds were not meant for commercial sale

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Announcement: German environmental NGOs launch Fachstelle Gentechnik und Umwelt to assess regulatory and policy implications of new biotechnology developments, project supported by federal nature conservation agency

Announcement: EU Parliament's Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) posts several documents containing programs and speaker contributions from recent hearings on new breeding techniques

Commentary: Rossella Muroni and Serena Pellegrino of Sinistra Italiana voice opposition to Giorgio Fidenato's continued planting of GM maize in spite of Italy's ban, they argue that Italy has the right under EU law to ban GMOs authorized at the EU level

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Argentine news sources report Agrarian Federation (FAA) objects to draft reform of Seed Law because it fails to include concept of "public order" as recognition of all intellectual property when

buying seed, would imply going back to present situations at beginning of last century

Commentary: Valdir Izidoro Silveira of Brazilian Communist publication Inverta warns readers about negative health effects of GMOs such as increased allergies and development of bacterial resistance, argues consumers have a right to transparent information

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: Australia's Weekly Times profiles cotton farmer Renee Anderson, highlighting her work to educate children and communities about environmental benefits of GMOs, she points to reduction in pesticide use, laments use of children in inaccurate videos

More Oceania items

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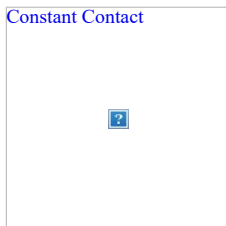
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 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - May 21, 2018
 Date: Monday, May 21, 2018 10:35:24 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Caitrin,

As previewed in last week's newsletter, the International Agency for Research on Cancer selected its new director, choosing Elisabete Weiderpass to replace Christopher Wild. Favorable Outcomes this week leads off with Hank Campbell's reaction to the predictable selection and some tips if Weiderpass wants to restore the agency's credibility.

We also highlight reaction to the new glyphosate claims promoted by the Ramazzini Institute - which, like IARC, was investigated by the U.S. Congress last year - and Henry Miller takes a closer look at neonic regulation in Europe as compared to the United States.

And with organic promoters kicking off Organic Week today in Washington, Paul Driessen examines claims that organic crops are superior and healthier to their genetically modified counterparts.

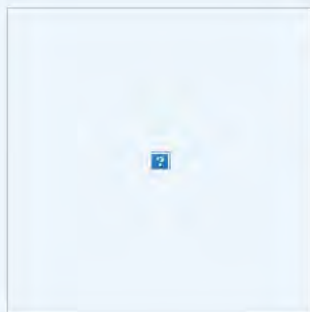
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In This Issue

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[Stories Worth Sharing](#)
[What's Trending?](#)
[Calendar highlights](#)

Stakeholder Spotlight: Ramazzini Institute



The Italy-based Ramazzini Institute returned to the public eye last week when it [announced it will publish three studies](#) in the journal *Environmental Health* this month [questioning the safety of glyphosate](#).

Stories Worth Sharing

[Hank Campbell: New director Weiderpass likely to keep status quo for IARC](#) / [But she should purge activists, increase transparency](#)

[Henry Miller on neonics: Europe takes "evidence-be-damned" approach](#) / [U.S. follows science, recognizes benefits](#)

[Marc Brazeau: "Lot of problems" with Ramazzini study claiming glyphosate is harmful, and with Guardian coverage of it](#)

[Paul Driessen: "Evidence strongly supports GE over organic crops" with better shelf life, lower prices](#)

[Lindsay Burgess: GMOs are good for farmers and the environment while posing no additional threat to human health](#)

[Angela Logomasini: U.S. EPA's Integrated Risk Information System overly cautious due to reliance on "outlandish assumptions"](#)

[L.M.K. Tillekeratne: Glyphosate ban based on "half-baked" science responsible for decline in rubber plantation productivity](#)

[Pamela Ronald: Feelings are an inescapable obstacle to public's perception of genetic modification](#)

The enigmatic society, which has had its **funding questioned** previously by the U.S. House Science Committee, **published manuscripts** from its Global Glyphosate Study claiming that glyphosate-based herbicides alter sexual development, genotoxicity and the intestinal microbiome at doses considered safe by U.S. regulators. It continues to seek crowdfunding for an estimated 5 million euro campaign.

Ramazzini's work was quickly amplified by **Greenpeace**, the **Organic Consumers Association**, **GMWatch**, **Generations Futures** and **The Greens/European Free Alliance**. However, its work was questioned by academics in **France** and **Belgium**.

Click **HERE** to learn more about the Ramazzini Institute.

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PROFILES**

Steven Cerier: USDA regulatory approach to gene-edited crops will slash development costs

Norwegian thesis project finds African farmers see GMOs favorably, are eager to adopt new technology

Irish research finds 80 to 90 percent reduction in fungicide applications with blight-resistant potato

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What's Trending?

March Against Monsanto protests in Europe, Latin America, North America draw limited media attention

World Bee Day attracts broad stakeholder interest, with FAO calling for agroecology to replace pesticide-based agriculture model

European court upholds neonic restrictions

U.S. lawmakers vote down Farm Bill proposal; environmentalists pleased pesticide regulations won't be rolled back

Calendar highlights

May 21-24	May 21-22	May 21-25
Organic Week	The Organic Center's Organic Confluences Summit	Fera Science 12th European Pesticide Residue Workshop
May 22	May 22-24	May 22
European Parliament Sustainable Use of Pesticides Conference	EDC-MixRisk Consortium Meeting	International Day for Biological Diversity
May 23-24	May 24	May 24-25
AgriChem & Technology LatAm	Organic Trade Association policy conference	Meeting of the European Commission Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed

CLICK HERE TO ACCESS FULL EVENTS CALENDAR

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Today's global biotechnology developments included continued reporting on Argentina's decision to allow imports of GM crops not yet approved in the country.

- News outlets in Argentina reported on a decision by the country's agriculture ministry to allow imports of GM grains that had not yet been approved in the country in order to address shortages following months of drought. A government announcement on the new process noted that GM trait approvals are increasingly asynchronous and that international mechanisms had been created to address the issue. [See more](#)
- Writing in *Forbes*, legal consultants reviewed technicalities of the recent Delhi High Court judgement invalidating Monsanto's Bt cotton patents in India. The authors added that the ruling has "serious ramifications" for research investment in the country. [See more](#)

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North America

Event: Anti-GMO NGO Hawai'i SEED promotes "Protecting the Sacred" talks to be held May 24 in Hilo, May 25 in Honolulu, with speakers examining threat of "extreme" genetic engineering to Hawaiian biodiversity, traditional cultural practices; University of California-Berkeley's Ignacio Chapela featured

Commentary: Beyond Pesticides daily blog cites prevalence of private farming on refuge lands, claims pesticides harmful to wildlife, notes FWS ban of neonics on wildlife refuges, phaseout of GE crops to feed wildlife, urges supporters to sign petition demanding FWS eliminate pesticide use on refuge lands

News: Farm news source reports Syngenta and plaintiffs announce \$1.51 billion settlement to resolve class actions and individual cases regarding Agrisure Viptera; cases allege Syngenta sold GM corn seeds to U.S. farmers even though genetic traits in those seeds hadn't yet been approved for import by China

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Video: African Centre for Biodiversity promotes video, "Spiritual and Cultural Value of Seed in South Africa," covering discussions from National Seed Dialogue and Celebration in December 2017

News: Nigeria News reports farmers pleased with performance of GM maize seeds that allow plants to thrive even in dry weather, notes concerns of most Nigerians about GMOs based on ignorance, natural aversion to scientific progress, points out some opponents believe eating GM foods harmful to health

Announcement: Nigeria's National Biosafety Management Agency gives 21-day public notice on display of application dossier by company for importation of GM maize for feed processing; display aims to enable public to give input that would facilitate informed decision on application

Commentary: GhanaWeb columnist Benjamin Senyo Bey criticizes spread of misinformation about GMOs, notes it is holding Ghana back even as new technologies like CRISPR are being embraced all over the world, highlights many beneficial applications of gene editing

News: Kenya's Daily Nation reports on potential for Bt cotton to revive Kenya's textile industry, Roy Mugiira of National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) noted Bt cotton has reduced pesticide use and boosted incomes in other countries

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: Rajdeep and Joyeeta Banerjee write for Forbes India, providing analysis of Delhi High Court ruling blocking Monsanto's patents on Bt cotton technology, they note the move could have serious ramifications for India's ag-biotech sector

News: Hindu in-depth report explores ways increased illegal GM cotton cultivation threatens country's cotton production, reveals regulatory shortfalls on GMOs

News: The Hindu reports on controversy over glyphosate use on Bt cotton in India: anti-glyphosate activist Tony Mitra calls on India to ban glyphosate unless it can prove its safety

News: Vietnamese news outlet reports on GRAIN Indonesia's Kartini Samon's statement that GMOs cannot end world hunger, stop chemical use or boost farmer incomes, speaking at event organized by Institute of Community Entrepreneurship Development

News release: Philippine government news agency reports ag department officials lobby for more pro-biotech policy at biotech exhibition, urges legislators to learn about benefits, cultivate laws that will help address food security

News: Pakistan's UrduPoint reports federal minister for climate change conveys message on International Biodiversity Day being celebrated May 22, says nation prepared National Conservation Strategy, ratification of Cartagena Protocol on Bio-safety helps curb negative impacts of biotech

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Spain news source recap of agri-food conference highlights arguments from agriculture, produce trade group members for Spain, Europe to embrace biotech as strategy to keep EU self-sufficient in food, noting organic cannot feed population alone

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Argentina's Infocampo reports government creates system to facilitate importation of GM grains, with mechanism valid for four years until report on its result, merits; officials cite need to allow importation of GM grains to maximize use of agro-industrial sector's processing capacity

Announcement: Government of Argentina publishes resolution passed by City of Buenos Aires urging support for establishment of procedure for granting commercial authorization to GMOs with exclusive objective of being used as raw material for agro-industrial processing, for use as human and animal food

News release: Argentina ag-tech institute celebrates cotton day with presentation of three new transgenic cotton varieties in the field, notes crops modified to resist herbicides, disease, improve fiber

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: The West Australian reports on launch of Producer Fighting Fund by WAFarmers and the Kimberley Pillbara Cattlemen's Association, with goal of raising \$50,000 to defend industry reputation, highlights GM crop compensation inquiry as an example

More Oceania Items

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Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Global biotechnology developments over the weekend included the Missouri legislature approving a bill that would prohibit lab-grown or synthetic products from being described as meat. Protesters participated in the sixth international March Against Monsanto.

- The Missouri Cattlemens Association announced the state legislature passed a bill prohibiting describing a product as meat unless it is harvested traditionally from livestock. *Quartz* reported on the development. Nationally, a House subcommittee included a provision on an agricultural spending bill to give the U.S. Department of Agriculture authority to regulate how cell-cultured meat products are labeled and inspected for safety. **See more**
- International media reported activists participated worldwide in the March Against Monsanto to protest GMOs, pesticide use, the Bayer acquisition of Monsanto and agribusinesses. *Agence France-Presse* reported hundreds marched in Paris, and other sites reported marches in Switzerland, Portugal, Germany, Mexico, Argentina and Canada. **See more**

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North America

[News: National Public Radio reports prototypes for GMO food labels leave both Big Agriculture, GMO opponents dissatisfied; proposal also gives companies option of simply using QR code](#)

[News release: Canadian agriculture minister wraps up week-long China visit that include request for China to approve three GE canola traits to increase canola exports to China](#)

[News: Reuters reports Chinese buyers cancel orders of, balk at buying U.S. corn over worries regarding trade tensions; even as tension eases Chinese traders stop buying U.S. corn due to difficulty obtaining GMO processing certificate in China](#)

[Commentary: Paul Driessen in Town Hall op-ed charges Russian agents conducting campaign to undermine benefits of GM crops, funnel money to Greenpeace, Food and Water Watch to conduct anti-GM, anti-pesticide crusades](#)

[News: Indiana's Star Press reports AquaBounty Albany GE salmon facility awaits eggs unable to ship from Prince Edward Island due to pending policy on labeling](#)

[News release: Missouri Cattlemens Association announces Missouri legislature passes bill prohibiting describing product as meat unless it is harvested from livestock; association official says they don't oppose plant-based or lab-grown products and legislation does not stifle technology](#)

[News release: International Food Information Council Foundation announces results of its 13th Annual Food and Health Survey, 33 percent of participants listed reducing pesticides as a top priority, 40 percent believe non-GMO products are healthier](#)

Audio: Agricultural experts tell Talking Biotech Podcast host that efforts to provide farmers in developing countries with GM plants resistant to disease handcuffed by anti-GM activists, government corruption, legislators' ignorance

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Writing in Daily Nation, Kenyan organic farmer and Indian food activist criticize fields trials of Bt cotton, claim crop has led to farmer suicides and poor fiber quality in India

Study: Crop Protection publishes study by Africa-, U.K.-based researchers finding climate-adapted push-pull technology effective against fall armyworm infestation

Letter to editor: Letter writer on Burkino Faso news site condemns plan to release GM mosquitoes to fight malaria-carrying mosquito, citing unpredictable health risks; notes decline in cotton quality after introduction of Bt cotton

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Manila Standard reports Monsanto asks Philippine government to crack down on illegal Bt corn, says the low-quality seed and lack of stewardship measures could undermine the technology and harm farmers' livelihoods

News: Pakistani news site reports country making gains toward self-sufficiency in growing corn, notes GM corn may provide impetus for further gains

Commentary: Bangladesh Post editorial calls on government to invest in research to boost yields of organic crops, noting popularity in Europe, the U.S. and Japan due to health benefits

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Euractiv reports mainstream EU farmers support adopting new breeding techniques, but organic farmers oppose it; notes European Court of Justice decision will be key to how gene editing is regulated, but conventional farmers fear politicized decision

Commentary: "What's Making Our Children Sick?" authors write for The Ecologist, claim there is strong link between GMOs and failing health mainly due to "leaky gut" syndrome triggered by agrochemicals

Commentary: Helsinki Times says early results on GM crops helping small-scale farmers is impressive, results in better soil management, reduced pesticide use, increased profitability

Commentary: GMWatch's Claire Robinson writes that as GMO lobby tries to persuade African nations to use Bt technology to combat armyworms when it failed in other regions, quotes 7-month-old news release stating that push-pull method of blending crops is effective against the pest, claims infestations 80 percent lower in push-pull fields

Commentary: European Scientist Editor Jean-Paul Oury says with complicated scientist relations with media that focuses on negative, scientists can turn to new media to get their message out on video, Facebook,

Commentary: OXFAM International notes FAO director says now is time to grow agroecology movement

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Panamanian news site reports Regional Council of Agricultural Cooperation discusses risks, benefits of obtaining GM plant products

Interview: Friends of the Earth Argentina quotes CONICET researcher who says "hegemonic" science has understated the risks of GMOs, claims future debates need to include social, ecological scientists and address societal needs

News: Mexican news site reports Mexican Parliament seeks to eliminate GMO labels, NGOs say they believe plan is part of renegotiated NAFTA

Commentary: Greenpeace touts its 25th anniversary in Mexico by noting accomplishments, including getting courts to stop GM soy and GM corn cultivation

Interview: Ecuadoran news site reports interview with Ana Lucia Bravo of Universidad Andina Simon Bolivar, says Ecuadoran constitution stipulates Ecuador is GMO-free country, notes court case intended to prevent GM crop studies and trials, claims there could be genetic contamination, could affect people's health

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Review: Frontiers in Plant Science - Researchers from Australia, Africa analyze progress, benefits of Banana21 project, predicts, given benefits of product, banana will be released by 2021

News: PLOS Synbio blogger notes laws governing synbio were not designed for synbio, are inadequate to regulate gene editing but banning gene editing outside a lab is extreme, unnecessary; says regulations should not treat all experiments the same, but focus on riskier types

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Today's global biotechnology developments included a European Parliament debate on new breeding techniques. In the U.S., a House funding bill includes a provision that would mandate labeling GE salmon.

- During the EU Parliament debate today on new breeding techniques, U.K. MEP Stuart Agnew said legislating gene-edited products as GMOs would be unwise because gene-edited products are difficult to detect. In a news release responding to the hearing, Green Party agricultural policy spokesman Martin Hausling said that because gene editing altered the genome, it should be strictly regulated. [See more](#)
- Agricultural news sites reported the House Appropriations Committee approved a funding bill that would require GE salmon to be labeled as part of the National Bioengineered Food Disclosure Standard. [See more](#)

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North America

Announcement: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service releases draft Environmental Impact Statement for release of GE citrus tristeza virus to treat citrus greening; public comments on the draft ends June 25

Commentary: Friends of the Earth scientist writing for Food Tank criticizes expected attempt in Senate version of Farm Bill to revise USDA organic standards, allow use of pesticides, GMOs,

News: Canada's Real Agriculture amplifies CropLife Canada video with vice president of government affairs touting improvement in consumer confidence in government regulations around biotechnology, crediting biotech's unblemished safety record; survey participants less confident about regulatory safety of pesticides

Commentary: Joan Conrow writes for Cornell Alliance for Science, notes Mark Lynas during Wisconsin Public Radio interview dispels GMO myths, discusses his new book, and gives peace plan for resolving GMO conflicts by focusing on shared goals of reducing pesticide use, increasing yields

Commentary: Townhall columnist notes organics have shorter shelf-life, higher risk of bacterial contamination, higher price than GMOs while more than 100 Nobel laureates confirm GMO safety, are better for the environment, and can be more nutritious

News: Florida Keys news site reports on GeneWatch UK claims that Oxitec overstated success of Cayman Islands GM mosquitoes field trial, notes scientists say emails were taken out of context

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: News24 reports on Nampo Harvest Day panel discussion, quotes Grains SA chairperson on the

country's need for agricultural technologies, including biotechnology, to improve smallholder farming

News: Ghanaian news site reports hospital researcher claims his research shows 70 percent of female and 50 percent of male premature deaths due to GMO consumption, which he says causes cancer and other diseases, claims autopsy report shows man in Spain died after eating GMOs

News: Burkina Faso news site reports Citizen Collective for Agroecology hosts demonstration march June 2 to oppose GMOs and GM mosquitoes; group says they believe GM mosquitoes are threat to environment, human health and are "outraged" over Bt cowpea proposal after GM cotton failure

News: Xinhua reports African Agricultural Technology Foundation will use \$27 million grant from Gates Foundation in effort to commercialize climate-smart maize to help farmers battle drought and pests

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: Writing in Bangladeshi news source, former scientific advisor to Int'l Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology argues Bangladesh should capitalize on local expertise to become internationally competitive in biotech field, use technology to reach national priorities

News: Indo-Asian News Service reports rising demand for eco-friendly fabrics encourages many farmers to switch to organic practices in cotton production, notes use of GM seeds, pesticides often produces bigger yields but decreased input costs for organic farming leads to profitable production

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Event: Testbiotech notes several attempts to release GMOs carrying gene drives into environment targeting mosquitoes, flies, rats that could reach "gene tipping point." promotes June 19-20 conference on gene drives partly organized by Testbiotech, questions to include regulating the processes according to precautionary principle

News: Germany's Frankfurter Allgemeine analyzes how genetic engineering, CRISPR may help feed world's growing population, notes importance of ruling by European Court of Justice on NBTs, whether food grown with CRISPR will have mandatory GM labeling

News: Horticulture Week reports British researchers group developed policy proposal to improve British agriculture following Brexit, includes GM crop commercialization, gene editing, sustainability, plant protection products, and allowances for innovation

News: The Telegraph reports British environment secretary's proposals for post-Brexit agriculture focuses on environment, use of innovative data, biotechnology, and breeding techniques; notes consumers becoming more open to biotech use

Commentary: Risk-Monger David Zaruk posts base text of his presentation at British Association of Feed Supplement and Additive Manufacturers (BAFSAM) general assembly on May 17, he speaks out against an overly precautionary approach to agriculture

News: Belgian life sciences news source interviews heads of biotech research institute, Dutch company about trends in agri-biotech; one says it seems introduction of GMOs in Europe now lost fight, but holds out hope genome-edited plants could be exempted from GM regulations

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Biology professor writes for Brazilian news site that whenever we eat GM food, we also eat insecticide - either sprayed on or Bt toxin in the plant; points out that current law requires GMOs to

be labeled in Brazil

News: Bolivian news site reports farmer says GM corn is cultivated in Yacuiba area and transported to Santa Cruz and sold to national companies; Institute of Agricultural and Forestry Innovation directors says there is no authorization for GM corn in Bolivia; Food Production Support Company notes they support conventional corn planting, but if farmer plants GM corn next to it, they will cross-breed

News: Argentina's Ecoportal reports on Bolivia's GMO labeling law, Sparkies chewy candies and Chips Ahoy cookies will be the first products labeled, highlights concerns that GMOs may be linked to celiac disease

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

There were no noteworthy biotechnology developments in Oceania during today's monitoring. Click the link below for the latest items.

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Today's global biotechnology developments included ongoing controversy over a Brazilian proposal to remove front-of-package transgenic labels on foods. In Europe, Dutch trade group Plantum filed a petition calling for the country to reduce restrictive policies on plant research.

- Brazilian news outlets reported that civil society groups met with legislators to protest a proposed law that would remove the "T" label on foods with GMO ingredients. In a news release, Senate Vice President Cássio Cunha Lima quoted a Greenpeace campaigner who urged the Senate to protect consumer rights. Celebrity chef Paola Carosella also spoke in favor of maintaining the "T" label. [See more](#)
- Celebrating International "Fascination of Plants" Day, members of the Netherlands-based trade group Plantum delivered a petition to the House of Representatives agricultural committee urging that restrictive policies on plant potential be removed. Specifically, the group called for "workable" regulations on new plant breeding techniques, as well as support for intellectual property rights and basic research funding. [See more](#)

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North America

News: Grain news site reports USDA awarded \$2 million for stakeholder, public engagement research on new breeding techniques for ag production; one defines consumer preferences for gene editing regulation and consumption

Commentary: Physician and public health expert says scientist developing plant that could halt climate change using unnecessarily slow conventional breeding method rather than CRISPR due to public suspicion of gene editing

News: Arthritis Foundation reports National Academy of Sciences study concluded GMOs safe for health but GMOs being labeled because critics say long-term effects are uncertain and say consumers have right to know

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science notes Peel Back the Label teams with Funny or Die on video that lampoons GMO-free labels designed to confuse consumers, actor points out in video that GMOs are safe

Commentary: Mother Nature Network contributor criticizes USDA's used of "bioengineered" term and label, says consumers are familiar with "GMO" term and label looks sunny, green, and natural; points out labels are not finalized and public has chance to comment

Study: University of Toronto hospital's Research Institute finds development of GE salmon will be beneficial for aquaculture

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: African Press Agency reports on Citizen Collective for Agroecology press conference announcing June 2 march to protest Target Malaria's proposed use of GM mosquitoes; group also criticized GM cowpea, cotton

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Announcement: Japanese consumer agency questions soy sauce providers regarding proposed GM labeling requirements, would change requirement from 5 percent threshold to 0 percent threshold for GMO labeling; companies say they oppose the measure, note how it will change their labels

News: Indo-Asian News Service reports growing demand for eco-friendly fabric prompts about 1,000 Indian farmers to switch to cultivating organic cotton due to increased price for the supply

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News release: Dutch association for plant reproduction Plantum presents petition asking politicians in the Netherlands to work together to establish workable regulations for plant breeding techniques such as CRISPR; Plantum director notes policy often hinders full potential of technology and plants

Announcement: EU Parliament posts agenda for committees' hearing on use of new breeding techniques

Commentary: Friends of the Earth food campaigner writes op-ed on Euractiv, says that following European Court of Justice opinion, EU Commission must act quickly and decisively to ensure gene-edited products won't be cultivated in EU and sold unlabeled

Commentary: GM Watch responds to Bayer editorial calling for end to animal feeding trials in Europe's GM crop approval process, group claims such trials have shown unexpected toxicity and allergenic effects

News release: Germany's Federation of the Organic Food Industry promotes appointment of its chief ag officer to IFOAM EU president, includes debate on novel GE techniques a top priority for the organization

News release: French NGO association Citizen Platform for an Agricultural and Food Transition, wants EU legislators to provide better labeling noting use of GM feed, ban glyphosate within 3 years, wants decline in emissions from ag sector

News: Feed Navigator editor questions why non-GMO soy doesn't have more demand, notes consumers unaware of "hidden commodity;" reports Avril Group taking multi-faceted approach to stimulating demand for "responsibly produced" soy by cultivating non-GMO soy in France

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Brazilian news site reports Brazilian celebrity cooks and Greenpeace officials meet with Parliament members to criticize bill that modifies GM labeling law, say right to know about GM products is critical

News release: Brazilian Senate announces Senate VP critical of bill that eliminates use of transgenic symbol, says proposal is dangerous because it would remove consumers' right to know

News: Brazilian news site reports councilman's motion criticizes law that restricts GM labeling in Brazil, says it harms consumers' right to choose and that GM products are not safe

News: Mexican news site reports that presidential candidate ALMO's proposed SAGARPA secretary says they will use biotechnology in agricultural but will not cultivate GM maize because Mexico has other options to increase maize yields

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

There were no noteworthy biotechnology developments in Oceania during today's monitoring. Click the link below for the latest items.

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A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included continued stakeholder response to a U.S. Department of Agriculture proposal on labeling GMOs. The European Parliament's agriculture and environment committees previewed a public hearing on new plant breeding techniques. Brazil's agricultural agency requested permission to offer testimony in a lawsuit opposing the country's use of GM crops.

- *Food Navigator* summarized early comments on the USDA proposal on GMO labeling, quoting several responses from consumers who called the rules "useless" or "misleading." The National Sustainable Agricultural Coalition analyzed the proposal, adding that the group was finalizing its response to the guidelines. Center for Food Safety, in an email to supporters, urged consumers to comment on the need for "clear" GMO labeling rules. **See more**
- The European Parliament's Agriculture and Rural Development Committee, in partnership with the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, previewed a public hearing on new plant breeding techniques (NBTs). The brief report noted that French researcher and biotechnology skeptic Yves Bartheau was among the planned speakers. In a separate report, Corporate Europe Observatory summarized efforts to liberalize regulations on NBTs, calling the effort a global biotech and seed industry lobbying campaign. **See more**
- Brazil's Confederação da Agricultura e Pecuária do Brasil filed to help defend the government against a lawsuit brought by the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office, which claims that the government's approval of glyphosate-resistant GM crops ignored potential health implications. **See more**
- News outlets in Ireland reported that a blight-resistant GM potato field trial had resulted in significant environmental benefits over conventional potato production. Researchers found that fungicide applications, in particular, were reduced by 80 to 90 percent in the blight-resistant fields. **See more**

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North America

News: Food Navigator reports on first wave of comments on USDA's proposed GMO labeling rules, includes samples of comments from a wide range of stakeholders, quotes plant researcher Kevin Folta on rules' exemptions

Commentary: National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition examines USDA's proposed GMO disclosure rules, summarizing which products are covered and exempt, and what labels might look like, NSAC will issue further comments as it continues its analysis

Commentary: Cornucopia Institute amplifies MIT Technology Review on proposed new GMO labels, claims labels look more like biotech propaganda than a consumer awareness label

Commentary: IATP policy analyst speculates terms of GE agriculture in NAFTA 2.0, suggests U.S.'s voluntary approach to regulation likely to be included; warns Trump administration's "war on science," U.S.'s lack of mandatory risk assessment may backfire, result in market rejection

Commentary: Beyond Pesticides highlights Center for Biological Diversity No Refuge report claiming national wildlife refuges contaminated with toxic pesticides, notes neonic links to pollinator declines, efforts against GE crops and pesticide use on refuges

More North America items

Africa

News: Nigerian news source reports OFAB Nigeria coordinator says Bt cowpea would generate N48billion a year in Nigeria, calls for adequate funding of biosafety agency to provide regulatory framework for biotechnology

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science piece by Nigerian journalist compares opposition to adoption of GMOs to history of electronic communications, noting resistance is more emotional than factual; argues Nigeria needs to focus less on concerns raised by "technophobes" and more on biotech resources

News: African Arguments highlights New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition initiative, clashes between pastoralists and farmers over land; farmers raise concerns about lack of land and water, say they feel abandoned by their govt

Campaign: World Bank funded agroecology scholarships announced for Uganda; program documents specifically stipulate "no GMO will be introduced" (anti-GMO organic lobbying groups PELUM, NOGAMU and EOAI also participating in program)

More Africa items

Asia

News: Times of India reports India Supreme Court decision rejecting seed patent rights prompts seed maker to refuse to pay bag trait fee to Monsanto; national seed association to petition to deposit trait fees to court at May 28 hearing

News: New Indian Express reports India's GEAC halts GM food import applications until food safety agency frames guidelines

News: The Hindu reports that food safety regulators are reviewing international food labeling schemes, including GMO ingredient disclosure, to help finalize India's guidelines; final rules expected in two to three months

News: Press Trust of India reports Food Safety and Standards Authority of India to finalize packaged food labelling standards in next 2-3 months; products with 5 percent or more GM ingredients to be labeled

News: The Hindu reports Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee calls for more field tests for GM mustard, activists say regulators have not addressed point that GM mustard has not been tested as a herbicide tolerant crop, or for impacts

News: IANS reports Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee allows field trials of GM mustard, chairperson says trials do not mean an approval for commercial release; notes opposition by Coalition for a GM-Free India

More Asia items

Europe

Event: European Parliament Agriculture and Rural Development committee previews May 17 public hearing on new plant breeding techniques (NBTs); speakers include INRA researcher Yves Bertheau, who claims gene edited crop effects "unknown"

Report: Corporate Europe Observatory investigation identifies seed lobby groups PR campaign strategy

advocating for NBT exception from EU GMO regulation, concludes discussion of food production control must be transparent, open to citizen dialogue to combat industry PR

News: Irish Independent reports on Teagasc field trial demonstrating environmental benefits of a blight-resistant GM potato, says three-year investigation showed 80 to 90 percent reduction in fungicide application

News: Irish agricultural news outlets report on Teagasc field trial of GM blight-resistant potato, AgriLand notes cisgenic approach is more acceptable to consumers and farmers than traditional GMOs

Commentary: Julian Little of Bayer CropScience writes for Europe's The Parliament Magazine, calls for end to mandatory GMO feeding studies, argues such animal testing is unnecessary, highlights examples where GMOs have improved food safety

News: Italy's Messaggero Veneto reports on Giorgio Fidenato's long legal battle to plant GM corn, Fidenato notes that in planting GM seeds this season, he is violating Italian law, criticizes Italy for failing to put European treaties into practice

News: France's 20 Minutes reports that GMOs are not responsible for deaths of 21 million kangaroos in Australia, contrary to information being circulated by dubious sources online, finds that reports cite fabricated agencies and documents

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News release: Confederation of Agriculture and Livestock of Brazil (CNA) issues request to assist the Union in lawsuit brought by Federal Public Ministry (MPF), seeking to prohibit use of GM herbicide-tolerant seeds, CNA points to many benefits of GM seeds

News: Ecuadorian news source reports country's constitutional court hears anti-GMO coalition arguments against Ecuador adoption, acceptance of transgenic seeds

News release: Observatorio Del Cambio Rural promotes Ecuador Free of Transgenics coalition's testimony and rally at constitutional court hearing on GMOs in Ecuador calling for seed sovereignty, support of Ecuodorian vs corporate interests

News: Cayman News Service amplifies GeneWatch UK report claiming West Bay field trial of GM mosquito did not reduce overall mosquito populations; notes health ministry promised an announcement and details addressing the claims

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

There were no noteworthy biotechnology developments in Oceania during today's monitoring. Click the link below for the latest items.

[More Oceania items](#)

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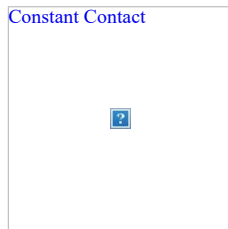
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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Diane Wray-Cohen@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - May 14, 2018
 Date: Monday, May 14, 2018 9:03:46 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Today's global biotechnology developments included news that a review board in India had delayed commercialization of GM mustard.

- India's Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) rejected an application for the commercialization of GM mustard, calling for additional field trials. The decision was criticized by the Alliance for Sustainable & Holistic Agriculture and the Coalition for a GM-Free India, which claimed that the committee was ignoring the implications of the crop's herbicide-tolerance trait on honeybees and other insects. [See more](#)

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North America

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project's Andrew Porterfield examines SynBioWatch's efforts to derail gene drive technology and its use to fight crop pests, debunks claims that U.S. gov't and scientists are engaging in a hostile corporate takeover of farming

Commentary: Lindsay Burgess of Brit and Co explains to readers why there is no need to fear GMOs, highlights long history of safe use, points to nutritional and environmental benefits, notes much GMO opposition comes from spread of fake news

Campaign: GMO Free U.S.A. urges supporters to send EPA comments in opposition to experimental release of GE mosquitoes in Harris County, Texas, and Monroe County, Florida, urges them to sign a petition and spread the word on social media

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Xinhua reports Tanzanian MPs urge government to set up special budget for fighting destructive armyworms

News: Ugandan news site reports civil rights NGO coalition urging finance ministry to release emergency funds to help battle pest, disease outbreaks including fall army worm infestation

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: India's The Tribune reports activist group raise concern of GEAC GM mustard review, write letter asking ministry for more thorough review addressing herbicide-tolerant concerns, among other issues

News: The New Indian Express reports on Environment Ministry's decision against commercial release

of GM mustard, stating that more field trials are necessary to determine impact on honeybees, soil microbial diversity and honey

Campaign: Coalition for a GM-Free India letter accuses GEAC of inadequate reevaluation of GM mustard, misguided decision to execute field trials; calls on agency to execute transparent, serious review of crop

News: Press Trust of India reports Coalition for a GM-Free India letters calls on GEAC to exercise "utmost seriousness" in reexamination of GM mustard, criticizes agency field trial plan

Commentary: T.V. Padma of India's The Wire analyzes ongoing legal dispute over Monsanto's Bt cotton patents, notes if Bt cotton were registered under Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights (PPVFR) Act, farmers would be able to use it for breeding

Commentary: Managing partner at Corporate Law Group, Krishna Sarma, writes for The Hindu, points out errors in Delhi High court ruling to invalidate Monsanto's Bt cotton patents, highlights importance of adding scientific and technical expertise to the judicial process

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News release: GeneWatch UK briefing offers evidence Mosquito Control and Research Unit scientists in Cayman Islands believe no reduction to Aedes aegypti in response to Oxitec GM mosquito

Campaign: France Nature Environnement asks supporters to call on MPs to introduce clear labeling under Food Law in advance of policy discussion May 22-25; includes labels on use of pesticides, GMOs among demands

Commentary: Beyond GM co-founder Lawrence Woodward writes for Hospitality and Catering News, argues plant-based meat alternatives are not necessarily sustainable, as they are frequently derived from GM crops, claims Impossible Burger hasn't proven safety

Report: Article in EMBO Reports identifies five areas in which gene drive organisms and existing GMOs differ, authors argue gene drives require adapted risk assessments, highlighting potential environmental risks

News: EurActiv reports on European Seeds Association's opposition to labeling requirements for products of new breeding techniques, ESA Secretary-General Garlich von Essen noted such labeling wouldn't provide consumers with any new information

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Bolivia's La Razon reports country's consumer defense deputy minister announces chewy candies, Chips Ahoy cookies are first products with GM labeling to hit market, noting labeling policy to take effect in June

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Australia's Farm Weekly reports on farming groups' testimony against proposed GM compensation fund for non-GM growers, CropLife Australia's Matthew Cossey described the plan as a "solution looking for a problem that just simply doesn't exist"

[More Oceania items](#)

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Diane.Wray-Cohen@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - May 14, 2018
 Date: Monday, May 14, 2018 4 57:36 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

As the International Agency for Research on Cancer is reportedly narrowing down its list of candidates to be its next president, this week's Favorable Outcomes highlights a pair of articles that explore IARC - one that revisits its controversial ruling that glyphosate could cause cancer and another suggesting that the agency can move back toward good science with a new leader in place.

We also shine a spotlight on items dealing with misleading food labels, European policy on endocrine-disrupting chemicals and a potential biotechnology solution to cassava virus in Uganda.

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In This Issue

[Stakeholder Spotlight](#)

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[What's Trending?](#)

[Calendar highlights](#)

Stakeholder Spotlight: Rainforest Alliance



The Rainforest Alliance promotes an agroecology-based certification service - similar to fair trade and other eco-friendly third-party programs - that prohibits the use of many pesticides (e.g., atrazine, paraquat, triazines) and all GMOs.

It promotes itself as going

Stories Worth Sharing

[Andre Heitz: Inside the IARC conspiracy to misrepresent health risks from glyphosate](#)

[Ellen Dhain: European draft guidance wrongly assumes chemicals have endocrine-disrupting properties](#)

[Lominda Afedrararu: Ugandan farmers eagerly await GMO solution to cassava virus](#)

[Amanda Zaluckyj: Europeans' embrace of organic, rejection of GMOs goes against environmental stewardship](#)

[Michelle Miller: Debunking latest claims that glyphosate is in your food](#)

[Ludger Wess: European organic industry getting in the way of CRISPR innovations, harming the environment](#)

[Joe McCarthy: Mike Adams creates alternate reality with Natural News "misinformation empire"](#)

[Consumer & Society: Change in leadership offers IARC chance to return to science instead of scaremongering](#)

[Alliance for Food and Farming: Media coverage becoming more critical of Environmental Working Group "Dirty Dozen" pesticide claims](#)

[AGDAILY: "Funny or Die" explores absurdity of food labeling](#)

"beyond organic" as relates to conservation and worker welfare. In 1998, it launched the Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN), which follows RA certification requirements restricting use of pesticides and prohibiting use of GMOs, while extending the NGO's work in Africa and other regions.

It includes a focus on sustainable coffee, bananas, tea and other products that are marketed with its seal by major food retailers such as McDonald's, Unilever, American Airlines and Whole Foods Market. This week, SAN published a report claiming "sustainable" certification schemes for poor farmers in developing markets are the best pathway to sustainable agriculture for both farmer economics and the environment.

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about Rainforest Alliance.

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What's Trending?

Activists claim U.S. farm bill up for consideration this week would ease pesticide regulations and harm farmworkers, pollinators

Anti-GMO groups unhappy with U.S. proposal to use "bioengineered" term on labels

Italian study warns of 259 pesticides in surface water

Sugar industry predicts significant losses from European neonic ban

Calendar highlights

May 14-15	May 15	May 15-18
Plant Genomics & Gene Editing Congress: Europe	European Parliament committee on EU authorization procedure for pesticides	International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements EU general assembly
May 15	May 16-17	May 16-18
"Whitewash" presentation at Houston Museum of Fine Arts by U.S. Right to Know activist Carey Gillam	Meeting of European Parliament Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	Conference on Governance of Emerging Technologies & Science: Law, Policy and Ethics
May 17	May 17	May 19
European Court of Justice releases judgments on challenges to 2013 restrictions on neonics and fipronil	Center for Environmental Health "Evening of Audacious Action"	March Against Monsanto - some events also target Syngenta, Dow, BASF

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Caitrin.Martin@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - May 14, 2018
 Date: Monday, May 14, 2018 4:57:25 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Caitrin,

As the International Agency for Research on Cancer is reportedly narrowing down its list of candidates to be its next president, this week's Favorable Outcomes highlights a pair of articles that explore IARC - one that revisits its controversial ruling that glyphosate could cause cancer and another suggesting that the agency can move back toward good science with a new leader in place.

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Diane Wray-Cohen@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - May 11-13, 2018
 Date: Sunday, May 13, 2018 10:06 09 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Global biotechnology developments this weekend included a provision in the U.S. House appropriations bill that would direct the USDA to regulate lab-grown meat. Two series of articles focused on regulating gene editing in the European Union and on how large agribusinesses view their part in the GMO discussion. Reporting and commentary continued on the USDA's proposed federal GMO labeling rule.

- reported an agricultural appropriations bill contains a provision directing the U.S. Department of Agriculture to regulate products made from livestock cells if it is intended for human consumption. Jessica Almy of the Good Food Institute, which represents plant-based and lab-grown meat companies, said American clean meat companies were not consulted and believe congressional action is not needed. In an editorial response to a U.S. Cattlemen's Association petition, *The Verge* science reporter Angela Chen said lab-grown meat should be called "meat." [See more](#)
- Two article series focused on agricultural biotech. A *Euractiv* series included an interview with Italian MEP Paolo De Castro, who said new gene-editing techniques are crucial to provide global food security and should not be regulated as GMOs. [See more](#) The last of a five-part series on GMOs by *Devex* examined how large biotech corporations perceive their roles in the biotech debate. [See more](#)
- *The New York Times* reported GMOs will be labeled because the technology remains a "source of anxiety" for Americans "despite scientific studies that say they pose no health threat." NGOs Beyond Pesticides and the Organic Consumers Association criticized the proposal's use of the "bioengineered" term and use of the QR codes, saying the rule is intended to keep consumers in the dark regarding GMOs. A Missouri law firm's blog asserted that the rule fails to address issues adequately, noting the "bioengineering" definition ignores other technologies. [See more](#)

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For a more extensive compilation of recent biotech items, [click here](#).

North America

Commentary: We Love GMOs blogger Stephan Neidenbach says pesticide producers fund anti-GMO groups as Bt brinjal, other crops reduce pesticide use; notes DuPont was caught funding anti-GMO group as Monsanto GMOs hurt sales; notes GM mosquitoes also make pesticide producers nervous

Commentary: Agroecology journal published Berkeley professor review of Carey Gillam's Whitewash: claims book shows need for increased regulatory oversight of agrochemical companies, pesticides and GMOs

Letter to the editor: David Schubert of The Salk Institute for Biological Studies responds to Michael Gerson commentary, says he is making a mistake believing GMOs are not health hazards, says Gerson's statements are false because there are no GMO studies on human safety, but there is evidence of toxicity of GMOs and chemicals they require

Commentary: Farmer's Daughter USA Amanda Zaluckyj on returning from U.K. tour says Europeans believe they make environmentally friendly choices, but embrace organics and reject GMOs, which is

counterproductive to reducing environmental footprint

News release: USDA's National Institute for Food and Agriculture announces awarding of research grants to identify consumer attitudes toward GM food, determine ways to gain public acceptance

News release: Organic Trade Association releases statement on USDA termination of Organic Check-off, suggests USDA is holding back progress for organics, says it's unfathomable organic stakeholders won't be given chance to vote on the issue

More North America items

Africa

Video: Cornell Alliance for Science video describes how GM potato variety immune to potato blight will enable small farmers to save cost of expensive fungicides, increase yields; notes variety could be released in 2020 if legislators approve biosafety bill

News: Ugandan newspaper reports National Agricultural Research Organisation official believes biotechnology only solution to widespread agricultural problems that are destroying major food, cash crops such as banana, sweet potato, cassava

News: Xinhua reports EU will begin subjecting Ugandan ag products to rigorous checks for fall armyworm in June, National Crops Resources Research Institute Director Godfrey Asea noted gov't is confident in field trials of GM drought-tolerant and insect-resistant crops

News: Xinhua reports African Union Commission tell scientists to incorporate traditional knowledge into biotech research to leverage continent's genetic resources for competitive, economic growth

More Africa items

Asia

News: The Bangladesh Post reports country is self-sufficient in food, Bangladesh Rice Research Institute officials credit hybrid and GM crop use; now country can export rice

News: India's Business Standard reports farmers income panel acknowledges GM is a powerful tool to improve farming, but research should be done more transparently and in socially inclusive manner to gain wider public acceptance, address opponents' concerns; points out GM cotton use in India provided pro and con lessons on GMO use

Commentary: Philippine newspaper staff writer explains GMO foods unlikely to threaten human health, no adverse effects reported after consumption

Commentary: Reader of Indian newspaper warns of growing food insecurity through growing population, misuse of pesticides, creeping urbanization; notes GM food might offer solution except for many ethical, moral, religious issues

News: Chinese news site reports on "Food Evolution" documentary screening in China, says film does not take sides but gives time for pro- and anti-GMO sides to speak, points out how people have changed food through agriculture for many years

More Asia items

Europe

News: The Daily Mail reports Penn State scientists using CRISPR to make cacao trees disease-resistant; notes disease destroys 20 to 30 percent of cocoa pods each year

News: Euractiv reports in a Corteva-sponsored series on new breeding techniques that Italian MEP Paolo De Castro says the NBTs hold great promise in producing disease-, drought-resistant crops,

providing food security; says they replicate natural breeding and cannot be regulated as GMOs

News: New Food magazine reports U.K.'s Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs received more than 44,000 comments on future farming proposals during agency's farming consultation; topics included biodiversity, soil health, animal welfare

Commentary: French anti-GM NGO Inf'OGM notes Codex meeting shows tension between GMO supporters and opponents in meeting on defining biofortification, as biotech opponents fear the term being used as Trojan horse for GMOs, notes they do not want individual countries to decide because pro-GMO countries would

News: Belarussian news agency reports GMO labels to become mandatory in the Eurasian Economic Union in 18 months

More Europe items

Latin America

News release: Greenpeace notes Mexican agency trying to eliminate non-GMO mention on organic labeling as Pena Nieto's presidency comes to close, says it's confusing and contrary to public desire to know GMO content in food

News: Brazilian science and culture news site reports labeling bill would reduce number of GMO products required to be labeled, would eliminate transgenic symbol requirement

More Latin America items

Oceania

Commentary: AgScience blogger notes New Zealand's Environmental Protection Authority director says New Zealand is more likely to consider using genetic modification for pest eradication than for crops

News: Australian Broadcasting Corp. reports southern Australia farmers coping with dry spell with rainfall 63 percent below normal; farmers who plant GM canola and GM barley said it's why they farm the way they do

News: Australian news site reports in last of 5-part series on GMOs, as biotech corporations tell how they fit into GMO debate; acknowledging profit is necessary part of their business, their goal is to help farmers, including smallholders; Bayer spokesman notes area with most potential for growth are those with lowest production, such as Africa, Asia, Latin America

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Today's global biotechnology developments included a news conference by a Burkina Faso-based NGO opposing the release of GM mosquitoes to battle malaria. The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced it would prepare an environmental impact statement on the potential permit approval for a genetically engineered virus to fight citrus greening. Nigeria's National Biosafety Development Agency Director Rufus Ebegeba continued a campaign against anti-GMO activists.

- A Burkina Faso activist group, Collectif Citoyen pour l'Agroecologie, hosted a news conference to announce its opposition to a planned GM mosquito release to help battle malaria. The groups listed reasons for opposing the project, including that similar efforts by Oxitec had unconvincing results, and the cost of 37 million CFA francs would be better spent in efforts to reduce the mosquito population. French journalist Catherine Morand also questioned whether Burkina Faso was being used as an experimental guinea pig in the name of eradicating malaria. An activist group announced a June 2 march in Ouagadougou to oppose the project. [See more](#)
- The USDA will prepare an EIS for a possible permit approval for Southern Gardens Citrus Nursery to release a genetically engineered citrus tristeza virus that would help against citrus greening. The agency has announced a public comment period will run through June 25. [See more](#)
- NBMA Director Rufus Ebegeba told a Nigerian journalist writing for the Cornell Alliance for Science that his agency would not be bullied or blackmailed by unscientific comments from activist groups. Ebegeba addressed a recent article in Nigeria's Leadership newspaper that he said was "riddled with outrageous errors" about GMOs. Other biotech supporters in the article said Nigerian farmers are eagerly awaiting approval of Bt cowpea that would save them money by requiring three to four fewer pesticide applications. [See more](#)

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North America

Commentary: Non-GMO Project marketing coordinator says GMOs too new to develop scientific consensus, have not been sufficiently studied, and we might never reach consensus, so the project advises using the precautionary principle

Commentary: Conventional and organic farmer Jeremy Brown writes opinion piece for Food Navigator, urges readers not to be frightened by Environmental Working Group's Dirty Dozen list, notes all produce in the U.S. is safe, and that organic also uses pesticides

Interview: Food Tank talks to Kate Mendenhall, director of Organic Farmers Association, who says organic farmers face issues with contamination from pesticide drift and GE pollen drift, claims organic fastest-growing agricultural sector, calls on Congress to increase support for organic farming in next Farm Bill

News release: University of Illinois announces researchers find cassava breeding - designed to resist disease and pests - doesn't increase yields or improve photosynthesis, sets goal to do both in program financed by Gates Foundation

Commentary: Biotechnology Innovation Organization says USDA considering using SmartLabels as part of federal GM labeling requirement, says the QR codes offer more information than could ever fit on a label

Commentary: Modern Farmer's Dan Nosowitz calls USDA's GM labeling rule "weird," notes it substitutes "bioengineered" for "genetically modified," has smiley-faced sun logo; Environmental Working Group's Scott Faber says it sows confusion, Sierra Club calls it "Orwellian"

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Nigerian journalist writes for Cornell Alliance for Science, notes Nigeria's top GMO regulator says anti-GMO activists won't stop GM crops because their sentiments are not backed up by facts; official says Bt cowpea will save farmers money by reducing pesticide spraying

News: Nigeria-based environmental news site reports a Burkina Faso NGO urges opposition to releasing GM mosquitoes to battle malaria, says cost is too great for uncertain results, drop in mosquito population could bring other species to forefront that could spread disease, and good public health policy would be more effective

Commentary: Nigeria's National Biotechnology Development Agency Assistant Director Rose Gidado says biotech crops aid farmers, increase food security, reduce amount of land needed for farming, and mitigate climate change effects

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: India's Economic Times reports government opts not to change cotton seed price as it awaits Supreme Court decision on Monsanto's appeal of a court ruling that it cannot patent its Bollgard II cotton seed

News: Indian news site reports Indian Supreme Court declines to put hold on Delhi High Court order on Monsanto's Bt cotton patent, sets hearing for July 18

Event: Navdanya announces public conference in Italy to promote Manifest on Food and Health, which promotes agroecology, prepared by activists such as Vandana Shiva, Richard Falk

News: Pakistan's Daily Times reports Cornell University professor of food process engineering gives keynote address at third international conference on biosciences, focusing on latest scientific developments in plant sciences, microbiology, biotechnology, highlighting challenges to world's food security and sustainability

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: German molecular biologist, author says EU organic industry's obsession with what is "natural" jeopardizes organic crops, harms the environment, threatens innovative uses such as CRISPR, and stymies African nations via trade barriers

News: U.K's Fruitnet amplifies results of survey conducted on behalf of Agricultural Biotechnology Council that showed only 22 percent of respondents aged 18 to 24 objected to use of gene editing, GM cropping, found "Generation Z" age group most in favor of modern farming techniques

Commentary: GMWatch notes USC communications professor claims UK survey that says Millennials "have no qualms about GM crops" was biased and leading

Commentary: Netherlands news site editorial points out debate often focuses on safety of innovation,

but acceptance is based on its application so more focus should go on the solutions provided by technologies such as gene editing

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Brazilian news site reporter notes justification for removing the "T" symbol from transgenic products includes position that it leads people to incorrect assumption the product is unhealthy and is unprecedented in alerting people to a safe product, but says it is impossible to say products are 100 percent healthy, notes Saudi Arabia also has warning label for GMOs

Commentary: Mexico's Union of Scientists Committed to Society reviews Steven Druker's book in which he claims FDA violated food safety laws to prevent GM food from going through long, vigorous trials and helped build myths about GMO safety

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Australian farming news outlet reports on CSIRO's research in genetics to help address problem of herbicide-resistant ryegrass, CSIRO research geneticist Greg Rebetzke noted wheat is particularly vulnerable due to commonplace use of glyphosate

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Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology developments included ongoing U.S. response to a proposed GMO labeling standard. In Mexico, proposed changes to organic labeling prompted activist criticism.

- U.S. media outlets, activists and researchers continued to weigh in on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's proposed GMO labeling guidance. Just Label It! criticized the proposal and urged supporters to comment on the need for a "clear" disclosure standard. Food policy researcher Marion Nestle mocked the proposed USDA graphics, while agriculture economist Jayson Lusk highlighted outstanding questions about what ingredients and concentrations trigger the label. An editorial in *National Fisherman* said the proposal ignores salmon producers' concerns that GE salmon could drive consumers away from all salmon consumption. [See more](#)
- Greenpeace Mexico, MA OGM Colectivo sin Transgénicos and several other environmental groups issued a statement criticizing Mexico's proposal to remove language about GMOs from its organic labeling scheme. Current organic labels specifically note that foods were produced without genetic engineering, but a proposed change would more broadly state that foods were produced according to the country's organic standards. The groups said the change would undermine consumer choice. [See more](#)
- *Euractiv* launched a special report on the future of new plant breeding techniques (NBTs) in Europe. In the first article of the series, reporter Sarantis Michalopoulos quoted Health Commissioner Vytenis Andriukaitis on the expectations around a pending EU Court of Justice ruling on the technology. The article noted that farmer group Copa-Cogeca has come out strongly in favor of NBTs, noting the potential for climate-adaptive agriculture, while Greenpeace EU warned that the decision would not address all aspects of the technology. [See more](#)

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North America

[Commentary: Joan Conrow writes for Cornell Alliance for Science, says USDA's proposed labeling rule softens "GMO stigma," says rule angers activists who spent years demonizing the term](#)

[Commentary: Purdue University's Jayson Lusk, professor of agricultural economics, notes USDA's proposed GM labeling rule causing controversy due to QR code inclusion, possible exemptions for highly-processed ingredients, and for setting threshold for what is considered GM food](#)

[Commentary: Technology news site writer notes USDA asks for public input on GMO labeling plan, notes GM food must be labeled despite the food being consumed for decades with no safety issues and says effort is "much ado about nothing"](#)

[Commentary: In email, Just Label It founder Gary Hirshberg criticizes USDA's proposed GM labeling rule, claims it will omit 70 percent of all GM products; urges readers to submit comments urging the agency to make big changes](#)

[Commentary: Nutritionist Marion Nestle sarcastic over USDA's proposals for GMO food labels that includes a smiling sun logo, urges readers to comment on the rule and logo](#)

Commenatary: National Fisherman editor says GE salmon will be labeled as "bioengineered," says GMO labeling rule panders to producers, says it's further proof the government does not work for the public, but for corporations; notes salmon producers pushed for GMO label to avoid consumer confusion

Commentary: Kyle Diamantas of law firm Baker Donelson analyzes USDA's proposed GMO disclosure rule, notes it will impact nearly all food products sold in the U.S. if finalized, rules for products containing only trace amounts have not been determined

News: South Florida public radio and TV news site reports public has 30 additional days to submit comment on Florida Keys GM mosquito trial

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Ugandan journalist Lominda Afedraru writes for Genetic Literacy Project, examines farmers' struggles to combat cassava viruses, and their hopes that GM varieties will become accessible

Commentary: Nigerian farmer, weekly columnist writing for local news site laments government deal to import U.S. food, suggests prevalence of GMOs, pesticides, antibiotics, hormones in U.S. industrial ag causing health issues, obesity, stresses need to eat local, organically-grown products

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Interview: AgriNews interviews International Soy Growers Alliance members Doug Winter, Monte Peterson and Jim Sutter on their recent visit to China, they note one of the biggest hurdles to Chinese biotech acceptance is lack of education on the subject

News: AgriNews reports on International Soy Growers Alliance members' recent visit to China to address biotech issues, Jim Sutter highlighted goal of sharing common interests among competitors, such as frustration about China's delayed biotech approvals

News: Xinhua reports on Iowa soybean farmers Martha and Rick Kimberly's role in accepting visitors from China's Guangdong Province, serving as ambassadors for modern farming methods, Rick Kimberly believes the U.S. and China will resolve trade tensions

Commentary: Vandana Shiva writes for Mathrubhumi, describes Supreme Court's refusal to stay lower court's ruling blocking Monsanto's patent on Bt cotton as a "major victory," claims Monsanto's arguments are scientifically invalid

Commentary: Indian intellectual property firm notes that in Monsanto IP case, Indian court found genes are not microorganisms, but did not state why it excluded Bt gene sequences from scope of patentability; says decision against Monsanto should be overruled by Supreme Court

News release: South Korean GMO labeling group criticizes South Korean president's reasons for not changing GMO labeling system, says it will not cause price increases as claimed because it is similar to ones used in Europe, Japan, Australia

News: Pakistani news site reports government plans to approve GM corn varieties without going through field trials in "clandestine move," seed association leaders criticize move jeopardizing food safety, say GM corn will cross-pollinate with other varieties and deprive the country of white corn

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: EurActiv reports on expected EU Court of Justice decision on future of new breeding techniques, highlights debate over whether or not they should be regulated as GMOs

News: EurActiv reports on EU Health Commissioner Vytenis Andriukaitis' assessment that regulation of products of new breeding techniques will depend on how EU Court of Justice interprets existing law, noting the Commission cannot interpret the law

Commentary: In a statement, University of Zurich researcher says EKAH statement on precaution did not include opposing viewpoints; says blocking new technology is also an ethical question given need for sustainable ag

News: The Week (U.K.) reports on risk that fall armyworm could travel from Africa to Britain, highlights challenges posed by chemical resistance, European farmers are more vulnerable due to widespread opposition to GM crops

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: La Jornada reports Mexican agency Senasica plans to eliminate wording on organic food labels that indicate the product is free from GMO; Mexican Center for Environmental Law says this will be confusing for customers

News: Mexican news site reports environmental groups denounce agency's attempt to eliminate from organic labels any mention that the product is free from GMOs

News: Argentine agricultural news site reports INTA introduces 3 new varieties of GM cotton that adapt to diverse conditions, resist disease, increase fiber length, resistance

News: Argentine news site reports on filmmaker Fernando Solanas' documentary on fumigated towns and his crusade to rid country of pesticides, other agrochemicals that he says "are polluting our lives" while they are prohibited in other countries; relates pesticide use to GM soybean cultivation

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News release: New Zealand's Environmental Protection Authority announces new gene editing technique does not create GMOs and is permitted activity; technique is under trial in lab, may improve disease resistance in plants, create less toxic pesticides

Commentary: New Zealand Institute of Agricultural and Horticultural Science blogger notes Australia's EPA rules RNA-based cell treatments do not produce GMOs, are permitted under Australian law

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology developments included significant local media coverage of India's proposed GMO labeling guidance. In Europe, a Swiss biotechnics group issued a report calling for "precautionary thinking" on new plant breeding techniques (NBTs).

- Indian news outlets reported on the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) draft guidance for labeling products made with genetically engineered ingredients. The rules would require a labeling on any food products in which more than 5 percent of the total ingredients come from genetically modified products. Despite previously calling for GMO labeling, the Coalition for a GM-Free India criticized the proposal, arguing that GMO imports are banned in the country and efforts should focus on enforcement of the moratorium. A final standard is expected by late July. **See more**
- The Swiss Eidgenössische Ethikkommission für die Biotechnologie im Ausserhumanbereich (EKAH), a federal ethics committee on biotechnology, issued a report today emphasizing the need for a "precautionary" approach to regulating new biotechnologies. The group argued that regulators are ethically obligated to reduce uncertainty and thus should apply traditional genetic engineering regulations to the new approaches. **See more**
- U.S. advocacy groups continued to respond to a USDA proposal on labeling products of genetic engineering. Separate statements by Moms Across America, Environmental Working Group and Sierra Club criticized the use of the term "bioengineered" and claimed that the proposed logos were too similar to organic labels. **See more**

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North America

Commentary: Nick Meyer of March Against Monsanto criticizes USDA's proposed GMO labels for leaving consumers in the dark, objects to use of the term "Bioengineered," amplifies Center for Food Safety's call on consumers to take action

Commentary: Sierra Club's Katie O'Reilly examines opposition to USDA's proposed GMO disclosure rules, notes most consumers are not familiar with the term "bioengineered," highlights criticism about the proposed symbols and lack of standardization

Commentary: Environmental Working Group's Scott Faber lists six ways in which USDA's proposed GMO disclosure rule leaves consumers in the dark, claims that three-quarters of products with GE ingredients would be excluded

Commentary: Zen Honeycutt of Moms Across America criticizes USDA's proposed GMO labeling symbols, highlights potential confusion surrounding the term "Bioengineered," notes "BIO" is used as the organic symbol in Europe

News: The Hagstrom Report amplifies Organic Trade Association email statement on USDA's GMO labeling guidance, says group is still reviewing but questions why agency didn't rule on highly-processed ingredients, animal products

Commentary: Devang Mehta of ETH Zurich writes for Massive Science, answers frequently asked questions about GMOs, explains why he is convinced about safety of GMOs currently on the market, highlights relative low toxicity of glyphosate

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Nigeria's Leadership reports on National Biosafety Development Agency (NBMA) director-general Rufus Ebegba's statement that anti-GMO sentiments will not stop biotech applications in the country, emphasized difference between hybrids and GMOs

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Press Trust of India reports on food regulator FSSAI's proposed GMO labeling requirement for all food products containing at least five percent GM ingredients, final regulation will likely be set within the next two months

News: India's Financial Express reports on Supreme Court's refusal to grant Monsanto's request for stay of court order blocking its Bt cotton patents, Monsanto argued its proprietary technology converted India into one of the largest cotton producers in the world

Commentary: Editorial for India's The Pioneer welcomes proposed GMO labeling rule, noting consumers should have an informed choice, claims GM foods have a long-term negative impact by increasing dependence on pesticides and harming human health

News: India's The Telegraph reports on Coalition for a GM-Free India's objections to Food Safety and Standards Authority of India's (FSSAI) proposed GMO labeling rules, arguing it is inconsistent with FSSAI's statement to Supreme Court that GM foods are not allowed

News: Times of India reports on proposed GMO labeling rules, Sridhar Radhakrishnan of Coalition for a GM-Free India argued the move will allow entry of GMOs, Chandra Bhushan of Centre for Science and Environment noted labs are needed to check GM content

Campaign: Sridhar Radhakrishnan of Coalition for a GM-Free India submits comments to Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), calls for deletion of proposed GMO labeling rule, argues it is inconsistent with FSSAI's statement that GM foods are not allowed in the country

News: India's Business Standard reports on Supreme Court's refusal to stay order blocking Monsanto's Bt cotton patents, it will hear the case on July 18, Monsanto argued its technology is registered in 25 countries, but the Bench noted that India is different

News release: Korea's Citizen's Coalition for Economic Justice announces it will hold a press conference on May 9 to denounce Cheong Wa Dae's response to citizen's petition on GMO labeling, and decision not to introduce a complete marking system

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News release: Swiss Federal Ethics Committee for Non-Human Biotechnology (EKAH) announces publication of report on ethical requirements for regulating new biotechnologies, finds that the precautionary principle is ethically justified

News: Swiss news outlet reports on Federal Ethics Committee for Non-Human Biotechnology's (EKAH) report which found that the ability to selectively intervene in the genome provides ethical justification for implementation and strengthening of the precautionary principle

News: Italy's Parma Quotidiano reports on 19th edition of Cibus International Food Show, Luigi Scordamaglia of Federalimentare and Roberto Moncalvo of Coldiretti expressed interest in gene editing and its potential to improve food quality, quantity and sustainability

Event: University of Bologna's Institute of Advanced Studies (ISA) to host discussion on how "misinformation and pseudoscience feed unfounded fears on GM plants" (May 22, 2018)

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Brazilian news outlet reports on Greenpeace and other NGOs' campaigns against bills to amend pesticide and GMO labeling regulations, they argue the pesticide bill will threaten public health, and that changes to GMO labels will deny consumers information

News: U.K. subscription site Agrow reports Brazilian Senate's environment committee approves support of senator to parliamentary bill to remove warning label on foods containing GMOs

Event: Universidad Autonoma de Occidente Cali-Colombia promotes conference to be held May 10 on "Transgenic foods: solution or problem?", featuring biologist Juan Manuel Perez Asseff of Universidad del Valle

News: Mexico's Expansion profiles Monsanto Corporate Affairs director Laura Tamayo as part of its 100 Powerful Women series, highlights her role in developing communication strategies to advocate for GMOs and help improve Monsanto's reputation

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: Australian news outlet reports on new Grain Producers SA CEO Caroline Rhodes' efforts to create new strategic plan, South Australia's GM moratorium will be a key focus, which the new gov't indicated it would review

More Oceania items

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Today's global biotechnology developments included news that India's Supreme Court would not stay a decision revoking Monsanto's patents on Bt cotton.

- India's Supreme Court refused to grant Monsanto's application for a stay to delay a Delhi High Court ruling invalidating its Bt cotton patents. The company has appealed the decision, seeking a stay until its July 18 hearing. Local media outlets continued to review the research and investment implications of the Delhi High Court decision, while activist news outlet *EcoWatch* called the decision a victory for India's farmers. [See more](#)
- U.K. news outlets reported on a survey conducted by the Agricultural Biotechnology Council, which found that most young people were not opposed to GMOs. The survey found that about 20 percent of young people were opposed to the technology, with most of the 18- to 30-year-olds supporting farmers' use of modern agricultural techniques. [See more](#)
- The Alliance for Food Sovereignty Africa issued a statement criticizing "GMO promoters" broadly and science communicator Mark Lynas in particular, arguing that efforts to encourage biotechnology ignored African culture and disregarded local activists' concerns. The group criticized recent news articles that claimed activist opposition to the draft Biosafety Act in Uganda was delaying the country's food sufficiency goals. [See more](#)

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North America

Commentary: Nature Plants editorial praises recent statements of officials in both the U.S. and the EU arguing that products of gene editing should not be regulated as GMOs, notes it indicates movement towards a more consistent, rational approach

News: MIT Technology Review reports on USDA's proposed labels for foods containing bioengineered ingredients, highlights proposed smiley-face labels and gene-editing exemption

News: Bloomberg reports on announcement by Monsanto CEO Hugh Grant and CTO Robb Fraley of their plans to depart following Bayer takeover, both believe the merger will speed agricultural innovation

Commentary: Organic Consumers Association notes FDA's approval of first U.S. facility for producing GE salmon, warns AquAdvantage salmon contains elevated levels of insulin-like growth factor-1 that can promote abnormal growth in adults, including spread of cancer cells

News: Wall Street Journal reports on Syngenta's push for Chinese developments in gene editing, with goal of global marketing, former American Farm Bureau Federation head Bob Stallman notes the move indicates diminished U.S. investment in ag research

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News release: Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa issues statement claiming that GMO lobby is showing signs of desperation, claims GMOs have failed to boost African food security, criticizes Mark Lynas' "Seeds of Science" book as misleading

Commentary: African Centre for Biodiversity promotes new six-part video series from recent National Seed Dialogue and Celebration, with focus on Politics of Seed in South Africa discussion session, supports agroecology for small farmers

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Reuters reports on Indian Supreme Court's refusal to grant stay on Delhi High Court ruling invalidating Monsanto's Bt cotton patents, Monsanto issued a statement that it remains "confident on the merits" of its case

News: India's Mint reports on Supreme Court's refusal to grant Monsanto's request for stay of Delhi High Court ruling invalidating its Bt cotton patents, Monsanto's appeal will be heard on July 18

Commentary: Ram kaundinya, Former CEO of Advanta Seeds, writes for India's Financial Express, criticizes Delhi High Court ruling to invalidate Monsanto's Bt cotton patents, labels it a "death knell" for ag innovation, calls for gov't intervention

News: The Hindu reports on Department of Biotechnology's Field Inspection and Scientific Evaluation Committee's recommendation for eradication of illegal herbicide-tolerant Bt cotton, pointing to risks for health, biodiversity and development of resistance

News: Wall Street Journal reports on Syngenta's push for Chinese developments in gene editing, with goal of global marketing, former American Farm Bureau Federation head Bob Stallman notes the move indicates diminished U.S. investment in ag research

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Dennis Eriksson of Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences writes opinion article in Frontiers in Bioengineering and Biotechnology, argues that current implementation of Europe's biotech regulatory framework has deviated from original intentions

News: The Telegraph (U.K.) reports on survey of 1,600 18 to 30-year-olds by Agricultural Biotechnology Council which found that two thirds of young people support use of modern farming techniques such as GM and gene-edited crops and drones

News: The Press and Journal (U.K.) reports on recent survey by Agricultural Biotechnology Council, which found that only 20 percent of young people oppose use of biotech in agriculture, over half of respondents believe gene editing and GM can improve sustainability

Commentary: Anti-GMO French NGO inf'OGM promotes its March/April newsletter that includes articles about proposed trade secrets law, unfulfilled environmental promises of GMOs, how pesticide industry influences regulations, marketing authorizations, whether synthetic biology can be regulated

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

There were no noteworthy biotechnology developments in Latin America during today's monitoring. Click the link below for the latest items.

[More Latin America items](#)

News: Australian Broadcasting Corp. examines how emerging industry of lab-grown meat and plant-based substitutes upsetting global livestock sector; Australian university professor predicts cultured "meat" could be commercially available in 10 years; debate continues over terminology

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Caitrin.Martin@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - May 7, 2018
 Date: Monday, May 7, 2018 5:58:23 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Caitrin,

A central theme of the items highlighted in this week's Favorable Outcomes newsletter is the importance of following good science – and the ramifications of doing the opposite.

The Washington Post opinion writer Michael Gerson explains that science supports the safety of genetically modified crops and that human lives are affected when that is ignored. David Zaruk, from his "The Risk-Monger" blog, takes a closer look at European authorities' conscious decision to ignore even their own science team's recommendations in proposing a ban on neonics. And Michael Dourson, in the *Washington Examiner*, describes how a new U.S. Environmental Protection Agency policy proposal would emphasize replicable, transparent research in the risk assessment process.

Other items take a critical look at activists David Suzuki and Carey Gillam as well as misleading anti-GMO claims and pro-organic marketing from Stonyfield Farm.

To view items on this newsletter, log in on the [Bonus Eventus Community](#) page. To create an account, fill out the Request Membership form on the front page of the site. To share articles, click on the Twitter icon.

Please [contact us](#) if you have any questions.

In This Issue

[Stakeholder Spotlight](#)
[Stories Worth Sharing](#)
[What's Trending?](#)
[Calendar highlights](#)

Stakeholder Spotlight: ETC Group



Canada-based ETC Group is planning a monthlong campaign to promote the "peasant food web" as a sustainable alternative to industrial food production.

■ Stories Worth Sharing

[Michael Gerson: Anti-GMO movement is anti-science and has a human cost](#)

[David Zaruk: Neonic ban a "failure of European leadership," which decided to shun science](#)

[Alex Berezow: Guardian provided disservice by publishing out-of-context glyphosate claims from activist with conflict of interest](#)

[Michael Dourson: EPA research policy sound because public interest is "best served when science is replicable and consistent"](#)

[Margaret Wentz: David Suzuki, "menace to scientific inquiry," undeserving of University of Alberta honor](#)

[Josh Bloom: European study shows how misinformation spreads myths that GMOs and other factors cause cancer](#)

[Sarah Schultz: No reason for moms to pay more for organic food, despite Stonyfield's "absurd" anti-GMO marketing claims](#)


[Hank Campbell: With no "beepocalypse" happening, push to plant flowers makes humans feel good without doing much for bees](#)

Last week, the NGO put out its first in a series of four animated videos, claiming that peasant agriculture produces 70 percent of the world's food while using only 25 percent of the resources. The videos feature the theme "Who Will Feed Us?" and build on a report it released in October.

ETC Group - originally the Action Group on Erosion, Technology and Concentration - is also a leading opponent of gene editing.

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about ETC Group.

CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES

Alison Bernstein: Understanding that safety is always relative and zero risk is an "impossible dream" 

Inter-American Network of Academies of Sciences food security report notes importance of biotechnology

CLICK FOR BONUS EVENTUS MONITORING

What's Trending?

USDA releases proposed labeling rule using bioengineered instead of GMO, will take comments through July 3

Pruitt research transparency proposal drives activist opposition, gains industry support

Monsanto challenges Indian court's ruling that it cannot patent Bt cotton seeds

European farm groups express concern about negative impact of neonic ban

Calendar highlights

May 9-10	May 13-17	May 14-15
International Food Policy Research Institute dialogue: "Towards Agricultural Innovation in Ghana: An Evidence-Based Approach"	Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry conference in Rome	6th Plant Genomics & Gene Editing Congress: Europe

CLICK HERE TO ACCESS FULL EVENTS CALENDAR

<p>Stakeholder database</p> <p>More information on the people and organizations influencing the food and agriculture debate</p>	<p>Monitoring portal</p> <p>Catch up on the latest news and other developments impacting regulations on agriculture.</p>	<p>Bonus Eventus community</p> <p>Connect with academic experts and researchers, journalists and agriculture allies.</p>
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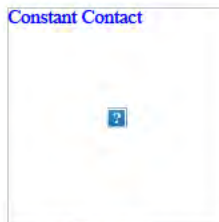
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 Date: Sunday, May 6, 2018 9 03:41 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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In global biotechnology developments over the weekend, anti-biotech NGOs and biotech advocates commented on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's newly released labeling rule. Monsanto appealed an Indian court ruling that disallowed its patent on Bt cotton. Mexican media reported on a National Autonomous University of Mexico study that showed 90 percent of the country's tortillas have GM corn in them.

- Media, activists, and biotech supporters commented on the USDA's proposed rule governing GMO labeling. *The Washington Post* reported the labels might not be as obvious or as comprehensive as consumers expect. The Alliance for Biotech Facts emphasized that foods produced with GMOs that have no DNA material, such as sugar from GM sugar beets, should not be labeled. The Organic Consumers Association's Katherine Paul called it an "insulting" and "loophole-ridden" rule intended to keep consumers in the dark. Attorney Baylen Linnekin wrote for the Reason Foundation's website that the rule included some vague language that could trigger mandatory labeling or litigation. [See more](#)
- International media reported that Monsanto is appealing a Delhi High Court court ruling to India's Supreme Court. Earlier in the week, the court ruled Monsanto could not patent its Bt cotton seeds. *Press Trust of India* reported seed industry groups said the decision would irreparably damage agricultural research and development in India. Biotech experts said the court's decision could void other GMO patents. [See more](#)
- Mexican media revived a study released in late 2017 that found about 90 percent of the tortillas in Mexico contain GM corn. The study, by the National Autonomous University of Mexico's Elena Álvarez-Buylla, also said about one-third of the tortillas contained glyphosate. Buylla said that no evidence shows GMOs to be safe for health and added that consumers should abide by the precautionary principle. [See more](#)

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For a more extensive compilation of recent biotech items, [click here](#)

North America

News: Wall Street Journal reports with supportive government in China, Syngenta to piggyback on Chinese university research to develop new technologies for plant breeding, making U.S. farmers, others worry that cutting-edge technology is shifting to the East

Commentary: Michael Gerson writes opinion piece for Washington Post in support of GMOs, amplifies Mark Lynas' new book, "Seeds of Science," describes negative impact of anti-GMO movement on agriculture in developing nations

Commentary: American Council on Science and Health president Hank Campbell notes Dr. Oz Show canceled, but he'll miss five of Oz's misinformation-spreading, conspiracy-theory-ridden guests such as Joe Mercola, Mike Adams, and yogic-flying Jeffrey Smith

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project's Andrew Porterfield examines the term monoculture" and whether it is really bad for biodiversity, highlights environmental benefits of monoculture with crop rotation in both organic and conventional systems

Commentary: Food and ag analyst for The Breakthrough Institute, Dan Blaustein-Rejto, argues that embracing modern technologies and industry is the key to environmentally-friendly food production, promotes "Ecomodern Eating"

Commentary: Vox health writer recommends schools teach critical thinking skills about health so public can spot charlatans like Dr. Oz, who extols discredited claims about GMOs

Commentary: Writing for Forbes, cancer epidemiologist Geoffrey Kabat examines how to sort out "which side to believe in an era of alternative facts," suggests activist groups often cite discredited research outside the bounds of scientific discourse on topics such as glyphosate, GMO crops, vaccines, autism

Commentary: Center for Food Safety objects to USDA's GM labeling rule's use of phrase "bioengineering," says it is confusing, maintains QR codes should not be allowed and products made from GM crops must be labeled

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Ugandan science journalist notes GM maize is proven to be safe and resistant to pests, but anti-GM politics delays its use by Ugandan farmers; notes U.S. and China are on top of the world because those countries venture into new areas while Uganda stagnates with "unnecessary fears"

Commentary: Organic crop protection producer NagriTech blog posted in Medium amplifies Stephanie Seneff research claiming link between glyphosate, autism, notes prevalence of glyphosate in typical diet, cites study indicating higher risk of children with autism from pregnant women living near farms using pesticides

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Press Trust of India reports seed industry groups say Delhi Court decision could do irreparable damage to agricultural research and development in India

News: Philippine News Agency reports Department of Agriculture's Philippine Rice Research Institute to set up GM golden rice demonstration farm despite farmers' fears of health risks, threat to biodiversity

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: NGO Agroecology Europe calls for nominations for world's best agroecology policies to enable worldwide growth of agroecology

Announcement: EFSA seeks feedback from science communicators on its proposed approach for communicating uncertainty in scientific assessments, as part of effort to improve harmonization and transparency

Commentary: French farming newspaper reports dozen food activist organizations are asking BASF to explain whether herbicide-resistant rapeseed derived from mutagenesis or microspore cultures,

Commentary: GMWatch rebuts genetic engineer Devang Mehta's claims that activists are reason Golden Rice has failed, notes anthropologist calls product "disembodied and placeless," noting it doesn't grow well in areas it's intended to help

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Brazilian IGO cites Proceedings of the National Academy of Science study in reporting insect-resistant GM crops suppress crop pests, benefiting nearby conventional, organic crops

News: La Jornada Maya reports author of study finding GM corn in Mexican tortillas says no study shows that GMOs are safe, urges using the precautionary principle; the researcher, from the Union of Scientists Committed to Society, says GMO presence likely due to "industrial flour" during preparation,

News: Argentina's El Dia reports on theatrical release of Pino Solanas' documentary, "Trip to the fumigated towns," documenting health and environmental consequences of Argentina's use of transgenic crops and agrochemicals

Commentary: Brazilian NGO Movement of Landless Rural Workers reports National Fair of Agrarian Reform promotes agroecology and organic production, says government has no interest in agrarian reform

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: Australia-based journalist writes part 4 of 5-part series for Devex, notes GMOs gaining support in developing countries with promise of increased yields, lower production costs to aid smallholder farmers and increase exports, says Philippines leading charge while Thailand is open but concerned over public backlash

More Oceania items

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Stakeholder database

More information on the people and organizations influencing food and agriculture issues.

Events calendar

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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In global biotechnology developments today, the U.S. Department of Agriculture released a draft of its proposed GMO labeling rule. Media and stakeholders also commented on developments regarding synthetic and cultured meat.

- U.S. media and stakeholders reported the USDA released a proposed rule using the term "bioengineered food" rather than "genetically modified" or "genetically engineered" and allowing QR code usage. Food & Water Watch executive director Wenonah Hauter claimed the rule will "keep consumers in the dark as it is intended." *Bloomberg* reported the agency left "wiggle room" to define GMOs by percentage of GM ingredient content and whether highly processed foods such as high fructose corn syrup are GMOs. The USDA set a July 3 deadline for public comments on the rule. **See more**
- A *Care2* contributor noted the U.S. Food and Drug Administration says the heme from the Impossible Burger is "generally recognized as safe" and noted the company is voluntarily working with the agency although it's not required to do so. *Global Meat News* reported Tyson Foods invested in an Israeli company to produce cultured meat. The company, Future Meat Technologies, is developing technology to produce non-GMO meat directly from animal cells. **See more**

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For a more extensive compilation of recent biotech items, **click here**.

North America

News: Politico reports USDA release proposed rule on federal GMO labeling requirements, will refer to GM food as "bioengineered food" will give 60 days to submit public comments,

News: Canada-based food producer news site reports Canadian breeders, seed tech companies worried that Canadian agencies have not announced how they will be regulated; CropLife Canada VP worries regs could put Canadian products at disadvantage, C-BAN official believes gene editing should be regulated

Commentary: Food & Water Watch's Wenonah Hauter criticizes USDA's proposed GMO labeling rule, says it will "keep consumers in the dark as intended;" says calling food "bioengineered" is deceptive, allowing QR codes keeps information away from many without smart phones

Commentary: University of Florida's Kevin Folta criticizes Paul Thacker's lack of integrity, deconstructs his article in *The Progressive* criticizing GMOs and biotech industry, says he's disappointed in *The Progressive* for running wildly inaccurate article by Thacker

Commentary: Organic Consumers Association notes organic farmer claims regenerative farming is single solution to many world problems, including climate change, polluted water from fertilizer runoff

More North America items

Africa

News: Agence France-Presse reports on challenges faced by African farmers seeking to control fall armyworm, Agrochemicals Association of Kenya's Patrick Amuyunzu noted some pesticides have been identified as effective, drawing from Latin America's experience

News: South African news outlet reports on Johannesburg organic farm Brightside, owned by Janet and Eric Diack, highlights their efforts to care for their animals' well being, points to "tasteless" background of GE chickens, bred to have very few feathers

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: India rural news site reports farmers plant Bt cotton on 90 percent of cotton fields, but pink bollworm developed resistance to the GMO and pesticides, devastating cotton crops and farmers' livelihoods

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: The Irish Times writer notes gene editing allows precise changes to plants, has massive potential for good, but questions if Europe will seek to ban the products if it's difficult or impossible to distinguish gene-edited from conventional products

Commentary: German naturopath claims GM maize grown with atrazine, glyphosate, links to increase in prostate cancer incidence, claims atrazine an EDC, cites Center for Biological Diversity report, Tyrone Hayes

News release: The Greens/European Free Alliance criticizes member states for voting in favor of reauthorizing Monsanto's glyphosate-tolerant GM sugar beet variety, notes some of those same member states also seek neonic ban exemptions to help beet farmers

Commentary: Slow Food social media director writes for Italian news site to debunk study by Santâ Anna School of Advanced Studies of Pisa showing GMOs are safe; claims only 76 studies considered and those are tainted by conflicts of interest, notes the study does not take pesticide application into account for herbicide-tolerant GM crops

News release: Wageningen University & Research announces publication of booklet entitled "Plant breeding techniques in a new era," with goal of providing plant breeders and the public with information on most recent developments

News release: International Federation of Organic Agriculture (IFOAM) EU Group and Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) announce publication of study which found that coexistence between organic/non-GM and GM ag is not possible, call for regulation of new breeding techniques as GMOs

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Brazilian consumer protection organization notes more than 100 groups signed an email objecting to legislation that would end requirement to include "T" symbol on transgenic food, would allow food with up to 1 percent GM ingredients to be labeled as "GMO free"

Campaign: Germany-based NGO dedicated toward saving rain forests launches petition drive to stop Mercosur treaty, says deal will flood Europe with South American beef at expense of jungles and forests

Commentary: Mexican science and technology agency Conacyt publishes article amplifying National Autonomous University of Mexico researcher's study finding GM corn and pesticide in Mexican tortillas; researcher says at minimum food companies should label GM food, but that won't stop damage to consumers' health

Commentary: Bolivian NGO claims GM corn cultivation in Bolivia threatens to contaminate native corn varieties

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

There were no noteworthy biotechnology developments in Oceania during today's monitoring. Click the link below for the latest items.

[More Oceania items](#)

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 Date: Wednesday, May 2, 2018 10:24:33 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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In global biotechnology developments today, environmental activist Vandana Shiva weighed in on the Delhi High Court decision revoking Monsanto's cotton patents. In the U.S., media outlets analyzed news that federal GMO labeling guidance could be delayed.

- In a statement for *Asian Age* and *Deccan Chronicle*, Shiva applauded a Delhi High Court decision revoking Monsanto's patents on some Bt cotton varieties. Shiva highlighted her role in helping to draft the Plant Variety Protection and Farmers Rights Act 2001, noting that the "farmers rights" clause reinforced the country's support for seed freedom. [See more](#)
- Food and agriculture news outlets continued to amplify a statement from U.S. Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue, who warned last week that the agency was likely to miss its July 29 deadline for releasing GMO labeling guidance. A *Food Dive* analysis noted that the delay opens opportunities for states to implement their own guidance. Meanwhile, *Food Chemical News* reported that the White House had completed its review of the proposal. [See more](#)

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North America

News: Food Processing reports on USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue's statement that the agency will likely miss July 29 deadline for creating its GMO disclosure rule, attributing the delay to White House Office of Management & Budget (OMB) reviews

News: Food Chemical News reports on White House's completion of its review of GMO disclosure rule on April 30 (subscription required)

News: FoodNavigator reports synthetic meat companies says US Cattlemen's Association effort to restrict lab-created meat from using terms "beef" or "meat" would have undermine innovation

News: Local news outlets report on Former U.S. Rep. Dennis Kucinich's gubernatorial campaign's release of details regarding consulting fees, \$115,000 came from anti-GMO group Center for Food Safety in 2016, amid GMO labeling debate

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project's Marc Brazeau concludes three-part series on insect-resistant and herbicide-tolerant biotech crops, examines benefits of reduced pesticide use, increased yields and farmer incomes in developing nations

Commentary: Hawaiian lifestyle magazine touts Hawaii ban of chlorpyrifos as "turning point" in effort to protect health of residents, notes prevalence of pesticide use during research, development of GE crops to stress significance of pesticide spray reporting requirements, no-spray zones

News release: Center for Food Safety welcomes Hawaii's passage of chlorpyrifos ban and increased requirements for restricted-use pesticides, includes statements from CFS attorney Sylvia Wu and Gary

Hooser of Hawaii Alliance for Progressive Action

Commentary: Gary Hooser of Hawaii Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) writes for The Garden Island, welcomes passage of bill banning chlorpyrifos and adding requirements for restricted-use pesticides, recounts the five-year process

More North America items

Africa

Commentary: Joseph Opoku Gakpo of Cornell Alliance for Science highlights Mozambican youth leader Nelson Salvador Balate's assessment that utilizing ag technology and getting young people involved is the key to boosting food security, highlights GM maize development

Commentary: Christopher Crellin of Future Directions International promotes International Centre for Research in the Dry Areas' (ICARDA) new drought-tolerant durum wheat variety, highlights potential to improve food security in Sub-Saharan Africa

Commentary: Oakland Institute's Flora Sonkin argues New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition (NAFSN) is losing ground in victory for groups opposed to corporatization of agriculture, points to France's withdrawal and Doing Business Report revelations

More Africa items

Asia

Commentary: Vandana Shiva writes for Asian Age, applauds Delhi High Court decision on cotton patents, adds that companies such as Monsanto see "seed freedom" as a problem because they want to change seed from renewable resource to "non-renewable commodity"

News: Indian news site reports Punjab Agricultural University's Bt cotton variety ready for trials, researchers hope variety proves more resistant to bollworm than current market varieties

News release: IndiaGMInfo says regulators, government ministries "pass the buck" on illegal GM seed imports; claims large volumes of GM seed pour into country

News: India's Business Today reports Bayer-Monsanto purchase focus shifts to India; notes Russian approval was contingent on technology transfer to the country from Bayer and Monsanto, notes anti-monopoly groups suggesting the same for India

More Asia items

Europe

News release: German NGO Testbiotech claims biotech lobbyists making untruthful assertions regarding gene editing, including that changes are indistinguishable from conventional breeding, says Testbiotech favors regulating gene-edited products as GMOs

More Europe items

Latin America

Announcement: The Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (Embrapa) announces May 4 seminar to present book addressing food and nutritional security in the Americas; project developed by Inter-American Network of Academies of Sciences

Report: The Inter-American Network of Academies of Sciences issues report outlining challenges and opportunities for food security in the Americas; among country-level breakdowns and assessments, overall findings highlight importance of biotechnology and other technological innovations

Commentary: Emiro Vera Suarez of Venezuelan NGO Aporrea examines Russia's ban on imports from the West containing transgenics, notes Russia's goal is to ensure that the population does not get sick, argues Venezuela is also infiltrated by the West

News: Mexican news site reports National Union of Autonomous Regional Peasant Organizations coordinator criticizes government for not promoting domestic agriculture, importing food from U.S.; claims GM food is poor quality, poisonous, causes cancer

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Announcement: Tasmanian government includes GMO moratorium review in its 2018 agenda from state Premier Will Hodgman; review is slated for third quarter

News: New Zealand news site reports Environment Court may force Federated Farmers to pay court costs for district councils, NGO after challenging right to legislate genetic engineering on local level

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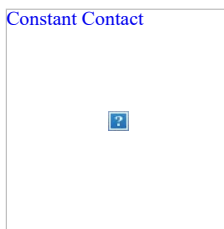
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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology developments included a new report from a U.K. trade group warning that a U.S. trade deal could undermine environmental regulations and risk agricultural exports. Two articles in Uganda's *New Vision* highlighted the impact of anti-biotechnology activism in the country.

- The U.K. Parliament International Trade Committee released a new report warning that efforts to cement a trade deal with the U.S. could lead to problematic compromises in environmental and agricultural standards. The wide-ranging report noted the impacts of a deal on a number of industries but noted that U.S. food production standards for chicken and GM crops did not meet U.K. consumer expectations. The group concluded that Britain risked sacrificing its standing in EU markets. **See more**
- Uganda's *New Vision* highlighted research delays caused by anti-biotechnology activism in the region. An opinion column by prominent science communicator Mark Lynas pointed to the stalled rollout of new, ecologically friendly crops, including drought-tolerant maize and a banana resistant to bacterial wilt. A separate news report quoted scientists at a news briefing organized by the Tropical Institute of Development Innovations, which warned that the revised draft biosafety law imposed research-ending restrictions on GM crops. **See more**
- Nigeria's *Leadership*, in a wide-ranging article that summarized and conflated many anti-GMO myths, reported that the newspaper had found Bt corn toxins in pregnant women's blood. The report also claimed milk from cows fed GMOs was cancerous and added that European researchers had found rats fed GM tomatoes died of stomach ulcers. The source for many of the claims, Global Prolife Alliance's Philip C. Njemanze, added that supportive GMO studies were "junk" because they were funded by the Gates Foundation. **See more**

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North America

Commentary: Marc Brazeau writes second article in three-part series on impact of GMOs on pesticide use for Genetic Literacy Project, examines data and evidence of environmental impacts of GM crop adoption and changes in herbicide and insecticide use

Commentary: Science Moms neuroscientist Alison Bernstein explores concept of safety, including overview of minimal risk categories used by FDA and EPA to define safety

Commentary: Sarah Schultz writes for Canada's Grainews, explains why she refuses to pay a premium for organic food, argues conventional foods, including GMOs, are just as healthy and nutritious, and might be more environmentally friendly

Commentary: Margaret Wente of Canada's Globe and Mail summarized controversy over University of Alberta's decision to grant David Suzuki an honorary degree, labels Suzuki "a menace to scientific inquiry," points to his claims about GMOs and pesticides

News: Food Dive reports on USDA Secretary Perdue's statement that the agency may not be able to meet July 29 deadline for publishing final GMO labeling rules, highlights potential problems with a

delay, reports states like Vermont may try to enforce their own laws

News: Progressive Farmer reports on challenges for products of gene editing, such as lag in U.S. regulation and consumer understanding, highlights current U.S. and international regulation on GMOs, and rising popularity of organic and non-GMO products

Commentary: Sam Bloch of The New Food Economy examines several types of GE animals that never made it to market due to regulatory hurdles, includes flu-resistant chickens, hornless dairy cattle and disease-resistant pigs

News: Associated Press reports farmers in Montana and other agricultural states are feeling effects of President Trump's unpredictable approach to trade, with growing China conflict a particular concern

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Mark Lynas writes for Uganda's New Vision, recounts recent visit where he observed exciting biotech developments by local scientists, laments negative impact of anti-GMO activism on Uganda's scientific innovation, points to delay in biosafety bill

News: Uganda's New Vision reports on ag scientists' criticism of Parliamentary recommendations for changes to biosafety bill as too restrictive; Tropical Institute of Development Innovations director Clet Masiga noted delays in ag innovation will worsen hunger

Commentary: Chika Okeke of Nigeria's Leadership says the newspaper found insecticide produced by GM corn in blood of pregnant women and their fetuses, links GMOs and glyphosate to several health disorders, claims the U.S. government has banned importation and consumption of GM foods

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Indian business, financial news site reports grain farmers conference features discussion on need for EU growers to compete with global market, answer consumer demands for healthier options by reducing pesticide use, growing non-GMO crops, notes EU moving toward pesticide restrictions

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News release: U.K. Parliament's International Trade Committee warns against rushing into trade negotiations with the U.S., emphasizing need for an evidence-based trade strategy; Committee Chair Angus MacNeil highlighted potential impact on U.K. agriculture

News: Business Insider reports on U.K. Parliament International Trade Committee report warning that a U.S. trade deal could impact trade with the EU, highlights concerns about lowering ag and food standards, such as hormones in beef and GMO labeling

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Mark Lynas writes for Cornell Alliance for Science, re-examines his opinion on GMO labeling in context of debate in Brazil, argues Brazil's current label could imply that GMOs are harmful, advocates smart label systems to give consumers information

Commentary: Nature's Jeff Tollefson analyzes Brazilian conservative congressional coalition's push to weaken environmental regulations prior to Oct. election, highlights proposed legislation to open Amazon rainforest to sugarcane farming

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: Devex publishes fourth article in five-part series on GMOs, examining political drivers for GM crop adoption in developing countries, with focus on climate change, food security, local economies and influence of foreign trade partners

Announcement: Australia's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator issues invitation for comment on proposed risk assessment of CSIRO's release of GM rust disease-resistant bread wheat and durum wheat

Commentary: Jody Scott of Vogue Australia examines question of whether it's safe to eat soy, highlights naturopath and nutritionist Ema Taylor's warning against eating GM soy sprayed with toxic herbicides, highlights link to health disorders, endocrine disruption

Commentary: Russian English-language news site What Does It Mean promotes Russian phytosanitary agency's supposed claim that Australian government partnered with Monsanto to grow GM wheat, resulting in death of 21 million kangaroos

More Oceania items

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - April 30, 2018
 Date: Monday, April 30, 2018 9:00:38 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Today's global biotechnology developments included news that the European Commission approved BASF's purchase of Bayer assets, clearing the way for Bayer's takeover of Monsanto.

- The European Commission announced that it had conditionally approved BASF's purchase of Bayer's seeds portfolio and crop science business. The decision allows Bayer's purchase of Monsanto, which was contingent on these sales, to move forward. The European Commission added that BASF would be required to sell off some of its herbicides portfolio as part of the deal. [See more](#)
- California researchers announced they've identified the molecular mechanism behind how Huanglongbing, or citrus greening, prevents trees from fighting off the infection. The researchers highlighted the potential for this discovery to lead to a new generation of gene-edited plants resistant to the disease. [See more](#)

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For a more extensive compilation of recent biotech items, [click here](#).

North America

News release: University of California, Riverside announces researchers advance understanding of molecular mechanism of citrus greening, the team is now investigating details of how protein SDE1 suppresses proteases, with goal of using CRISPR to create resistance

Study: Study in Nature Communications by University of California, Riverside-led research team identifies mechanism by which Huanglongbing (HLB) inhibits protease activity in citrus trees

Commentary: Josh Bloom of American Council on Science and Health amplifies European Journal of Cancer study which found that many people believe in mythical causes of cancer, such as GMOs, notes it demonstrates that spread of misinformation is effective

Commentary: Writing for the Genetic Literacy Project, Marc Brazeau publishes first in three-part series arguing that development of Roundup Ready and Bt crops are most substantial innovations in sustainable agriculture in three decades, lays out context for their assessment

News: Hoosier Ag Today reports on difficulty in encouraging biotech acceptance in China, as part of a U.S. soybean producer delegation to China, Doug Winter noted he had to explain that U.S. farmers eat GM foods with no adverse health effects

Interview: Boca magazine interviews Dr. Oz, regarding GMOs, he voices opposition to those designed to tolerate pesticides, which he claims are harmful to human health and the environment, he believes non-browning apples are fine

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Report: Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa launches seed policy report on World Intellectual Property Day challenging policy shift favoring corporate takeover of African seed systems; report is one of three in series, other two focus on land rights and agroecology

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Indian news outlet reports government calls on policy think tank NITI Aayog to play peacemaker in GMO debate, with goal of bringing supporters and opponents of the technology together in discussion, the April 26 meeting was canceled, to be rescheduled

Commentary: Physician Eduardo Gonzales writes for Manila Bulletin, examines pros and cons of GM food, highlights benefits such as pesticide use and biofortification, but points to potential risks to beneficial insects and human health

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News release: EU Commission announces conditional approval of BASF's acquisition of parts of Bayer's Crop Science business, as part of Bayer's divestment commitments for its acquisition of Monsanto, BASF agreed to certain divestments as well

News release: Agricultural NGO Abl criticizes German federal government decision to renew import license for glyphosate resistant GM sugar beet, claiming retailers and producers increasingly rely on GM-free materials to meet popular demand

News: Germany's Taz reports Green party's dietary spokeswoman Renate Kunast rejects the party's proposed consideration of new GE methods, arguing there is no guarantee that gene editing would eliminate need for pesticides

News release: German organic farming association Bioland resolution calls for solid regulations from new federal government to exclude GMOs and classify and label new gene editing methods as GE

Commentary: Andre Heitz of Science Technologies Actions collective writes for France's Agora Vox, amplifies recent study demonstrating unexpected benefit that Bt maize reduces pesticide use on neighboring vegetable crops, examines continued EU GMO opposition

Video: France Televisions reports on detection of unlicensed GMOs in animal feed in France (video cannot be accessed in the U.S.)

Commentary: GMWatch's Claire Robinson criticizes recent Economist magazine article supporting use of GM Bt maize in Africa to fight fall armyworm invasion, points to Brazilian study demonstrating armyworm's resistance to Bt toxin

News release: Wageningen University and Research announces re-analysis of research comparing organic and conventional ag shows inconsistencies in the original publication, which made it erroneously appear that organic crop yield was increasing on average

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Timothy A. Wise of Small Planet Institute writes for Food Tank, examines leading Mexican presidential candidate Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador's endorsement of Farm Movement's Plan de Ayala 2.0, which bans GMOs, promotes agroecology

Commentary: Catarino Mendoza Gutierrez writes for Mexico's El Sol De Salamanca, examines concerns about protecting native corn varieties from transgenics, amplifies recent press conference where Steven

Druker spoke about dangers of GMOs

News: Mexico's Diario De Quintana Roo reports on recent Fiesta de las Semillas Nativas (Native Seed Festival), as part of joint strategy by Yucatan Peninsula producers in refusal to use transgenics, farmers traded and exchanged seeds

News: Bolivia's Chaco Dia Por Dia reports on Mandela Center report on El Juramento ranch, it highlights clearing of protected area for transgenic crops, authorized by Directorate of Forests

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

There were no noteworthy biotechnology developments in Oceania during today's monitoring. Click the link below for the latest items.

[More Oceania items](#)

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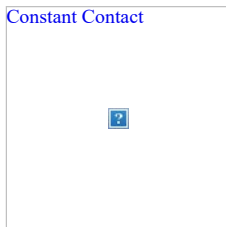
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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Caitrin.Martin@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - April 30, 2018
 Date: Monday, April 30, 2018 4:03:22 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Caitrin,

This week's Favorable Outcomes newsletter features a series of articles that dig into some of the hottest food and agriculture topics of the day: the European ban on neonics, the U.S. farm bill and Environmental Working Group's "Dirty Dozen" list.

There's also a column from *The New York Times* that describes how science has yet to prove any real threats from genetically modified food - and how it could benefit developing countries.

To view items on this newsletter, log in on the [Bonus Eventus Community](#) page. To create an account, fill out the Request Membership form on the front page of the site. To share articles, click on the Twitter icon.

Please [contact us](#) if you have any questions.

In This Issue

[Stakeholder Spotlight](#)
[Stories Worth Sharing](#)
[What's Trending?](#)
[Calendar highlights](#)

Stakeholder Spotlight: Hawaii Alliance for Progressive Action



Hawaii Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) was founded in 2014 by activist Gary Hooser with board members from the environmental law group Earthjustice and other environmental, labor and political organizations.

HAPA has primarily engaged in lobbying efforts to ban GMOs

Stories Worth Sharing

[Jane Brody: Fears about GMOs are "theoretical," but benefits in developing countries could be real](#)

[Jon Entine: Why was Europe set on banning neonics when rest of world sees little threat to bees?](#)

[Amanda Zaluckyj: U.S. farm bill's \\$25M earmark for organic agriculture should instead be used to benefit all types of farming](#)

[Lindsay Burgess: It's OK to ignore the "Dirty Dozen" list](#)

[Joe Schwarz: Environmental Working Group sounds false alarm about pesticides on produce because it "keeps donations coming in"](#)

[Toban Dyck: Agriculture can always improve, but calling pesticides and GMOs "unhealthy and environmentally harmful is inaccurate"](#)

[Henry Miller and Drew Kershen: IFOAM ensures organic practices are to agriculture "what cigarette smoking is to human health"](#)

[Joseph Opoku Gakpo: Water Efficient Maize for Africa field trials showing armyworm resistance](#)

[Carrie Dennett: Don't let "Dirty Dozen" scare you away from buying produce](#)

[Chuck Dinerstein: Will Congress make the right call on who should oversee GM food and animals?](#)

and pesticide usage in Hawaii. The group is closely affiliated with the Center for Food Safety Hawaii office, which is a co-litigant with Earthjustice on numerous anti-agriculture lawsuits, and the organic industry-funded Hawaii SEED group.

Hooser, who formerly served as the Hawaiian Senate majority leader and a Kauai County Council member, was recently recruited by Swiss NGO Public Eye to aid in its promotion in Switzerland of the documentary "Poisoning Paradise" that claims agrochemical companies' use of pesticides on open-air GMO labs in Kauai harms the health of Hawaiians.

Hooser has been active recently advocating for passage of a Hawaii [bill that would ban the use of chlorpyrifos](#). The bill passed out of the legislature's conference committee Friday and votes in both chambers are expected Tuesday.

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about HAPA.

[CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES](#)

[CLICK FOR BONUS EVENTUS MONITORING](#)

What's Trending?

[European member states approve outdoor ban of neonics](#)

[U.S. advocacy targets: Farm Bill rollback of endangered species protections / EPA science transparency initiative](#)

[U.K. cancer research firm lists GMOs among "mythical" factors public wrongly believes cause cancer](#)

[Comment period on U.S. glyphosate review concludes](#)

Calendar highlights

May 2-4	May 3	May 9-10
Basel/Rotterdam/Stockholm conventions symposium: "Chemicals and wastes and the prevention of soil pollution"	Princeton University "Science for the People" panel featuring Tyrone Hayes	International Food Policy Research Institute dialogue: "Towards Agricultural Innovation in Ghana: An Evidence-Based Approach"

[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS FULL EVENTS CALENDAR](#)

<p>Stakeholder database</p> <p>More information on the people and organizations influencing the food and agriculture debate</p>	<p>Monitoring portal</p> <p>Catch up on the latest news and other developments impacting regulations on agriculture.</p>	<p>Bonus Eventus community</p> <p>Connect with academic experts and researchers, journalists and agriculture allies.</p>
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 Date: Sunday, April 29, 2018 9:01:33 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Global biotechnology developments over the weekend included the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's approval of an AquaBounty facility in Indiana. The Jamaican government will review the country's national seed policy as a program works to make GM potato seeds available to farmers.

- The FDA announced it approved AquaBounty's facility in Indiana, where it will produce AquAdvantage salmon. Although the facility is approved for production, the company is prohibited from importing the eggs needed to produce GE salmon due to an FDA appropriations law. **See more**
- The Jamaican Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries Ministry announced it will review the national seed policy, with a goal of establishing a sustainable seed system. Minister Audley Shaw said Jamaica's seed program is using biotechnology to produce potato seeds for farmers. **See more**

Reminder: to access the full text, archives and monitoring dashboard resources you need to log in to the **Bonus Eventus community portal** using your email address and personal password. Please contact us if you need any assistance or support.

For a more extensive compilation of recent biotech items, **click here**.

North America

News: The Progressive Farmer reports gene editing could bring innovative crops to market more quickly, but regulators, consumers lag behind

News: Wired updates its guide to CRISPR technology, says today's scientists beginning to edit DNA almost as easily as software engineers modify code, argues CRISPR won't end disease or hunger anytime soon but is beginning to reshape world around us; piece predicts more regulation as CRISPR applications get more powerful

News: Ozy reports University of California, Davis' Alison Van Eenennaam using gene-editing to create cows without horns, reduce livestock environmental footprint

Commentary: Houston Chronicle runs op-ed by GMO Answers expert Neva Cochran reflecting on Amazon's takeover of Whole Foods, calling on new owner to move supermarket chain away from fear-based labeling, including gluten-free, non-GMO and no added hormones

News: Reuters reports Bayer's bid to buy Monsanto on track to win U.S. antitrust approval by end of May, barring last-minute complications; deal would create company commanding more than 25 percent of combined world market for seeds and pesticides

News: Science magazine highlights attempts by California researchers to develop gene drive approach to combat spotted wing fruit fly, creating lethal "cargo gene" to kill flies exposed to specific chemical compound, or even to heat; other geneticists question whether gene drive can remain in population of pest for a long time

Commentary: Ontario Director of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation writing in Toronto Sun denounces David Suzuki as "charlatan" pretending to be environmentalist; notes Suzuki claims GM food dangerous despite absence of scientific proof

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: [Ghanaian news site reports biotechnologist says GMOs can solve fall armyworm problem in Africa to help farmers avoid losses, affirms GM crop safety](#)

News: [News Ghana reports National Biosafety Authority director says country needs GMOs to battle armyworm, but activists claim GM crops threaten health, environment, and country's economy.](#)

News: [South African news site reports GM crops are answer to Zimbabwe's struggles against armyworm, increasing food production and nutritional value](#)

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: [Indian business newspaper reports Indian National Congress election manifesto promises to develop sustainable agricultural plan for Karnataka province that will focus on GM crops, integrated pest management](#)

Commentary: [Member of National Academy of Science and Technology argues against making environmental rights part of new Philippine Bill of Rights, cites judges' ruling in case against GM eggplant that genetic engineering deprived pests of food, upsetting balance of nature](#)

Commentary: [India NGO promotes TWN agroecology report; claims gender bias against women favors high yield technology over "healthier, environmentally superior" indigenous knowledge](#)

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: [Wired's Italian edition reports ag entrepreneur Giorgio Fidenato won right to plant GM maize, questions why so many Italians remain frightened of GMOs, calls for considering science of the issue, predicts Fidenato's action alone unlikely to change situation in Italy, terms his stand a "battle of principle"](#)

News: [BBC reports universities' study shows many Europeans believe in mythical cancer causes, including GMOs](#)

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Announcement: [Jamaican agency announces cabinet will review national seed policy; notes program is developing potato seeds using biotechnology](#)

Commentary: [Cida de Oliveira of Rede Brasil Atual reports lawsuit filed questioning National Technical Biosafety Commission's decision to commercially release transgenic soybean, maize and cotton seeds resistant to glyphosate; writer notes majority of corn, soybeans and cotton grown in Brazil transgenic but pesticide use keeps going up](#)

News release: [Brazilian city announces PhD in medical science discussed genetic engineering with health department employees, pointing out advantages, but warned GM crops contaminate environment, long-term consequences of GM food consumption unknown](#)

News: [Venezuelan news site reports group urges government to support Venezuela Free of Transgenic campaign by supporting peasant farmers to resist GMO cultivation](#)

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

There were no noteworthy biotechnology developments in Oceania during this weekend's monitoring. Click the link below for the latest items.

[More Oceania items](#)

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - April 26, 2018
 Date: Thursday, April 26, 2018 9:04 51 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's monitoring included two favorable developments in Europe, as well as reports of illegal GMOs in India and Zambia.

- The European Academies Science Advisory Council released a new report, "Opportunities and Challenges for Research on Food and Nutrition Security and Agriculture in Europe," which argues the current food system in Europe is unsustainable. It promotes a shift to climate-smart agriculture, including the adoption of plant breeding innovations. [See more](#)
- Cancer Research U.K. funded a study released today by researchers at the University College London and the University of Leeds that found the public often believes in "mythical" causes of cancer, including GMOs. A representative of Cancer Research U.K. attributed the misconceptions to fake news. Several U.K. news outlets amplified the survey. [See more](#)
- Authorities in Asia and Africa are responding to the illegal presence of GMOs. India's *Nagpur Today* reported local police and agriculture department officials seized a large stock of illegal, herbicide-tolerant Bt cotton seeds in Beltarodi ([see more](#)). Meanwhile, a Zambian news outlet reported a seizure of food products containing GM ingredients from supermarkets in Lusaka, led by team of National Biosafety Authority, Zambia Police and Lusaka City Council officers. According to the report, some products were found to contain GMO levels up to 90 percent ([see more](#)).

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For a more extensive compilation of recent biotech items, [click here](#).

North America

Audio: USDA radio report updates progress of agency's attempts to develop labels under the GMO food labeling law passed by Congress in 2016; USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue says it's unlikely agency will meet July 1 deadline to present final proposed rules for public comment

Commentary: Canadian activist Tony Mitra warns supporters against controlled opposition to GMOs, notes GMO opposition in India ignores dangers of glyphosate while focusing on Monsanto's cotton patents, urges them to confront politicians

Commentary: Henry Miller and Jeff Stier write for American Greatness, criticizing Earth Day for promoting anti-technology activism, they believe activists should support modern technologies like genetic engineering and state of the art agrochemicals

Commentary: Devang Mehta of ETH Zurich writes for Massive Science, reviews "Seeds of Science" by Mark Lynas, praises him for giving African farmers and scientists a platform, voices disappointment in his occasional agreement with anti-GM objections

News: Digital media site run by Penn State University students reports on screening of "Food Evolution" documentary on campus, followed by Q-and-A session with panel including Sarah Evanega, director of Cornell Alliance for Science; she says film has been meaningful for partners in Africa who see own

challenges depicted

News: Reuters reports three North Dakota farmers file class action against Texas plaintiffs' firm Watts Guerra, alleging it duped 60,000 farmers into signing 40 percent contingency fee agreements in nationwide litigation against Syngenta, then cut secret deals to save fees by excluding Watts clients from state, federal class actions

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News release: Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa announces release of report urging governing bodies to reject intellectual property rights on African seeds

Interview: Malawi development consultant group Imani publishes transcript of interview with consultant Victor Mponda-Banda in The Times, on the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition, he highlights Malawi's progress towards implementation

News: Zambia's Q-FM reports on seizure of food products containing GM ingredients from supermarkets in Lusaka, led by team of National Biosafety Authority, Zambia Police and Lusaka City Council officers, some products were found to contain 90 percent GMOs

News: Times of Zambia reports on National Bio-safety Authority's seizure of products from Choppies Lake Road superstores containing GMOs without proper sales permits, NBA's Christopher Simuntala noted the items will be burned

News release: West African Committee for Peasant Seeds (COASP) criticizes report by National Academy of Science and Technology of Senegal (ANSTS) for positive stance on GMOs, points to financial risks to farmers and evidence of health risks

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: People's Television Network reports Monsanto Philippines official warns about continued proliferation of illegal biotech corn, Bt corn seeds in country, points out absence of refuge in counterfeit seeds puts Bt technology at risk of having pests such as corn borer develop resistance to Bt corn, threatening nation's corn industry

News: Pakistan Observer recaps conference on "Innovation and Commercialisation of Biotechnology" held at Pakistan Council for Scientific and Industrial Research; speaker asserts government has done much to develop biotech; dean of Malaysia University calls for consensus on biotech development among different nations

News: The International News reports Pakistan officials announce tighter regulatory checks of cargoes to curb trade of tainted GM rice, with strict scrutiny of inbound and exporting rice consignments, since Rice Exporters Association of Pakistan complained about EU rejecting consignments after detecting GM rice in some shipments

Report: Paper in Current Opinion in Plant Biology examines potential for genome editing to accelerate development of climate-change ready crops, authors note importance of integrating different disciplines and involving multiple stakeholders

News: India's Nagpur Today reports on seizure of large stock of illegal herbicide tolerant Bt cotton seeds by Beltarodi police and Agriculture Department officials, farmer Ashok Bapurao Kamble in Panzri village was booked under several provisions of the law

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: EuropaBio Secretary General John Brennan writes sponsored content for Politico EU, highlights exciting advances in biotech in medicine, food production, and environmental protection, calls for science-based policies, end to GMO opposition

Commentary: Inf'OGM claims "hidden GMOs" produced via mutagenesis "present same risks" as herbicide-tolerant GMOs and are progressing throughout Europe

Report: EASAC report on food sustainability urges EU to make changes to food system rather than addressing only production, reducing food waste, using new technology, innovation, and utilizing resources more efficiently

Study: Study in European Journal of Cancer examines prevalence of beliefs about actual and mythical causes of cancer, authors note that since one third of participants believe GMOs and food additives cause cancer, continued monitoring of risk perceptions is warranted

Report: Report by Wageningen University & Research examines developments of new plant breeding techniques, highlighting opportunities for sustainable production of healthy food, and helping meet challenges posed by climate change

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Mexican news outlets report on Steven Druker's recent visit and presentation of his book, "Altered Genes, Twisted Truth," highlighting health risks, anti-GMO scientist Antonio Turrent Fernandez called for reduction of GM corn imports from the U.S.

News: Brazilian news site reports more than 100 civil society groups sign letter protesting changes to Brazil's GM food labeling law, call the changes "anti-democratic"

Commentary: Columnist for Brasil De Fato, Mario Augusto Jakobskind, describes Senate Environment Committee's approval of removing GMO symbol as "an affront to the Brazilian people," accuses them of favoring agribusiness interests

News: Panamanian ag news outlet reports on Technical Secretariat of the National Biosafety Commission for Genetically Modified Organisms' (STCNB) call for civil society representatives to participate in the commission, candidates may be nominated through May 4

Commentary: Victor M. Toledo of National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) writes for La Jornada, points to scientists' defense of GMOs as an example of "robotization" of science, argues that GMOs pose risks to human health and the environment

More Latin America items

Oceania

News release: New Zealand Minister of Agriculture announces members of Primary Sector Council, which will give independent strategic advice to government on issues confronting primary industries; Minister Damien O'Connor says council may help plans for sustainable development, technological opportunities

News: The Australian reports on U.K. universities' study findings that people swayed by social media believe in mythical cancer risks such as GMOs, stress, cell phones, artificial sweeteners, but are unaware of some known risks

News release: New Zealand NGO GE Free Northland applauds court decision affirming district council's right to manage or ban GMO use in regional plan, urges Federated Farmers to "withdraw their vexations" against other councils

News: The West Australian reports on National Association for Sustainable Agriculture Australia general

manager Mark Anderson's assessment that relaxing the zero tolerance rule for GMOs in organic would hurt organic growers in international markets

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Diane.Wray-Cahen@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - April 25, 2018
 Date: Wednesday, April 25, 2018 9 04:00 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included a statement from Peru's environment ministry affirming that GM maize had not been detected in monitored fields. In India, an investigation into illegal Bt cottonseed sales was extended. Controversy over GMO labeling changes in Brazil continued.

- In a statement amplified in local media outlets, Peru's environment ministry reported that tests of over 60 monitored maize fields detected no transgenic presence. The results confirm a similar analysis from 2017. Peru's moratorium on GM crop cultivation extends through 2021. [See more](#)
- A Special Investigation Team looking in to the illegal sales of herbicide-tolerant Bt cotton in Maharashtra has requested additional time, adding that the illegal seeds appear to be produced in Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat and thus would require an interstate investigation. Maharashtra officials had not yet announced their decision. [See more](#)
- Controversy over updates to Brazil's GMO labeling regulations continued, with celebrity chef Paola Carosella calling for the Senate to reject the proposed changes and preserve consumers' right to know. Brazil's Small Farmers Movement (MPA) similarly rejected the draft law, calling it a "huge setback" for environmental and human rights. [See more](#)

Reminder: to access the full text, archives and monitoring dashboard resources you need to log in to the [Bonus Eventus community portal](#) using your email address and personal password. Please contact us if you need any assistance or support.

For a more extensive compilation of recent biotech items, [click here](#)

North America

News release: USDA Agricultural Research Service announces partnership with Earth BioGenome Project, international cooperative initiative to sequence DNA of more than 1.5 million species, predicts effort will yield millions of new solutions to agriculture's challenges, like new ways to control insect pests

Commentary: Henry Miller and Drew Kershen write for Genetic Literacy Project, examining IFOAM-Organics International's science denial in its refusal to recognize modern technologies, they highlight several disadvantages of organic ag

News: Modern Farmer looks at legal status of vegan Impossible Burger that uses soy "heme" to "bleed" like real meat, notes FDA "still evaluating" whether to issue official approval of burger, already being sold by major nationwide restaurant chains; Impossible Foods secured "generally regarded as safe" approval

Commentary: Forbes contributor Steven Savage highlights Swiss company's new technology that can detect, reject individual corn kernels contaminated with cancer-causing aflatoxin, also notes insect-resistant GM maize reduces incidence of infections, "gene silencing" strategy could prevent toxin

Video: Farms.com talks to Corteva's Bryce Eger about the formation of the Corteva brand out of the DowDuPont merger, explains meaning of brand's name, mission statement

Commentary: Farmer's Daughter USA argues proposed boost in funding for organic research as part of 2018 Farm Bill should be invested in research to help entirety vs. single area of agriculture, notes organic's obsession with "natural" means it excludes many practices that are better for environment

Commentary: Texas A&M AgriLife Extension specialist Steve Byrns reports entomologist warns cotton farmers in state could face growing bollworm problem this season, says Bt cotton plants have lost effectiveness, recommends spraying, integrated crop management methods to gain control

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Joseph Opoku Gakpo of Cornell Alliance for Science examines discovery that Mozambique's Water Efficient Maize for Africa field trials are demonstrating resistance to fall armyworm pest, in addition to drought and stem borer

News: Burkina Faso news outlet reports on Target Malaria's plans to release sterile male GE mosquitoes to help curb spread of malaria, Coalition for the Protection of African Genetic Heritage (Copagen) argues all security guarantees have not yet been met

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Times of India reports a special investigation team (SIT) charged with looking into sale of illegal herbicide-tolerant cotton seeds seeks an extension for submitting its report, as it is an inter-state matter, highlights another SIT for recent pesticide deaths

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Announcement: EFSA responds to Dow AgroSciences' request for competent national authority in Finland to set import tolerance for quizalofop-P-ethyl in grain from GM maize with aad-1 gene, EFSA finds risks to human health unlikely

Commentary: Anti-GMO French NGO inf'OGM criticizes Canada's approval for marketing of golden rice, noting International Rice Research Institute said it would not sell golden rice in Canada, but countries where golden rice might help address vitamin A deficiency could rely on Canadian assessment

Commentary: Slow Food President Carlo Petrini writes for The European Sting, voices opposition to Bayer-Monsanto merger, argues it will create a de facto monopoly and threaten food sovereignty, points to risks associated with glyphosate and neonics

Commentary: Doro Schreier of German anti-GMO NGO Netzfrauen examines experimentation with GMOs and pesticides in Hawaii by large biotech companies, highlights overturning of Maui's GMO moratorium, points to health risks of pesticide exposure

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Peru's Diario Voces reports on Environment Ministry's monitoring of 60 yellow corn fields in San Martin for presence of GMOs, operating within framework of Moratorium on Living Modified Organisms Law, the ministry did not find any evidence of GMOs

News: Peruvian news outlet reports on Environment Ministry's release of results of monitoring in 60 yellow corn fields in San Martin for presence of GMOs, banned through Dec. 2021, the ministry found no evidence of GM corn in the fields, similar results to 2017

Campaign: Brazil's Small Farmers' Movement (MPA), along with several other NGOs, sign letter in opposition to Senate bill to remove mandatory "T" symbol from food products with GMOs, claiming there is no consensus on safety, and that it violates consumers' rights

News: Brazil's Exame reports on chef Paola Carosella's participation in campaign against removing mandatory "T" symbol from food products containing GMOs, drawing attention to the Senate bill on Twitter, highlights letter from NGOs with over 100 signatures

News: Mexico's La Jornada reports attorney for collective action against sowing of GM maize argues Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation has no basis to approve planting transgenic corn, claims case can't be compared with those involving cotton and soybeans

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News release: ISAAA's Crop Biotech Update runs release recapping recent Commonwealth Innovation Forum in Australia that touted innovation's role in delivering global economic productivity; academic cites delays in making GM banana variety available to Ugandan farmers through collaboration with scientists

[More Oceania items](#)

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Today's global biotechnology developments included a letter, issued by a coalition of Brazilian NGOs, calling for a halt to GMO labeling changes. Activists in Burkina Faso launched a campaign against the use of GM mosquitoes.

- Brazilian environmental, health and food activists issued a joint letter calling on the Brazilian Senate to reject draft legislation that would remove front-of-package "T" labels on items produced with transgenic ingredients. The groups claimed that nutrition label disclosures would not be informative enough for consumers. The Senate environment committee approved the proposed changes last week. [See more](#)
- The Citizen Collective for Agroecology (CCAIE) in Burkina Faso launched an Avaaz petition today calling on government officials to reject the use or trial of GM mosquitoes in the country, warning of unforeseen health and environmental risks. Speaking to *aOuaga*, the Coalition for the Protection of African Genetic Heritage similarly warned that biosecurity assessments of the project were lacking. [See more](#)

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North America

Commentary: Chuck Dinerstein of American Council on Science and Health voices frustration at USDA and FDA's different definitions of GM food, especially GE animals, highlights development of virus-resistant pigs, worries Congress will favor politics over science

News: Food Chemical News reports on Ag Secretary Perdue's statement that USDA is delayed in publishing its GMO disclosure rule, while it continues to collect comments from other federal agencies (subscription required)

News: Wisconsin-based dairy industry news source amplifies NMPF's "Peel Back the Label" campaign, cites Stonyfield and Danone-owned Left Field Farms among companies identified as using misleading food labeling or deceptive marketing to instigate fear in consumers in bid to increase sales

Commentary: Civil Eats contributor from FOE promotes peasant-led agroecology over industrial, GMO-using Gates Foundation promoted agribusiness practices; promoters state movement growing in Africa with FAO support and that coexistence is not an option

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science writer shares comments from Nigerian experts touting biotechnology as method to fight climate change, promote environmental conservation, combat deforestation

Campaign: Burkina Faso's Citizen Collective for Agroecology (CCAIE) launches petition to National Biosafety Agency Director, in opposition to release of GE mosquitoes for malaria control, pointing to

potential health and environmental risks

News: Burkina Faso news outlet reports on Target Malaria's plans to release GE mosquitoes to curb spread of malaria, highlights concerns raised by Coalition for the Protection of African Genetic Heritage

News: Zimbabwean news outlet reports on cotton seed producer Quton's release of new hybrid seed with higher yield potential, Quton managing director Edworks Mhandu spoke about the company's goal of going further with biotech to enhance the sector's competitiveness

More Africa items

Asia

News: Indo-Asian News Service reports USDA Chief Economist Robert Johansson would not comment on Delhi High Court ruling invalidating Monsanto's Bt cotton patent, but he did emphasize necessity of protecting seed companies' intellectual property rights

News: The Hans India reports on recent state-level bio-safety capacity building workshop, where joint director of Environment Ministry said farmers can earn more profits with GM crops, noted several ag research institutes in India looking into GE methods in plants on trial basis

News: The Hindu reports on former Indian Institute of Rice Research, Hyderabad director Dr. Kumar's statement that GM crops can help address declines in farm yield, speaking on sidelines of Biosafety Capacity Building Workshop

More Asia items

Europe

News: Competition Policy International reports Federal Antimonopoly Service of Russia grants approval of Bayer-Monsanto deal, following Bayer's agreement to transfer defined technologies to Russian recipients in seed farming and digital ag sectors

Commentary: Global Green Growth Institute Director-General Frank Rijsberman writes for Inter Press Service, recounts second Global Bioeconomy Summit in Berlin, highlights discussion of whether public will accept bioeconomy, given distrust of biotech, GMOs

News release: Testbiotech criticizes publication on risks of spread of GM maize transgenes in Spain, claims it shows close collaboration between EFSA and industry, notes co-author Alan Raybould is a Syngenta employee, highlights risks of teosinte contamination

Commentary: Christof Potthof of Germany's Gene Ethical Network (GeN) describes Green party's recent statement of openness to certain new technologies as puzzling, examines media coverage and regulatory debate

Commentary: Swiss GMO-Free Alliance (SAG) examines proposal to use CRISPR to select for female chicks to prevent current practice of euthanizing male chicks, believes the new method is unlikely to be introduced in Europe due to consumer stance on GE

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Brazil's Estadão reports several NGOs, including Oswaldo Cruz Foundation, linked to Ministry of Health, send letter with over 100 signatures to Senate in opposition to bill to limit GMO labeling, arguing it violates consumers' right to information

Commentary: Raquel Torres of Brazil's Outras Palavras weighs in on GMO labeling debate, argues the main issue is not with GMOs themselves, but with a production model that favors monocultures, pesticides and large companies

Commentary: Hugo Molinari of Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (Embrapa) writes for *Cenário Agro*, celebrates 20 years of GMO use in Brazil without any negative impact on health or the environment, argues Brazil can be an important player in the biotech sector

News: Mexico's *La Jornada* runs op-ed criticizing proposed General Law of Biodiversity as being bad for the national interests, warning it aims to privatize genetic resources, grants privileges to biotechnology industry, among others, without guaranteeing rights to information, citizen participation

Video: NGO *Seeds of the Venezuelan People* posts YouTube video explaining differentiated system established by country's Seed Law, which recognizes both seed subject to certification regime and so-called local seed, indigenous peasant and Afro-descendant

Commentary: Friends of the Earth's Uruguayan radio outlet, *Radio Mundo Real*, reports first Regional Consultation on International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture held April 17 in Brazil, with Latin American groups claiming regional seeds as common good in service of humanity

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Commentary: Australia's *Cosmos* magazine runs op-ed by official with Johns Hopkins Berman Institute of Bioethics discussing ethical issues posed by synthetic biology; notes biologists who developed rDNA technology, from which synbio descends, enacted moratorium on rDNA while they addressed risks

[More Oceania items](#)

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 Date: Monday, April 23, 2018 9:05:17 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included news that Italian farmer Giorgio Fidenato re-planted a GM maize variety for the upcoming growing season. In India, a weekend stakeholders meeting on pink bollworm continued to generate commentary on Bt cotton use in the country.

- Fidenato, speaking in local video reports this weekend, announced that he had planted GM maize despite local officials' previous attempts to stop the practice. Fidenato vowed to continue to fight "illegal" GM crop restrictions, citing his vindication by a European Court of Justice ruling in late 2017. [See more](#)
- Indian news outlets reported on a recent stakeholders' meeting to discuss efforts to control the cotton pest pink bollworm. In a statement to *The Times of India*, the Maharashtra state agriculture minister claimed that the country's acceptance of Bt cotton had left farmers with few options for fighting the pest. [See more](#)
- Responding to the common "non-GMO" label, a health columnist for *The New York Times* reported that, according to scientific consensus, GM crops are safe for human and animal health. Columnist Jane Brody reviewed recent research supporting safety and benefits, and she concluded by urging GMO opponents to take a more nuanced view of the issue. [See more](#)

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North America

[Commentary: New York Times personal health columnist Jane Brody examines persistent fear of GM foods in spite of years of study and no evidence of harm, explains how labels can be misleading, highlights several beneficial applications](#)

[News: Bloomberg reports on how China is buying its way into Europe, highlights ChemChina-Syngenta merger as biggest deal between China, Europe in 2016, provides charts showing chemicals as top investment sector for China since 2008](#)

[Letter to the editor: California newspaper runs letter from director of Center for Consumer Freedom reflecting on Earth Day, arguing genetically improved plants help Earth by saving land, reducing pesticide use, asserting studies show organic agriculture has lower yields, requires more land](#)

[Commentary: Kansas newspaper's op-ed discusses Earth Day, cites USFRA list of ways nation's ag producers improve environment, with adoption of GM crops reducing pesticide applications 36 percent over last 20 years, helping preserve 51 million acres of land in 2014 and decreasing soil erosion](#)

[More North America items](#)

Africa

[Letter to the editor: Adam Kighoma Ali Malima writes to Uganda's New Vision, recounts visit to biotech research centers in Kawan da and Namulonge, praises Ugandan scientists' advances, notes Africa needs](#)

a developmental framework success story

Commentary: African Seed Trade Association annual newsletter highlights efforts to address fall armyworm in the region, includes commentary on biotechnology projects

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Times of India reports on Maharashtra state Ag Minister Pandurang Phundkar's assessment that cost-intensive GM Bt cotton seed has wiped out alternatives from the market, speaking at a meeting on strategies for preventing pink bollworm attack

News: Telangana Today reports on awareness program organized by Kamareddy District Agriculture Department, and attended by 220 seed and pesticide dealers, who were warned to follow Seeds Act guidelines and not sell herbicide tolerant seeds

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Leonardo Facco writes editorial for Italian Libertarian party's blog, criticizes groups Friuli Venezia Giulia Region and Coldiretti for continued opposition to Giorgio Fidenato's GM corn sowing, amplifies Fidenato's response

Video: Italian news sites syndicate video reporting that Italian farmer Giorgio Fidenato plans to continue planting GM corn, says he will continue challenging the law as Italy ignores EU laws

Event: Norway's Biotechnology Council to host debate with Danish Ethical Council in Copenhagen (May 2), on future regulation of GMOs and how to achieve sustainable agriculture in the future

News: Norwegian research news site reports on master's thesis project at Norway's Environmental and Life Sciences University (NMBU), in which researcher surveyed farmers in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania to compare attitudes on GMOs

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Argentina's Pagina 12 reports team of researchers from National Institute of Agricultural Technology (INTA) issues book, "Pesticides in the environment," that argues use of GMOs doesn't produce higher yields, warns massive use of agrochemicals leads to "vulnerability" and calls for agroecology

News: Mexican news outlet reports on Native Seeds Festival in Laguna Kana, where organizers discussed invasion of transgenics and replacement of corn crops as main challenges facing Yucatan Peninsula peasants

News: Mexico's Cronica recaps debate held at UNAM between opponents and supporters of transgenics; supporters include Francisco Bolivar Zapata, who emphasized responsible biotechnology, lack of evidence to prove transgenics harmful to human health

Interview: Mexico's El Economista talks to writer Cristina Barros Valero about role of biodiversity in Mexican cuisine, she highlights its importance, warns against adoption of transgenics, argues GM corn has achieved only resistance to glyphosate and resistance to an insect not found in Mexico

News: Brasil De Fato reports on advancement of relaxed GMO labeling measures in the Senate, highlights opposition from Consumer Protection Institute (Idec), which claims the bill violates the Consumer Protection Code

News: Agencia EFE reports on recent exhibition in Plaza de la Constitucion, where Guatemalan farmers demanded protections of native seeds and promotion of agroecology, and voiced opposition to transgenics

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

There were no noteworthy biotechnology developments in Oceania during today's monitoring. Click the link below for the latest items.

[More Oceania items](#)

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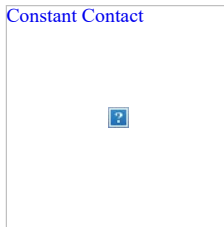
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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Diane.Wray-Cohen@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - April 23, 2018
 Date: Monday, April 23, 2018 4:04:19 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

After NGOs marked Earth Day this weekend with a series of U.S. speeches from anti-GMO, anti-corporate activist Vandana Shiva and the spread of false claims about pesticides pushing bees toward extinction, this week's newsletter provides links to various sources' attempts to unearth some scientific facts on food and agriculture.

This week's Favorable Outcomes includes a review of bee health issues from Jon Entine, some tips from David Zaruk for communicating positive messages about pesticides and a couple of Earth Day-themed pieces. Also, Richard Roberts takes a closer look at biosafety legislation in Uganda.

To view items on this newsletter, log in on the [Bonus Eventus Community](#) page. To create an account, fill out the Request Membership form on the front page of the site. To share articles, click on the Twitter icon.

Please [contact us](#) if you have any questions.

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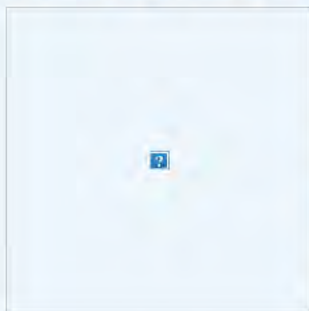
[Stakeholder Spotlight](#)

[Stories Worth Sharing](#)

[What's Trending?](#)

[Calendar highlights](#)

Stakeholder Spotlight: U.S. Right to Know



An offshoot of the Organic Consumers Association, U.S. Right to Know has been a key player recently in promoting and supporting anti-pesticide litigation.

The NGO has publicized court hearings in California on claims that glyphosate causes cancer,

Stories Worth Sharing

[Jon Entine: Disputing claims that bees are going extinct and pesticides are to blame](#)

[Alex Berezow: Organic Consumers Association helps spread "nonsense" claim that pesticides influence school shootings](#)

[Richard Roberts: Anti-biotech activists using poison pill amendments to Uganda biosafety bill to impose pro-poverty agenda](#)

[David Zaruk: 10 tips for communicating positive information about pesticides](#)

[Ronald Bailey: USDA decision on gene editing opens "vibrant new biotech crop and seed industry"](#)

[Will Coggin: Earth Day brings out "garbage advice" from activists to shun GMOs, support organic](#)

[Henry Miller/Jeff Stier: Earth Day renews "deeply flawed" anti-pesticide claims from Rachel Carson](#)

[Mark Lynas: I changed my mind on GMOs because I "got the science wrong"](#)

[Michelle Miller: What Vandana Shiva needs to know about American family farms](#)

as well as promoting similar claims and anti-industry messaging in seeking to boost sales of Carey Gillam's "Whitewash" book.

USRTK also actively recruits whistleblowers to expose "hidden crimes or scandals" in the food industry.

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about U.S Right to Know.

CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES

Science Codex: Friends of the Earth ignores danger to bees from common organic pesticide spinosad [?](#)

USDA radio service examines whether consumer-focused GMOs can bring public acceptance [?](#)

CLICK FOR BONUS EVENTUS MONITORING

What's Trending?

California court rules state can list glyphosate as potential carcinogen

Brazil's Senate approves measure to relax GMO labeling requirements

U.S. consultation on neonics ends with activists promoting submission of 219,000 negative comments

Court ruling could open door to GM crops in Italy

Vote planned Friday on proposed EU ban on outdoor uses of neonics

Calendar highlights

April 16-20	April 16-18	April 17
International Symposium on Pollination	Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry North America meeting	International Day of Peasant Struggle
April 21-29	April 23-24	April 23-24
International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements leadership course in Ghana	International Conference on Food Technology and Biotechnology	International Conference on Climate-Smart Agriculture and Agroecology

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<p>Stakeholder database</p> <p>More information on the people and organizations influencing the food and agriculture debate</p>	<p>Monitoring portal</p> <p>Catch up on the latest news and other developments impacting regulations on agriculture.</p>	<p>Bonus Eventus community</p> <p>Connect with academic experts and researchers, journalists and agriculture allies.</p>
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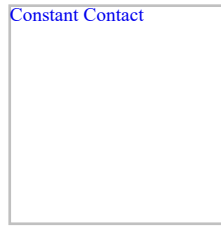
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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Caitrin.Martin@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - April 23, 2018
 Date: Monday, April 23, 2018 4:03:57 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Caitrin,

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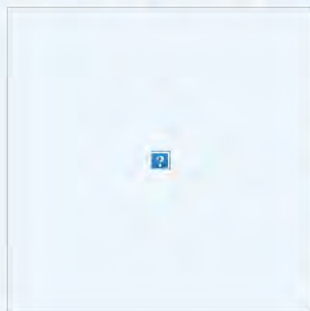
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[Mark Lynas: I changed my mind on GMOs because I "got the science wrong"](#)

[Michelle Miller: What Vandana Shiva needs to know about American family farms](#)

as well as promoting similar claims and anti-industry messaging in seeking to boost sales of Carey Gillam's "Whitewash" book.

USRTK also actively recruits whistleblowers to expose "hidden crimes or scandals" in the food industry.

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about U.S Right to Know.

CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES

Science Codex: Friends of the Earth ignores danger to bees from common organic pesticide spinosad [?](#)

USDA radio service examines whether consumer-focused GMOs can bring public acceptance [?](#)

CLICK FOR BONUS EVENTUS MONITORING

What's Trending?

California court rules state can list glyphosate as potential carcinogen

Brazil's Senate approves measure to relax GMO labeling requirements

U.S. consultation on neonics ends with activists promoting submission of 219,000 negative comments

Court ruling could open door to GM crops in Italy

Vote planned Friday on proposed EU ban on outdoor uses of neonics

Calendar highlights

April 16-20	April 16-18	April 17
International Symposium on Pollination	Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry North America meeting	International Day of Peasant Struggle
April 21-29	April 23-24	April 23-24
International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements leadership course in Ghana	International Conference on Food Technology and Biotechnology	International Conference on Climate-Smart Agriculture and Agroecology

CLICK HERE TO ACCESS FULL EVENTS CALENDAR

<p>Stakeholder database</p> <p>More information on the people and organizations influencing the food and agriculture debate</p>	<p>Monitoring portal</p> <p>Catch up on the latest news and other developments impacting regulations on agriculture.</p>	<p>Bonus Eventus community</p> <p>Connect with academic experts and researchers, journalists and agriculture allies.</p>
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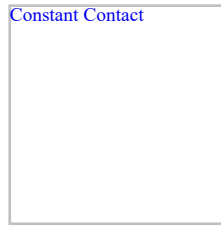
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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Global biotechnology developments over the weekend included commentary that a recent court decision could mean Italian farmers now can plant GM crops. A science writer reports the Impossible Burger is heading toward controversy despite studies that show it's safe. Several commentators noted that many Earth Day messages are not science-based.

- The Luca Coscioni Association's Marco Perduca wrote in *The Huffington Post* Italian edition that the Court of Udine's decision earlier in the week to dismiss charges against Italian farmer Giorgio Fidenato for planting GM crops reaffirmed an EU court decision that Italy has no concrete reason to prohibit GMO cultivation. Perduca wrote that farmers throughout the country now can plant GM crops, and researchers now can apply for GMO field trial permits successfully. [See more](#)
- *Business Insider's* science correspondent noted recent articles indicate Impossible Food's vegan burger, which includes GM heme, is heading for controversy. However, writer Erin Brodwin pointed out that research, repeated assertions by scientists and years of people eating heme indicate no health problems. As for claims that heme may cause cancer, Brodwin wrote that studies have found no link, and in fact one study found that people who consume heme were less likely to develop cancer. [See more](#)
- Earth Day celebrations prompted commentary from GMO supporters such as Henry I. Miller and Jeff Stier, who wrote for *Fox News* that the event ignores science and allows "environmental activists and alarmists to warn of apocalypse, dish anti-technology dirt, and proselytize." The Center for Consumer Freedom's Will Coggin warned against taking bad Earth Day advice. One example Coggin gave was that environmentalists often warn against GM food, although biotech crops offer many environmental benefits. [See more](#)

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For a more extensive compilation of recent biotech items, [click here](#)

North America

[News: Bloomberg reports on Impossible Burgers latest attempt to convince FDA that its GE heme is safe, Tom Neltner of Environmental Defense Fund and Ricardo Salvador of Union of Concerned Scientists acknowledge potential environmental benefits](#)

[Commentary: Henry Miller of Stanford's Hoover Institution and Alex Berezow of American Council on Science and Health write opinion piece for Fox News, criticizing an'ti-Trump nature of recent science march, they highlight USDA's recent pro-biotech policies](#)

[Commentary: Writing for Naples Daily News, Center for Consumer Freedom's Will Coggin warns of bad Earth Day advice, including opposition to GMO foods, which can reduce pesticide use, recommendations to eat organic, which requires more land use](#)

[Commentary: Reason magazine science correspondent Ronald Bailey urges government regulators to learn from earlier overreactions, use existing regulations for biomedical research to avoid stifling innovation](#)

[Commentary: Wisconsin State Farmer runs op-ed by executive director of The Center for Food Integrity touting need for farmers, ag industry to defend their environmental record on Earth Day, recommending](#)

they tackle topics such as GM seeds, pitching stories to media that incorporate messages about benefits of biotechnology

News: Business Insider science correspondent reports Impossible Food's GM veggie burger heading for controversy, but notes scientists and studies on heme show no cause for concern, professor notes heme has been eaten for years without problems

Commentary: The New England Skeptical Society's NeuroLogica site posts blog by physician questioning whether elected leaders qualified to properly regulate cutting-edge science and technology, such as genetic engineering, CRISPR, other biotech; he opposes mandatory GMO labeling, largely because definition of "GMO" vague, imprecise

More North America items

Africa

News: Ugandan news site reports scientists angered by Parliament's changes to biosafety bill, including provision to imprison scientists if something inadvertently goes wrong with GMO, notes all new technology carry some adverse effects; says law will stifle innovation

Commentary: CLOC-La Via Campesina recaps World Day of Peasant Struggles observance held April 17 and 18 in Chile, highlighting role of peasant and indigenous women producers, criticizing "transnational offensive that seeks to patent and privatize seeds"

News: Cameroon news magazine amplifies African news magazine report that Burkina Faso will introduce 10,000 male mosquitoes rendered sterile by genetic modification into wild to control malaria; NGO initiates petition against release

More Africa items

Asia

News: Indian news site reports state of Sikkim's ban on some conventional products, part of its efforts to become "organic state," causing food prices to rise up to eight times normal price; efforts include seizing conventional produce and dumping at landfill, angering producers

Commentary: NGO writing in Philippine newspaper chides government for promoting GMOs owned by transnational corporations instead of supporting organic agriculture, developing farmers' skills

News: The Hans India reports police and ag officials conducted inspections at seed and pesticide shops in Kukunoorpally village for sale of illegal and counterfeit products, police warned about gov't ban on Bt-III cotton seeds, threatened legal action against violators

More Asia items

Europe

Commentary: European Seed - David Zaruk offers 10 rules for communicating on pesticides amid manipulative activists using fear tools like children, bees and fear of cancer to undermine public trust in industry, related products

Commentary: Marco Perduca of Luca Coscioni Association writes for HuffPost Italy, expresses gratitude for farmer Giorgio Fidenato's civil disobedience, calls for seizing opportunity to review unjustified lack of permits for GM field trials for Italian researchers

News: Politico EU ag news roundup highlights Parliament revisions to organic regulations as European Food Safety Authority near completion of safety assessments on risks of exposure to multiple pesticides

Commentary: Corporate Europe Observatory criticizes inclusion of food industry lobbyist on short list of names for appointment to EFSA's management board

Commentary: Keine-Gentechnik reports debate within Germany's Greens Party on new GE methods such as CRISPR/Cas, with party aiming to develop new policy program amid speculation some members want to give up strict rejection of agro-genetic engineering; article notes theory that GE, biotechnology could prolong life

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Mexican news source reports member of agricultural sciences faculty at university suggests use of transgenics, ag chemicals have contributed to development of agriculture, feeding more people, asserts challenge to provide products with least risk of harmful effects, warns Mexico depends on imported corn

News: Mexican news site interviews Greenpeace coordinator about NGO's efforts to stop GM crop cultivation in Yucatan, Greenpeace official claims GM farming hurts environment, encourages deforestation and overuse of pesticides

Campaign: Coalition of anti-transgenic NGOs letter calls on Ecuador president to suspend alleged ag and environment ministries' regulation proposing to permit transgenics for research, citing threats to biodiversity, irreversible genetic contamination

Commentary: Venezuelan left-wing news source runs op-ed by journalism professor criticizing country's lack of regulation to prevent import of GMOs, complaining about Brazilian products that list their GM and transgenic components on labels, arguing the late President Hugo Chavez opposed allowing GMOs in Venezuela

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Australian farming news site reports Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development says current mechanisms effective to minimize GM crops' impact on non-GMO properties, notes no shipments rejected since adopting GM canola

[More Oceania items](#)

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included news that the proposed draft U.S. Farm Bill contains amendments addressing gene editing. In Italy, a regional court dismissed charges against a farmer accused of planting GM crops.

- U.S. media outlets reported that the draft text of the 2018 Farm Bill includes two amendments proposed by U.S. Rep. Ted Yoho of Florida. One amendment would require the Environmental Protection Agency, the Food and Drug Administration and the Department of Agriculture to compile a report on how to remove regulatory barriers to gene-edited plants. A second amendment, similarly, would require FDA and USDA to issue a report on how to best streamline regulations on genetically engineered animals. The Biotechnology Innovation Organization issued a statement praising the proposals. [See more](#)
- In Italy, the regional Court of Udine dismissed charges against maize farmer Giorgio Fidenato over his planting of GM corn. Judge Carlotta Silva, citing a European Court of Justice ruling from earlier in the year, said that Italian law had not prohibited the maize planting at that time. [See more](#)

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North America

News: Agweek reports U.S. House Agriculture Committee approves 15 Republican amendments to its farm bill that would address biotechnology, other issues, including amendment to create Biotechnology and Agricultural Trade Program to advocate against foreign trade barriers that restrict use of GE commodities

Commentary: Biotechnology Innovation Organization reacts to amendments to farm bill passed by U.S. House Agriculture Committee, applauds how they address some of BIO's key policy priorities, notes amendment that would create Biotechnology and Agricultural Trade Program

Commentary: Writing in The Hill, Illinois farmer and Global Farm Network board member thanks Agriculture Secretary Perdue for decision to relieve gene-edited crops from burdensome GMO regulation, says move allows technology to flourish

Announcement: Health Canada announces approval of raw and refined sugar produced from GM sugarcane grown in Brazil for sale in Canada, says scientists found GM sugarcane posed no greater risk to human health than raw and refined sugar currently available on Canadian market

News: Writing in Yale Environment 360, science author examines whether biodegradable vaccines developed with gene editing can protect crops from pathogens, reduce pesticide use, boost yields; he suggests emerging technologies may make farming more sustainable

News release: The College of New Jersey recaps Vandana Shiva's speech, "The Transnational Politics of Science, Seeds, Power and Gender," she gave April 12 as part of 2018 Dawley Memorial Lecture, during which she urged attendees eat organic food as often as possible

More North America items**Africa**

Commentary: Nobel laureate Sir Richard Roberts writes for Uganda's New Vision, criticizes proposed amendments to Uganda's Biosafety Bill resulting from anti-GMO activist pressure, argues they are not based on sound science and will not improve safety

News: Nigerian news source report on country's March for Science featured comments from Nigeria farmer association VP proclaiming biotechnology has potential to lift farmers

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science blogger reports farmers in Mozambique hope researchers can develop improved seeds to cope with changing climate and drought; they also blame climate change for increased pest attacks, say WEMA project shows good seeds can cope with pests, weather

More Africa items

Asia

Commentary: Ashok Jha, independent director on Nuziveedu Seeds' board, writes for India's Financial Express, praises Delhi High Court's ruling canceling Monsanto's Bt cotton patents, notes gov't will not allow monopolists to dictate prices for essential inputs

Commentary: Hindustan Times highlights "food revolution," pitting small-scale, "de facto organic" farming against industrial ag, cites shift in science community favoring sustainable methods, suggests need for Indian farmers, government to embrace pesticide-, GMO-free approach

Commentary: Times of India's Abha Goradia examines rice farmers' return to indigenous varieties, noting they could withstand climate change and needed little fertilizer before farmers were "tricked" into believing that GM seeds would boost yields

News: Official news source of Communist Party of Vietnam reports Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development proposes cutting nearly 70 percent of business rules, including requirements concerning animal feed and GM food, in government effort to make nation's business climate friendlier

More Asia items

Europe

News: Italian wire service ANSA reports libertarian farmer Giorgio Fidenato acquitted of charge of violating ban on planting GMO corn in Udine Court, follows September 2017 European Court of Justice ruling providing interpretation of EU regulation

News release: EuropaBio reacts to outcomes of GRACE, G-TwYST and GM090+ research projects, calls on EU to eliminate unnecessary animal testing, reinstate science in GMO safety assessments, arguing mandatory studies do not add safety or build trust

News: The Scottish Farmer gets reaction from Rothamsted Research's senior plant geneticist to European Court of Justice's "landmark opinion" on definition of GM organisms; Professor Nigel Harford says opinion could break deadlock of legislative barriers to crop biotechnology on continent

Commentary: Editorial for Spain's Libertad Digital hopes EU Court of Justice will make ruling consistent with Advocate General Bobek's opinion that products of new breeding techniques are exempt from GMO regulation, highlights USDA's recent statement

News: EU Food Law subscription site reports Poland's President Andrzej Duda signs country's amended bill on microorganisms and GMOs, paving way for its implementation

Campaign: German NGO Aktion Agrar calls on supporters to sign petition calling on federal and state ag ministers to develop ag policies allowing farmers to switch to environmentally friendly animal

husbandry, decries destruction of rainforest for feed production

Commentary: Writing in Italian news source, Navdanya activist promotes FAO symposium promoting agroecology, says society is in urgent need of shift away from industrial ag model promoting heavy use of agro-toxins to feed the world

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Brazilian Institute of Consumer Protection (IDEC) discredits Senate Environment Committee's approval of relaxed GMO labeling measures, arguing only two senators were present for the vote; urges supporters to contact senators in support of labeling

News: Brazil's Agrolink reports on Senate Environment Committee's approval of proposal to modify GMO labeling requirements, removing mandated "T" symbol, proposed by Sen. Cidinho Santos, who argued there is no evidence of damage to human health

Commentary: Greenpeace Mexico legal campaigner Maria Colin writes for Mexico Ambiental, praises civil society efforts for successfully preventing fast track approval of General Biodiversity Law, now required to go through full consultation

Commentary: Union of Scientists Committed to Society members write in La Jornada, claim GM crops do not increase yields, while pesticides used on them harm environment and human health; adds study shows glyphosate create weed resistance to herbicides, claims WHO designates glyphosate as carcinogen

Commentary: Latin American Scientific Society of Agroecology posts statement on FAO's agroecology meeting, warns effort should not involve "conventional international organizations" that distort agroecology with sustainable intensification, but should instead focus on peasant farmers

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

There were no noteworthy biotechnology developments in Oceania during today's monitoring. Click the link below for the latest items.

[More Oceania items](#)

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included a statement from India's central government noting that it was reviewing a recent court decision on seed patents in light of setting seed prices.

- *Press Trust of India* and the *Financial Express* reported on a statement from India's secretary of agriculture, who said the government was reviewing a Delhi High Court decision invalidating Monsanto's patents on some cottonseed varieties. Agriculture secretary S K Pattanayak said the government was likely to determine next week whether to remove Monsanto's trait fees on cottonseeds. [See more](#)
- European researchers working under the GM Plants Two-Year Safety Testing (G-TwYST) project, which attempted to recreate a rat feeding study that found harmful effects from GM maize, have released draft findings showing no indicators of harm during a two-year examination. German activist group Testbiotech, writing before the complete study has been made publicly available, claimed that the methodology was flawed. [See more](#)

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North America

[Commentary: Andrew Porterfield of Genetic Literacy Project examines how AquaBounty's GE salmon remains caught in Congressional "sausage grinder," in spite of being ready for market, highlights AquaBounty's frustrations](#)

[Commentary: Biotechnology Innovation Organization's Connor McKoy amplifies Wall Street Journal article, makes case that gene editing on the continuum of plant breeding; suggests next big hurdle will be consumer acceptance in face of fear-mongering by activists](#)

[Commentary: Medium runs GMO Answers piece debunking The Non-GMO Project's #NonGMOChallenge that urges shoppers to look for their label in grocery stores; points out initiative promotes spread of myths about GMOs, applauds consumers using social media to set record straight](#)

[News release: Center for Biological Diversity report highlights 10 most iconic endangered species in Mexico, with report attributing monarch butterfly threats to GM agriculture, pesticides](#)

[Report: Friends of the Earth publishes issue brief on GMO animal replacement products, argues that new lab-grown synbio meat products such as Impossible Burger have not been sufficiently tested for health and environmental safety, promotes organic meat](#)

[Commentary: Friends of the Earth deputy director writing for Food Tank urges Congress to reject GOP farm bill that would increase risks to health, environment by boosting ag practices based on pesticides, GM foods, antibiotics, hormones; says bill significantly weakens small-scale farmers and organic ag](#)

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Nigerian Tribune reports on recent March for Science, Open Forum on Agricultural Biotechnology's Rose Gidado highlighted goal of increasing public understanding, and to emphasize role of science, especially biotech, in national development

News: Kenya's The Star reports on Kenya Biodiversity Coalition's opposition to use of GM maize as solution to fall armyworm invasion, claiming that the pest does not spare GM crops, and that the armyworm was introduced as part of strategy to push GMOs in Africa

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: India's Financial Express reports Ag Ministry will make decision on whether or not to scrap Monsanto's trait fee on Bt cotton next week, after reviewing Delhi High Court ruling which invalidated Monsanto's patents, according to Ag Secretary S K Pattanayak

News: Press Trust of India reports on Ag Secretary S K Pattanayak's statement that the ministry will evaluate recent Delhi High Court ruling dismissing Monsanto's request for patent enforcement on Bt cotton, before deciding next course of action

News: Pakistan Observer reports experts predict global market for GM seeds to grow 10 percent in coming years, based on projected demand, which shows GM crops widely adopted since introduction; article cites ISAAA report on worldwide biotech crop market value

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Report: EU's GM Plants Two Year Safety Testing project (G-TwYST) publishes draft conclusions and recommendations on design, conduct, interpretation and analysis of animal feeding studies for GMO risk assessment, includes efforts to ensure stakeholder engagement, transparency and data accessibility

Commentary: Testbiotech criticizes recent EU-funded two-year rat feeding trial using glyphosate-tolerant GM maize which found no evidence of adverse effects, argues the feeding trial is of limited value in assessing overall risks of GMOs

News: Germany's Sueddeutsche Zeitung reports on launch of "Agrarwende-Forum" initiative by anti-GMO activist Heiner Schwab, with goal of offering a monthly round table to counteract farmer dependency on large multinational corporations

News: Politico Pro reports U.K. environment and ag secretary tells parliamentary audit committee country may stray from precautionary principle post Brexit in areas ripe for innovation

News release: The Greens/European Free Alliance voices support of encouraging ecological re-localization of protein crops within the EU, pointing to negative health and environmental impacts of GM soy cultivation in South America, calls for shift to agroecology

Commentary: GMWatch amplifies review in Agricultural Systems demonstrating potential risks of Rothamsted Research's GM omega-3 camelina to terrestrial invertebrates, including butterflies and honeybees, highlights authors' call for further investigation

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Brazil's Primeira Hora reports on Senate Environment Committee's passage of new GMO labeling bill, removing mandatory "T" symbol; Sen. Cidinho Santos notes consumers' right to information is preserved, perhaps even more clearly

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: New Zealand Herald reports on Environment Court's ruling in favor of Whangarei District Council's (WDC) case against precautionary language in anti-GMO policy, allowing for deletion of the word "plants" and creating a total GMO ban

More Oceania items

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Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included an activist news conference in Mexico's Yucatan calling on political candidates to reject GM crops.

- In a news conference organized by Greenpeace Mexico, civil society groups from the Yucatan Peninsula called on gubernatorial candidates to take positions to preserve indigenous farming communities. The groups highlighted the importance of beekeeping in the region and urged politicians to uphold a GMO moratorium. [See more](#)
- The European Parliament endorsed a non-binding report calling for an increased focus on developing domestic plant protein sources. A *Politico* report highlighted lawmakers' concerns about the region's reliance on imports and highlighted environmental concerns about soy production in South America leading to deforestation. The environment committee approved the report in March. [See more](#)

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North America

Commentary: Chicago Tribune freelancer reviews confusion over variety of labels on products claiming to be made with "greener," ethical practices, cites "USDA Organic" label certifying pesticide-free, non-GMO, amplifies USDA-accredited company representatives recommending use of EWG Dirty Dozen list

News: AgWeek reports farmers expected to receive notices by mid-May on ways to file for Syngenta Viptera settlement; attorney involved with case urges farmers to respond quickly; final court approval due in November

Commentary: Alli Willis of Non-GMO Project's Living Non-GMO blog explains importance of rigorous testing for non-GMO verification, highlights examples of GMO crop contamination, summarizes Non-GMO Project's testing process

Commentary: Nolan Peterson of Heritage Foundation's Daily Signal examines ways in which Ukraine stands to gain from U.S.-China trade war, China's increased tariffs on U.S. corn opens door for more Ukrainian corn exports, already favored by China as non-GMO

Announcement: Center for Food Safety promotes Food Revolution Summit featuring NGO's director Andrew Kimbrell (April 28-May 6)

News release: UC Davis announces renewal of College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences' World Food Center, with mission to mobilize research, educational and outreach resources to promote innovative, sustainable and equitable food systems

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Editorial for Kenya's The Star notes there is a solution to fall armyworm crisis in allowing trials on GM maize, demonstrates that gov't has a choice of letting farmers lose half their crops or allowing GM maize

Review: Journal of Pest Science publishes analysis from international team of crop researchers concluding negligible risk of Bt cowpea on non-target organisms in West Africa

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News release: Philippine Network of Food Security Programmes, Inc. (PNFSP) announces recent meeting with partner NGOs from several Asia-Pacific countries, to raise concerns and issues in each country regarding opposition to the Golden Rice Project

Audio: English-language Korean news podcast features University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Professor Emeritus Bruce Chassy and UC Berkeley's Claire Kremen in discussion of health and environmental aspects of GMOs, in context of Korea's labeling debate

News: India's Food and Beverage News reports on Food Safety and Standards Authority of India's (FSSAI) draft food labeling regulations, includes requirement that food business operators (FBOs) label all products containing at least five percent GE ingredients

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Politico Pro EU reports on Parliament's support of EU protein crop plan, critics of current reliance on South American soybean imports argue it threatens EU food security and contributes to deforestation, MEPs called for allowing soy on organic farms

Commentary: German news columnist says Greens' GMO opposition is unprincipled protest of Monsanto vs science-backed stance, argues Greens would more effectively annoy Monsanto by backing GM plants that reduce pesticide applications

Commentary: Karen Shevina of German NGO Aktion Agrar, summarizes recent political market breakfast meeting, promotes presentation of "Stop Bayer Monsanto" initiative, notes large mergers can be broken up if enough people protest

Interview: European Seed interviews Allen and Overy attorney Geert Glas on his analysis of EU Advocate General Bobek's opinion on regulating new breeding techniques, Glas notes Bobek clearly rejected NGOs' allegations of invalidity of certain GMO Directive articles

Commentary: Inf'OGM's Eric Meunier criticizes USDA's decision not to regulate Calyxt's new GM high-fiber wheat variety, argues Calyxt has not demonstrated lack of risk, voices concern about its possible entry into the EU

Interview: Spanish organic brand Navarra Ecologica interviews University of Lleida soil science professor Jose Ramon Olarieta Alberdi, he believes that GMOs are unnecessary and unsafe, claims they exist for large companies to control the seed supply

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News release: Greenpeace Mexico sends letter to Yucatan gubernatorial candidates, calls for policies to support organic farming and beekeeping, and traditional indigenous knowledge, highlights importance of GMO-free honey for exports

News: Mexico's Diario De Yucatan reports on letter from civil organizations, including Greenpeace, to

Yucatan gubernatorial candidates, calling for polices to support organic farming, beekeeping and indigenous knowledge, and Transgenic-Free Zones

Commentary: ETC Group's Silvia Ribeiro writes for Mexico's La Jornada, notes all of ETC Group's predictions regarding major agribusiness mergers have been fulfilled, criticizes Francisco Bolivar Zapata's support of GMOs at recent UNAM debate

News: Argentina's Pagina 12 reports on mobilizations in observation of International Day of Peasant Struggle, organized by La Via Campesina, activist leader Diego Monton spoke out against gov'ts and companies violating rights of peasants and indigenous peoples

Announcement: Brazilian Senate news agency announces bill to remove mandatory GMO labeling using "T" symbol is approved by Environment Committee, Sen. Cidinho Santos, who supported the bill, noted consumers will still be provided with information

News: Brazil's Agrolink reports on research by Phillips McDougall suggesting GMO development takes average 13 years of study and R\$400 million, Brazilian agronomist Hugo Molinari notes there have not been any negative health effects after 20 years in Brazil

More Latin America items

Oceania

There were no noteworthy biotechnology developments in Oceania during today's monitoring. Click the link below for the latest items.

More Oceania items

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Diane Wray-Cohen@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - April 16, 2018
 Date: Monday, April 16, 2018 9:04 55 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Today's global biotechnology developments included news that Brazil's Senate environment committee plans to review legislation updating the country's GMO labeling guidelines. In India, seed technology firms launched a new trade group to advocate for technology-supportive policies.

- In Brazil, the Senate Committee on the Environment (CMA) is scheduled to review and potentially vote Tuesday on legislation that would loosen some of the country's guidance on labeling genetically modified ingredients. Specifically, the measure would remove the mandatory "T" symbol on foods produced with transgenic ingredients. The measure had been rejected in the Committee on Social Affairs, where one senator claimed that removing it would put organic producers at a disadvantage in the marketplace. [See more](#)
- India news outlets reported that agricultural technology firms Bayer, Monsanto, DowDuPont and Syngenta had teamed up with local firms to form a new trade body called the Alliance for Agri Innovation (AAI). In a statement, the group said it will promote the development of plant breeding innovations in India. The move comes after a Delhi High Court ruled last week that Monsanto seed patents were invalid under the country's legal code. [See more](#)

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For a more extensive compilation of recent biotech items, [click here](#).

North America

[Commentary: Care2 amplifies EWG Dirty Dozen, Clean Fifteen lists, notes EWG singles out produce commonly grown with GE methods, highlights recommendation of purchasing organic produce](#)

[Commentary: Thuy Bercher writes for Odyssey, lists six reasons why GMOs are better than organic, points to safety, improved nutrition and reduced pesticide use, in addition to environmental benefits](#)

[Commentary: CropLife's Eric Sfiligoj muses on potential disappearance of Monsanto name from agricultural landscape after merger with Bayer completed, points out anti-ag activists may miss it most because Monsanto name was staple of their protests](#)

[News: Bloomberg reports on developments in microbiome treatments as means to improve crop yields, Indigo CEO wants to reshape ag industry structure, product would compete with chemicals companies and distributors](#)

[More North America items](#)

Africa

[Commentary: Anthony Daka of Uganda's Daily Monitor speaks out against spread of misinformation about GMOs, noting there is no evidence of health risks, blames delay in Biosafety Bill passage on anti-GMO activism and lack of science communication](#)

[News: Uganda's The Observer profiles Uganda Biotechnology Consortium chairman Erostat Nsubuga,](#)

highlights his innovative use of tissue culture to improve disease-resistance in bananas, he notes those opposed to biosafety bill don't understand the science

News: Kenya's The Star reports on African Agricultural Technology Foundation technical operations director Emmanuel Okogbenin's assertion that GM maize is best method for controlling fall armyworm invasion, he explained efforts to combat misinformation

News: Kenya news site highlights comments by USAid's fall armyworm taskforce coordinator made at recent press conference raising concerns about the pest for agriculture, impact on food security, noting resistance to usual pesticides makes armyworm more dangerous

News: Nigeria's Vanguard reports on National Biotechnology Development Agency CEO Abayomi Oguntunde's speech at recent 2018 March for Science event, he voiced concern about decreasing farming population, called on Nigeria to embrace ag biotech

News: Agribusiness Global report examines potential food security threats associated with fall armyworm infestations in Africa; notes lifting GM bans in region could help control pests' impact

News release: Government of Ghana announces recent seminar on GMOs hosted by National Biosafety Authority, NBA's Gloria Naa Dzama Addico emphasized importance of biotech for reducing use of land and chemicals, Food Sovereignty Ghana's Edwin Kweku Andoh Baffour voiced opposition to the technology

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Press Trust of India reports on formation of Alliance for Agri Innovation (AAI) amid patent and royalty dispute between Monsanto and Nuziveedu Seeds, with goal of promoting new ag technologies; Bayer, Dow, DuPont, Monsanto and Syngenta are members

Commentary: The Hindu's R. Keerthana examines GM crop debate in India, highlights several benefits of the technology, but claims that very little testing has been done on GM food, and that GMOs could possibly cause allergies or antibiotic resistance

Commentary: Indian food news site HungryForever examines difficulty consumers face when trying to avoid GMOs or harmful chemicals, notes draft Food Safety and Standards for GMO labeling are currently open for public comment

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Dutch news outlet reports Jeffrey Smith will give lecture on health risks of GMOs on April 21 in Garderen; Smith is invited by GMO-free supplement supplier Beyuna, whose recently commissioned study found that 50 percent of Dutch consumers are afraid of GMOs

News: U.K.'s AgriCensus reports global demand for non-GM soybeans is expected to rise, as consumers seek verification for food production sustainability, especially in the EU, according to Dutch bank Rabobank in its Grain & Oilseeds update

Interview: Slow Food promotes establishment of national Slow Food network in Macedonia, talks to newly elected President Nikolce Nikolovski of Slow Food Makedonia, who says group wants to become the nation's leading NGO on food issues

News: The Guardian reports on Convention on Biological Diversity Executive Secretary Cristiana Pasca Palmer's call to make at least half of the world more nature-friendly by 2050 to ensure humanity's well-being, highlights threats posed by ag activities

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Brazilian environment news site reports Senate Environment Committee will vote on bill to end mandatory GMO labeling on April 17, highlights opposition from Sen. Vanessa Grazziotin, who argues expanding GMOs will lead to increased agrochemical use

Commentary: French anti-biotechnology group Inf'OGM examines ongoing legal dispute over royalties on Monsanto's Intacta RR2 PRO soybean variety in Brazil, notes it demonstrates tumultuous relationship between Monsanto and South American farmers

News: Argentina's Infobae reports on local ag technology company DonMario and its application of latest biotech innovations, highlighting goal of adding to knowledge, moving beyond transgenics, to develop the best possible seeds

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: Radio New Zealand reports on Principal Environment Court Judge Laurie Newhook's statement questioning Federated Farmers' continued attempts to block local councils' GMO bans, Soil and Health Association criticized the group's tactics

More Oceania items

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Diane.Wray-Cohen@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - April 16, 2018
 Date: Monday, April 16, 2018 4:04:42 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

Each year, the organic industry-funded Environmental Working Group helps scare up new business for its financial backers by releasing its "Dirty Dozen" list warning about the supposed dangers of pesticide residues on produce.

Along with a [coordinated response](#) from the Alliance for Food and Farming - which featured a [blog with a dozen reasons to eat fruits and vegetables](#) and a [guest column in Food Safety News](#) - we highlight a series of other criticisms from Steve Savage, dietitian Toby Amidor, Stephan Neidenbach and Andrew Porterfield.

Other non-"Dirty Dozen" pieces include the SciMoms' Anastasia Bodnar looking into the increased price of organic-labeled products and Mark Lynas highlighting a study that question whether organic farming really helps the environment. Plus, an ETH Zurich scientist warns that efforts to ban glyphosate and neonics could have unwanted impacts on food production and greenhouse gas emissions.

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Please [contact us](#) if you have any questions.

In This Issue

[Stakeholder Spotlight](#)
[Stories Worth Sharing](#)
[What's Trending?](#)
[Calendar highlights](#)

Stakeholder Spotlight: Environmental Working Group



The U.S.-based Environmental Working Group released its annual "[Dirty Dozen](#)" guide to pesticides in produce last week, prompting media coverage and

■ Stories Worth Sharing

[Steve Savage: Organic industry-funded "Dirty Dozen" list is an "egregious, science-free misrepresentation" of government data](#)

[Toby Amidor: "Dirty Dozen" not based on sound science, does disservice to consumers](#)

[Newsweek: International Food Information Council warns EWG puts "unnecessary fear" in consumers about healthy foods](#)

[Stephan Neidenbach: A "Dirty Dozen" list of organic foods linked to safety recalls and foodborne illnesses](#)

[Andrew Porterfield: American Academy of Pediatrics should reconsider alignment with "anti-science" Environmental Working Group](#)

[Mark Lynas: New study questions whether organic farming is better for the environment](#)

[Anastasia Bodnar: "No need for concern about pesticide residues" regardless of product's labels](#)

[Robert Finger: Efforts to ban neonics and glyphosate could have wider implications, including reduced food production and quality](#)

response from critics.

EWG is well-known as a promoter of organic products and issuing numerous other reports complaining about "hidden" pesticides in foods.

The NGO houses and staffs an organic industry-funded lobby arm known as the Organic Voices Action Fund, whose campaigns include "Just Label It" and "Only Organic."

EWG's bottom-line advice is consistently that consumers should buy organic whenever possible. It derives financial support and board leadership for its activities, in part, from large organic industry donors.

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about EWG.

CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES

Alison Van Eenennaam: GMO technology could help those struggling daily with starvation

Siang Hee Tan: Activists engaged in "shameful" behavior by opposing potentially life-changing Golden Rice

Eliot Bakker: Court hearings show activists have "blown out of proportion" IARC's cancer claims about glyphosate

Business Insider: Controversial CRISPR technology could prevent starvation

CLICK FOR BONUS EVENTUS MONITORING

What's Trending?

European Commission proposes increased pesticide risk assessment transparency following glyphosate controversy

India high court rejects Monsanto request to enforce patent on Bollgard II cotton seeds

European Commission formally schedules neonic ban vote for April 27; Germany and Austria declare support.

French public health agency research suggests agriculture, pesticides linked to Parkinson's disease

Proposed Mexico biodiversity law sent back to legislative committee

Calendar highlights

April 16-20	April 16-18	April 17
International Symposium on Pollination	Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry North America meeting	International Day of Peasant Struggle
April 21-29	April 23-24	April 23-24
International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements leadership course in Ghana	International Conference on Food Technology and Biotechnology	International Conference on Climate-Smart Agriculture and Agroecology

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More information on the people and organizations influencing the food and agriculture debate

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Diane Wray-Cohen@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - April 13-15, 2018
 Date: Sunday, April 15, 2018 9:02:38 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Global biotechnology developments over the weekend included commentary on the Mexican Green Party sending the biodiversity law back to committee. Thousands gathered in Washington, D.C., and around the world for the annual March for Science.

- Media, NGOs and other stakeholders commented on Mexico's biodiversity law after the Ecologist Green Party of Mexico withdrew the proposal, sending it back to committee. Commenters said the law would allow corporations to privatize the country's genetic resources and that it is unconstitutional because it bypasses consultations with indigenous peoples' groups. **See more**
- The American Association for the Advancement of Science noted thousands gathered in Washington for the international March for Science on Saturday. Earlier, Alex Berezow wrote for the American Council on Science and Health, arguing the event is "going nowhere" because it fails to take stances on issues such as biotechnology and nuclear power. Henry I. Miller wrote in a *Washington Examiner* op-ed that the march is too partisan. **See more**
- German media reported that during the Green Party conference, party chairmen Annalena Baerbock and Robert Habeck led members to question policies such as those opposing genetic engineering. Party members pointed out the technology could help fight hunger in some parts of the world. The science editor for the German publication *Die Tageszeitung* urged Green Party members "give up their basic rejection of GM food." **See more**

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North America

News: North Carolina University professor speaking at gene editing conference hails CRISPR technology as having potential to feed world while enabling greater food safety, providing sustainability, but warns public perceptions, ethical concerns remain major issues

Commentary: ACSH's Alex Berezow discusses second annual March for Science set for April 14, suggests it's a movement going nowhere, largely because backers fail to properly address their issues, points to their lack of public position on GMO safety, overwhelmingly supported by science

Commentary: GMWatch says Folta's estranged wife accuses him of attempting to hide earnings from corporations; Folta says he was reimbursed for expenses only

Interview: St. Louis Business Journal interviews Danforth Plant Science Center's new crop improvement director, says his goal is to get regulatory approval for improved crops such as GM cassava to help countries battle hunger and malnutrition

Commentary: EcoWatch columnist says India court decision preventing Monsanto from claiming Bt cotton patents may prompt company to leave country

Commentary: The Conversation runs piece by two Michigan State University researchers amplifying its latest Food Literacy and Engagement Poll, showing affluent Americans tend to overestimate their

knowledge about health and nutrition, are more likely to be influenced by misinformation and pseudoscience about GE crops

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: News Agency of Nigeria reports more than 1 million smallholder farmers will get discounted seeds, cropping technology under deal between Syngenta and Nigeria Incentive-Based Risk Sharing System; Syngenta pledges to work toward improving farmers' productivity up to 50 percent

News: Nigerian news source reports HOMEF condemns government's plan to introduce GM crops, warns there's no guarantee of environmental and health safety of GM cotton and cowpea to be introduced by end of 2018, calls on government to learn from other countries that have used caution regarding GMOs

Video: Kenyan news source speculates 50 percent of harvests likely to be affected by armyworm infestations

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: Manila Times writer notes China could respond to U.S. tariffs by raising taxes on GMOs imported, keep U.S. crops stuck in Chinese approval process as its GMO sector catches up

News: Press Trust of India reports Federation of Seed Industry of India statement indicates Delhi High Court's decision against enforcing Monsanto's Bt cotton seed patent could hurt agricultural investment in India

News: Indian news site reports farm activists warn Andhra Pradesh state govt. about lax regulation of cotton seed sales, which leads to illegal GM cotton sales; says large number of seed producers sell Bt cotton seed using misleading claims

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Deutsche Presse-Agentur reports Germany's Green Party to open debate on its stance on various policies including genetic engineering

News: Feed Navigator reports on EU Commission's proposal on solutions for boosting transparency of EFSA risk assessments, highlights reactions from Corporate Europe Observatory, European Consumer Organization (BEUC), EuropaBio and EFSA

Commentary: University of Copenhagen researcher says parliamentary debates on GM foods ignored public concerns about perceived unnaturalness, adds that misrepresentation undermines trust in government

Commentary: Global Justice Now director Nick Dearden writes for The Guardian, warns about potential negative impacts of a U.S.-U.K. trade deal post-Brexit, pointing to U.S. efforts to reduce U.K. restrictions on pesticides, GMOs and animal hormones

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: La Jornada reports Green Ecologist Party of Mexico withdraws biodiversity law due to claims it would allow corporations to privatize country's genetic inheritance, including traditional knowledge of indigenous people

Commentary: Mexican science foundation posts researchers arguments over health, environmental safety of transgenics; notes one researcher claims transgenic advocates ignore complexity of nature, influences such as environment on genetic modifications

News release: Brazilian Senate reports senators to consider on April 17 ending mandatory labels on GMO food products; notes senator favoring label rollback cites no reported human health risks

More Latin America items

Oceania

Commentary: Soil and Health Association of New Zealand submits comments on NBTs to FSANZ, opposes use of genetic modification and new gene editing techniques in food production

News release: GE Free NZ notes Stop Golden Rice International Campaign conference in Philippines claimed FSANZ approval of Golden Rice would negatively impact Asian farmers due to trade issues; says FSANZ has not provided evidence that supports Golden Rice safety

More Oceania items

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - April 12, 2018
 Date: Thursday, April 12, 2018 9:00:48 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology developments included media coverage of a National Autonomous University of Mexico debate on genetically modified organisms. In India, analysis of a court decision on cotton patents continued.

- Local media outlets reported on a debate about genetically modified organisms and agriculture, hosted by the National Autonomous University of Mexico. Coverage from *La Jornada* highlighted some researchers' claims that transgenic crops contaminate local varieties and contribute to pollution. *Notimex* reporting on the debate quoted researcher Rosaura Ruiz, who said that irreconcilable positions were common in science and that more research was required. The events associated with the debate continue through April 13. [See more](#)
- A Delhi High Court decision rejecting Monsanto's patents on Bt cotton continued to generate commentary today, with analysis in *Financial Express* and *Business Insider India* noting the negative implications for agricultural research and investment. A report in *The Hindu* noted that seed companies were divided, with some arguing that the measure "kills" innovation and others claiming it protects farmers. [See more](#)
- *Radio New Zealand* reported that Federated Farmers plans to challenge a GMO moratorium established by Hastings District Council, despite the group's failure to overturn similar regulations in other districts. The report quoted Federated Farmers national president Katie Milne, who argued that the district had attempted to pre-empt the national framework regulating GM crops. [See more](#)

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North America

News: Associated Press reports organic farming advocacy group creates new food label that excludes hydroponic farming, CAFOs; notes action comes in response to National Organic Standard Board opposing proposal to block hydroponics, aquaponics from the USDA's organic certification program

Commentary: Steven Novella says ecomodernism bases environmental views on science, views GMOs as important part of farming's future, while environmentalists generally view science and technology as problematic

Commentary: March Against Monsanto reports activist Mila de Mier drowned in Washington D.C. hotel pool, was in area to oppose GM mosquito use in the Florida Keys; claims suspicious circumstances surrounding her death

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Isaac Ongu writes for Uganda's New Vision, says parliamentary committee biosafety bill proposal would be "indirect ban on GMOs," threatening to imprison those who plant GMOs within 200 meters of non-GMO crops, making biotech use impossible for smallholders

News: Ugandan news site reports MPs oppose GMO introduction, claiming it will give power to feed Ugandans to multinational companies and would "enslave Ugandans" to white men

News release: Convention on Biological Diversity's Biosafety Clearing-House recaps Uganda's first National BCH Training workshop held in March; participants included members of Uganda National Council for Science and Technology currently involved in GMO research, Confined Field Trials of some GM crops

News: Namibian news site reports country will soon establish GMOs safe to use locally and to export; says Namibia eventually will develop drought-resistant crops and animals

News: Kenya news site reports USAID estimates up to 50 percent of maize crop could be destroyed by fall armyworm, while ag ministry says there is no reliable data on extent of manifestation, status report to be released soon; officials discuss solutions, pesticide options

More Africa items

Asia

News: The Hindu reports Delhi High Court rejects Monsanto's plea to protect its Bt cotton seed patent, court says company is protected only under Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Act; seed producers say their stance vindicated

Commentary: Dilsher Dhillon of Business Insider India analyzes implications of Delhi High Court decision invalidating Monsanto's patents on Bt cotton, highlights criticisms of Monsanto's business practices, notes the ruling may discourage investments in India

Commentary: Vivian Fernandes writes for India's Financial Express, criticizes Delhi High Court's ruling that Mahyco Monsanto Biotech cannot patent its Bt cotton technologies, argues the move will further undermine confidence of ag technology investors

News: India news sites report Icrisat and Corteva partnership has goal to produce improved crops using technology such as CRISPR, says farmers in Indian state of Telangana and others will benefit from the cutting edge technology

Commentary: President emeritus of Chicago Council on Global Affairs, Marshall M. Bouton, begins new blog series, "Cultivating Tomorrow: Indian Agriculture Challenged," examines India's agrarian crisis, calls for new approaches and policies as bold as the Green Revolution

More Asia items

Europe

Commentary: Spanish pro-ag NGO Fundacion Antama praises EU Commission's proposal for improving confidence and transparency in risk assessment in the food chain, amplifies response by EuropaBio General Secretary John Brennan, hoping to restart debate

News release: European farmers and agri-cooperative groups COPA and COGENA applaud EU's attempts to make risk assessment transparent, but want science-based framework that promotes innovation

News: Germany's Top Agrar reports on EU Commission's proposal to improve transparency in risk assessments related to food production, highlights criticism from groups like Greenpeace, Joachim Rukwied, President of German Farmers' Association welcomes it

Commentary: Officer of development NGO Hivos East Africa posts blog touting conclusion of UN FAO's International Agroecology Symposium that current agricultural system should be replaced by agroecology, praising partner IIED for their Zambian Food Change Lab

Commentary: Dutch ag news source Boerderij posts blog by pig farmer arguing VLOG feed leads to lower yields, more expensive food; questions whether that means better pig farming and points out

VLOG is German association with goal of driving demand for GMO-free foods in German market

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Mexico's La Jornada reports on recent debate on GMOs at Faculty of Sciences of the National Autonomous University of Mexico, Bolivar Zapata and Javier Flores defended the technology, while Maria Elena Alvarez-Buylla Roces and Julio Munoz pointed to risks

News: Notimex reports on recent GMO debate at Faculty of Sciences of the National Autonomous University of Mexico; following the debate, academic Rosaura Ruiz described the different positions on GMOs as "irreconcilable"

Commentary: Manuel Valencia Castro writes editorial for Mexico's El Siglo, provides background for General Biodiversity Law in context of Convention on Biological Diversity's Cartagena and Nagoya protocols, examines implications for use of genetic resources

Commentary: Mexico's El Financiero runs op-ed by economist discussing presidential candidate's proposal to suspend purchase of U.S. corn, seek food self-sufficiency, pointing out U.S. production costs much lower because of use of GM seeds, predicting proposed move would lead to higher costs

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Radio New Zealand reports on Federated Farmers' plans to challenge Hastings District Council's GM-free status, in spite of failure of similar challenges in other districts, notes district rules ignore national framework on GMOs

Commentary: Blogger for New Zealand Institute of Agricultural and Horticultural Science examines Federated Farmers' legal challenge of Hastings District Council's GM-free status; re-emphasizes previous advice to scientists to watch for local council legislation

News: The West Australian reports state ag department rejects proposed compensation mechanism for financial losses due to GM crop contamination, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development also argues against mandatory farming practices

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Diane Wray-Cohen@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - April 11, 2018
 Date: Wednesday, April 11, 2018 9 03:25 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Today's global biotechnology developments included news that a court in India had revoked Monsanto's patent on genetically modified cotton varieties. A U.S. science group reported that long-term efforts to combat citrus greening will likely require biotechnology.

- *Bloomberg and Press Trust of India* reported that, in a sweeping decision, the Delhi High Court revoked Monsanto's patent on Bollgard and Bollgard II cotton varieties. The court further added that seeds, plants and animals can't be patented under Indian law. Responding to the news, the National Seed Association of India said it may approach the Competition Commission of India to recoup the costs paid to Monsanto. Monsanto can appeal the decision to the Supreme Court. **See more**
- A report from the U.S. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine sounded a cautious note on the country's efforts to fight citrus greening (or Huanglongbing), emphasizing that a "breakthrough" solution was unlikely. The group noted that short-term resources are required to keep the disease at bay while longer-term solutions are likely to involve gene editing. Accordingly, the group said, growers should begin public outreach on the issue. **See more**
- The European Commission released a proposal to help improve the transparency of risk assessments in food safety, including those for pesticides and genetically modified foods. Several news outlets highlighted the example set by Bayer, which releases redacted safety studies on its website. Greenpeace and other activists criticized the proposal, warning that it still relied on industry-funded and industry-conducted studies. **See more**

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North America

Report: The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine makes available download, paperback copies of its consensus study report, "A Review of the Citrus Greening Research and Development Efforts Supported by the Citrus Research and Development Foundation"

News: Growing Produce posts article from editor of Florida Grower citing new report by National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine that finds single breakthrough discovery for managing citrus greening is unlikely; report says long-term solutions expected to use gene modification

News: Politico Pro - New report from NAS shows research initiative on citrus greening disease in Florida has found no breakthrough discovery since 2009 to control disease; long-term solutions likely to include GE technologies, but panel recommends research on whether consumers would accept GM citrus

More North America items

Africa

Report: Global Network for the Right to Food and Nutrition analysis claims current Africa policies push peasant farmers to adopt commercial seeds that deprive communities of autonomy, increase production

costs, threaten biodiversity

News release: Global Network for the Right to Food and Nutrition report cites Burkina Faso Bt cotton as example corporate interests turning peasants into passive recipients of seeds, agrochemicals, victims of an exacerbated debt cycle

News: Ghana News Agency reports on USAID Bureau of Food Security Fall Armyworm Taskforce Policy and Engagement Coordinator Regina Eddy's statement that the pest has come to stay in Africa, calling on governments to develop Integrated Pest Management plans

News: Kenya news site reports USAid task force coordinator warns maize-producing countries in Africa could incur huge losses from fall armyworm, notes chemical and organic pesticides have proved effective, offers other potential solutions

News: Kenya's The Star reports National Environment Management Authority will accept public comments on its environmental impact assessment for proposed Bt cotton field trials until Friday, April 13, NEMA's Margaret Njuki noted every comment will be considered

More Africa items

Asia

News: Press Trust of India reports on Delhi High Court's dismissal of Monsanto's plea to enforce a patent on its Bt cotton seeds, upholding previous ruling that seed companies will pay Monsanto a government-set trait fee

News: BloombergQuint reports on Delhi High Court division bench's ruling that Monsanto does not have a patent on Bt cotton seed varieties, the court granted Monsanto a three-month window to apply for registration under the Plant Varieties Act

News: Bloomberg reports Delhi High Court rules Monsanto can't own patent on GM cotton seeds in India; Monsanto lawyer says company may challenge decision in India Supreme Court

News: DNA India reports on Rajasthan ag department's authorization of sale of Bt cotton seed this season, in spite of ag minister Prabhu Lal Saini's opposition to GM mustard, and his claims that Bt cotton causes impotence

News release: Korea's Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice announces upcoming event on April 12 to present petition with over 200,000 signatures demanding stricter GMO labeling standards and ban on GM foods in schools

More Asia items

Europe

News: Politico reports EU Commission proposes legislation obliging agri-chemical companies to publicly release their product safety studies, noting decision follows public outrage on secrecy of glyphosate studies, alleged Monsanto ghostwriting

Commentary: France's Ecole de Guerre Economique member argues Bayer website publicly releasing product safety studies with redactions may serve more as PR tactic to combat criticism of glyphosate, GMOs, than a sincere gesture of transparency

News: Agence France-Presse reports on "walk for environmental health" from Fos-sur-mer to Paris between May 1 and June 30, where organizers, including Generations Futures and Friends of the Earth, will call for action against pollution, "junk food" and toxic products

Commentary: French pro-ag news site Alerte Environnement criticizes upcoming "march for environmental health," finds the organizing group Citizens, Health, Environment is a front group backed by Green MEP Michele Rivasi

News: U.K. newspaper covers Norfolk farmers workshop to review Defra proposals for agricultural policies post-Brexit, highlights investments in agricultural technologies; notes consultation closes May 8

Commentary: German GE information site Transparenz Gentechnik examines retraction of Nature Methods study which claimed to demonstrate off-target mutations in CRISPR mice, highlights USDA statement on gene editing, and pending EU Court decision

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Argentina's The Left Daily promotes debate on GMO foods being held April 11 through 13 at National Autonomous University of Mexico, with series of round tables organized by Center for Interdisciplinary Research in Sciences and Humanities

Announcement: Convention on Biological Diversity announces Panama's Technical Secretariat of the National Biosafety Commission for Genetically Modified Organisms (STCNB) will receive nominations for Civil Society representatives through May 4

Commentary: Nicaragua's Seed Alliance Identity promotes campaign against transgenics developed by nation's producers and agroecological producers, particularly against "glyphosate corn," with objective of disclosing crop's risk, promoting advantages of criollo and aciollada seeds

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Commentary: New Zealand Institute of Agricultural and Horticultural Science blogger highlights new legislation that could strengthen powers of local authorities to determine how GM research is handled; Labour Party has said it will maintain status quo of new GM techniques requiring EPA approval for use

[More Oceania items](#)

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - April 10, 2018
 Date: Tuesday, April 10, 2018 9:05:02 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included media reports that the U.S. Justice Department had approved Bayer's purchase of Monsanto. German Green Party politicians announced an upcoming meeting to reassess the party's policies, including proposed revisions to the group's stance on genetic modification.

- International media outlets amplified a *Wall Street Journal* report claiming that the U.S. Justice Department had approved Bayer's acquisition of Monsanto, following some concessions on digital agriculture assets and seeds. Several reports highlighted objections from Food & Water Watch, which claimed that the company's "extreme control" would lead to price gouging. [See more](#)
- Leaders of Germany's Greens issued a statement announcing a two-year effort to redefine the party's positions on several issues. The announcement noted that the current party platform was 16 years old and called for a "fourth phase" of the Greens. Among potential changes, the statement noted that it was time to reassess whether there were appropriate uses of genetic modification to adapt to climate change. *Der Spiegel* and other news outlets noted that the campaign would launch Friday and Saturday with a conference in Berlin. [See more](#)
- In Mexico, the Chamber of Deputies continued to review a proposed General Law on Biodiversity. The political coordination board announced that consultations on the bill were ongoing, quoting environment commission Chairman Arturo Álvarez Angli. A statement from a Party of the Democratic Revolution politician warned that consultations with indigenous groups were a necessity to reach consensus on the measure. [See more](#)

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North America

[News: Wall Street Journal reports on U.S. Justice Department's decision to allow Bayer to acquire Monsanto, after the companies agreed to sell additional assets, Monsanto's shares closed 6.2 percent higher on Monday, following WSJ's initial reporting](#)

[News release: Organic Consumers Association's Ronnie Cummins issues statement following U.S. Department of Justice's approval of Bayer-Monsanto deal, voices disappointment, reiterates commitment to promoting organic regenerative ag](#)

[Commentary: Common Dreams staff writer examines recent reports that Bayer-Monsanto "merger from hell" is approved by U.S. Justice Department, highlights concerns raised by Food & Water Watch's Wenonah Hauter and Friends of the Earth's Jason Davidson](#)

[Commentary: Bill Gates writes for Foreign Affairs, examines ways in which CRISPR can transform global development, highlighting applications to combat malaria and make more resilient and nutritious crops, calls for regulatory harmonization](#)

[Commentary: NPR's Dan Charles reports regenerative agriculture movement takes root as farmers, food-ag companies see healthy soil cultivation as way to improve food, reduce carbon emissions, market products](#)

Video: Nick Saik of Know Ideas Media posts YouTube video explaining why foods derived from mutagenesis should be seen as "genetically modified," even when labeled organic; says GMO is an umbrella term, can apply to traditionally bred or GE organisms

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project posts piece by Marc Brazeau of Food and Farm Discussion Lab as first in series of articles on U.S. biotech regulations and potential reform; Brazeau outlines patchwork U.S. regulatory system for GE crops and animals, argues some system aspects make sense

Commentary: Organic Authority reacts to Italian meta-analysis finding GMOs aren't dangerous, have benefits, lists three reasons to ignore such claims; piece suggests GMOs encourage use of herbicides, contribute to lack of biodiversity, and warns too much remains unknown about them

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News release: Nigeria National Biosafety Management Agency responds to illegal GMO imports by issue 7-day ultimatum to GM seed importers to formalize dealings or risk being shut down

Interview: Nigerian Tribune interviews National Biosafety Management Agency Director General Rufus Ebegba on seven-day ultimatum for GM seed and grain importers, he points to prior information sessions for importers, notes they must have products certified

News: Nigeria Institute of Food Science and Technology claims GM seeds would prevent local seeds from germinating, forcing farmers buy outside seeds; grow food for the country; adds that long term health impacts are also likely

News release: Nigerian NGO Health of Mother Earth Foundation criticizes National Biotechnology Development Agency's announcement of plans to commercialize Bt cowpea and Bt cotton, and National Biosafety Management Agency's handling of illegal GM imports

News release: La Via Campesina promotes International Day of Peasants' Struggles to be observed April 17, calls on member organizations and supporters to coordinate actions of resistance globally against Free Trade Agreements, criminalization of social struggles, urges defense of indigenous seeds

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: The Korea Times reports hundreds of farmers, activists demonstrate in Seoul to demand GMOs be listed on food labels, citing concerns GMOs could hurt human health; protest supports petition calling on president to revise country's GMO regulation to meet international standards

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Announcement: German Green Party announces plans to develop new policy program by 2020, while maintaining opposition to GM food modifications, they indicate openness to "certain new technologies" to maintain food supplies amid climate change

News: Germany's Der Spiegel reports on Green party's new policy document to usher in a "fourth phase" of the party, chairpersons Annalena Baerbock and Robert Habeck call for reviewing position on GE, noting it could help produce more food amid climate change

Review: University of Goettingen researchers publish review of literature on sustainability of organic ag in Annual Review of Resource Economics, they find that upscaling organic ag would lead to additional loss of natural habitats and increased output prices

Commentary: Mark Lynas writes for Cornell Alliance for Science's blog, amplifies University of

Goettingen researchers' publication challenging common belief that organic ag is better for the environment than conventional, highlights recommendation for integration

News: France's Mediapart reports on concerns that free trade agreement between EU and Mercosur countries could include provisions to increase cooperation on GMOs (subscription required)

News release: Confederation Paysanne voices skepticism about France federal organic program budget, calls on government to address NGO concerns by beginning of announced consultation

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Notimex reports on Chamber of Deputies' Political Coordination Board's (Jucopo) efforts to reach consensus on General Biodiversity Law, amid divergent opinions, according to Environment and Natural Resources Commission chairman Arturo Alvarez Angli

Announcement: Mexico's Chamber of Deputies announces PRD vice-coordinator Jesus Zambrano Grijalva's warning that consultation with indigenous communities on General Biodiversity Law is necessary, citing risk that it could otherwise be declared unconstitutional by Supreme Court

News: Mexico's Cambio Digital reports on Morena local deputy Maria del Rocio Perez Perez's call for revisions to General Biodiversity Law, warning that it currently creates a vacuum that could allow private companies to exploit natural areas

Commentary: Writing for a Mexican news source, National Autonomous University of Mexico ecologist says Mexico does not need transgenics in piece criticizing agribusiness for pushing science and innovation as a way to boost profits vs improve society

Interview: Colombia's Portafolio talks to Greg Ibach, USDA undersecretary of marketing and regulation, about agency's recent statement that it won't regulate products of gene-editing technology; he discusses USDA-financed project in Colombia to use GE technology to reduce cocoa plant absorption of cadmium

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

There were no noteworthy biotechnology developments in Oceania during today's monitoring. Click the link below for the latest items.

[More Oceania items](#)

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 Date: Monday, April 9, 2018 9 01:29 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included new commentary published in *The CRISPR Journal* criticizing proposed U.S. regulations on gene-edited animals. Kenyan officials announced plans to approve Bt cotton field trials by May.

- *The CRISPR Journal* promoted a new commentary from prominent U.S. scientist Alison Van Eenennaam, who criticized the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's proposed regulations on gene-edited animals. Van Eenennaam noted that the genetic changes introduced through gene-editing techniques could be achieved through traditional breeding programs and questioned the need for "burdensome" regulations on gene-edited livestock. **See more**
- Kenya's *The Daily Star* quoted an official from the National Environment Management Authority on the government's expected approval of nine GM cotton field trial sites by May. The official noted that the government is currently reviewing public comments on the proposal; the comment period closes April 23. **See more**

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For a more extensive compilation of recent biotech items, **[click here](#)**

North America

Commentary: Alison Van Eenennaam writes opinion article for The CRISPR Journal, points out flaws in FDA's proposed regulation of gene edited animals as animal drugs, argues the framework is neither proportional to product risk nor agnostic to modification technique

News release: The CRISPR Journal announces publication of article by UC Davis geneticist Alison Van Eenennaam which demonstrates why burdensome gene editing regulations on animals threaten food supply sustainability

News: California Ag Today reports on UC Davis geneticist Alison Van Eenennaam's assessment of difficulties faced by science communicators in trying to reach anti-GMO consumers and emotion-based arguments, she recommends Food Evolution documentary

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project's Andrew Porterfield raises concerns about American Academy of Pediatrics' alignment with Environmental Working Group's organic messaging, noting joint efforts in questioning EPA's approval chlorpyrifos, promoting organic foods over conventional ones

Commentary: Forbes energy, environment and economy columnist Robert Rapier examines Rethink Ethanol's call for changes in U.S. ethanol mandates, highlights link between increased GM corn and soybean production and monarch butterfly declines

Commentary: Alternet runs op-ed by founder of Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance touting poll finding 93 percent of farmers surveyed oppose Bayer-Monsanto merger, think it will hurt independent farmers, communities; 75 percent surveyed say higher prices for new seed varieties not offset by productivity

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Kenya's The Star reports National Environment Management Authority to OK performance trials for GM cotton by May, agency waiting for feedback from public before it can give approval; public commenting on environmental impact assessment for proposed trials at nine sites

News: Zambian news outlet reports on National Biosafety Authority Registrar Lackson Tonga's clarification that there is no GM-involved activity or entity in the country, noting the only possibility of entry would be from neighboring Malawi

News: News Agency of Nigeria reports National Biosafety Management Agency (NBMA) issues alert over influx of illegal GM products, NBMA Director General Rufus Ebegba gives GM seed importers and dealers a seven-day ultimatum to obtain permits

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

There were no noteworthy biotechnology developments in Asia during today's monitoring. Click the link below for the latest items.

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: U.K. farming news outlet reports U.K. scientists welcome USDA's statement announcing that it will not regulate crops produced via gene-editing, hoping it will set a precedent for EU regulation

News release: Spanish Society of Organic Agriculture (SEAE) promotes free download of its study, "Agroecological practices of adaptation to climate change," part of its Adapta Agroecologia project, aiming to push adaptation of agriculture to climate change through agroecological production

Commentary: French blogger Seppi amplifies Risk-Monger David Zaruk piece applauding Dutch farmer's successful court challenge of an organic lobbying organization's claims that conventional farming harms human health, environment

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Mexican politician Javier Herrera Borunda writes for Contacto Urbano, voicing support for the General Law of Biodiversity, highlights the draft process, including involvement of Commissions on Indigenous Affairs and Climate Change

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: The Australian reports on announcement by Tasmania and South Australia gov'ts of plans to review GM moratoriums in the states, Primary Producers SA supports removal of the moratorium, Tasmania's Dairy Council welcomes a review amid diverse views

Commentary: New Zealand science blogger Grant Jacobs notes Australian and New Zealand citizens can still make submissions regarding regulation of new food varieties, advocates a product-based approach to risk assessment

Commentary: Mandy Sacher of Australia's MammaMia advises readers on interpreting nutrition labels and finding "hidden nasties," promotes her new book, she notes GMOs are not labeled in Australia, advises readers to avoid processed food and buy "Non-GMO"

[More Oceania items](#)

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 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - April 9, 2018
 Date: Monday, April 9, 2018 4:37 55 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

This week's Favorable Outcomes features a series of articles raising questions about the reasons behind certain regulations on food, agriculture and chemicals around the world.

The examinations of laws that are scientifically lacking include Hamish Grant of the Vanessa Grant Trust reviewing Kenya's ban on GMOs, Sara Chodosh of *Popular Science* disputing California's Proposition 65 and weed scientist Buddhi Marambe criticizing Sri Lanka's ban of glyphosate. Also, Val Giddings of the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation describes why the U.S. leaving certain gene-edited plants unregulated is the right move.

To view items on this newsletter, log in on the [Bonus Eventus Community](#) page. To create an account, fill out the Request Membership form on the front page of the site. To share articles, click on the Twitter icon.

Please [contact us](#) if you have any questions.

In This Issue

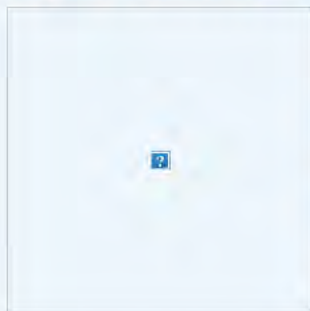
[Stakeholder Spotlight](#)

[Stories Worth Sharing](#)

[What's Trending?](#)

[Calendar highlights](#)

Stakeholder Spotlight: Beyond Pesticides



Presentations are expected from U.S. Right to Know activist Carey Gillam, atrazine researcher Tyrone Hayes and California bee researcher James Nieh during Beyond Pesticides' [National Pesticide Forum](#) this week in Irvine, California.

The forum, with the theme

Stories Worth Sharing

Val Giddings: USDA statement should help prevent gene editing from being "smothered in its cradle" due to irrational fears [?](#)

Hamish Grant: Agencies should explain reasons for Kenya blanket ban on GM crops that is "not supported by science" [?](#)

Popular Science: California placing cancer warnings on everything from coffee to glyphosate "defeats the whole point" [?](#)

Science Codex: Organic industry, John Fagan pushing regenerative agriculture while "dooming the developing world to starvation" [?](#)

Chuck Dinerstein: Activists wrong to aim same criticisms at CRISPR as GMOs [?](#)

Terry Daynard: Complete elimination of pesticides neither laudable nor realistic [?](#)

Andrew Porterfield: Activist with no entomology background wrote report blaming dicamba for monarch butterfly decline [?](#)

Buddhi Marambe: Sri Lanka glyphosate ban a "disastrous" policy based purely on speculation [?](#)

Alex Berezow: Turn focus to factors likely to cause autism, not pesticides [?](#)

"Organic Neighborhoods," is to include sessions on GM crops and pesticides, pollinator health, endocrine disruptors, farmworker health and other topics.

It's the 36th annual event sponsored by Beyond Pesticides, a strong opponent of GMOs and conventional crop agriculture, and a promoter of organic systems.

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about Beyond Pesticides.

CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES

Ryan Tipps: "Well Fed" documentary provides important conversation about value of GMOs [?](#)

Stephan Neidenbach: YouTube's termination of Natural News channel a "public service to the entire planet" [?](#)

CLICK FOR BONUS EVENTUS MONITORING

What's Trending?

With U.S. EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt under fire, environmental groups question his pesticide policy

Indian activist Vandana Shiva to begin U.S. speaking tour this week; stops include New Jersey, Wisconsin, Ohio, New York

Tasmania, South Australia to review moratoriums on GM crops

Kenyan farmers seek government help to fight armyworm scourge

European Commission informs NGOs vote on neonic ban will come in May

Calendar highlights

April 11-13	April 11	April 11
World Congress on Freedom of Science	Royal Society Te Aparangi gene editing workshop	Le Monde meeting on endocrine-disrupting chemicals and "Monsanto Papers"
April 12	April 13-14	April 16-20
Vandana Shiva opens U.S. speaking tour with environmental lecture at College of New Jersey	Beyond Pesticides National Pesticide Forum	International Symposium on Pollination

CLICK HERE TO ACCESS FULL EVENTS CALENDAR

<p>Stakeholder database</p> <p>More information on the people and organizations influencing the food and agriculture debate</p>	<p>Monitoring portal</p> <p>Catch up on the latest news and other developments impacting regulations on agriculture.</p>	<p>Bonus Eventus community</p> <p>Connect with academic experts and researchers, journalists and agriculture allies.</p>
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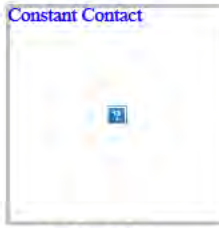
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 Date: Sunday, April 8, 2018 9 02:04 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Global biotechnology developments over the weekend included groups campaigning against Mexico's biodiversity law and the Coalition for the Protection of African Genetic Heritage (COPAGEN) hosting a news conference to oppose Bt cotton and gene drive usage in Burkina Faso.

- Mexican media reported political parties, Chamber of Deputies groups, state councils and activists oppose the country's proposed biodiversity law. Opponents said the law violates the legislative process and indigenous groups' rights, threatens biodiversity and the environment, and encourages commercial exploitation. [See more](#)
- During a COPAGEN news conference, the NGO's officials announced they oppose farmer requests to reinstate Bt cotton cultivation in Burkina Faso. The group also announced its opposition to a project that would use GM mosquitoes to help prevent the spread of malaria. [See more](#)

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North America

Commentary: Cornell University's Alliance for Science examines recent history of cotton production in Burkina Faso, highlights devastating impact on farmer income, pest infestation following phaseout of Bt cotton, notes ongoing development of Bt cowpea, Feb. announcement of potential reintroduction of Bt cotton

Commentary: Wesley Smith of conservative non-profit think tank Discovery Institute writes for National Review, argues that opposition to golden rice is "anti-human," points to evidence of its safety, notes it is currently being developed by the public sector

Commentary: The Cornucopia Institute amplifies Sustainable Food News article about IFOAM study finding no appropriate legal measures to protect breeding and seed production for organic farming against GMO contamination, concluding co-existence in breeding and seed production unfeasible

Commentary: The Western Producer's editorial applauds Health Canada's decision to approve Golden Rice as safe for sale to developing countries, charges Greenpeace and other groups oppose GMOs so much that they're willing to let millions of people suffer from vitamin A deficiency rather than accept science

News release: University of Florida ag science writer promotes effort by its scientists to use genetic engineering to save rare Florida torrey tree, recaps inaugural Torreya Tree of Life event with keynote address by evolutionary biologist E.O. Wilson, whose team found fungal disease killing torreyas, says CRISPR could help fight it

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science's Joan Conrow blogs about importance of examining beliefs; she says repressive tactics of anti-GMO movement she formerly supported led to period of intensive research that made her a GMO proponent, argues that getting it wrong about ag biotech causes harm

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: African social justice NGO member says Kenya's broken food system requires action, rejects suggestions Green Revolution approach would do anything besides further consolidate power into commercial hands

News: Burkina Faso news site reports COPAGEN activists at press conference oppose Bt cotton return, claim cotton production did not decline; group seeks to prevent GM mosquito use in malaria prevention project, claims the country being used as a guinea pig

Commentary: Kenyan farmer writes op-ed in Daily Nation, says science does not support GMO ban, points out GM safety and that it aids food security, says government agencies should give "reasoned scientific explanation" for opposing biotech

News: Nigerian news site reports National Biosafety Management Agency gives grain importers 7-day notice to certify products; move intended to prevent uncertified GM crops from entering country; news site claims GE products have no consumer benefits but accelerate pesticide use

News: Uganda's Daily Monitor reports on Uganda Women's Network's (Uwonet) support of President Museveni's decision not to sign biosafety bill, Uwonet executive director Rita Aciro argued it does not favor women, questioned impact on indigenous seeds

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: The Times of India reports cotton sowing starts officially April 1 in Punjab but state agriculture department yet to release list of recommended varieties, which includes varieties of hybrid Bt cotton seed also approved by Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee; other states have released their lists

Commentary: International Rice Research Institute FAQ page stresses Golden Rice will cost no more than white rice due to donation of technology, terms of licenses, lack of sale limitations

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Risk-Monger David Zaruk details successful court challenge by Dutch farmer accusing organic food industry lobbyist of falsifying health, environmental impacts of conventional farming, criticizes organic lobbying tactics of making wild claims without evidence

News: Spanish news source reports several municipalities of Navarra declare GE-free zones, ban use of glyphosate, embrace precautionary principle; University of Lleida professor speaks against need for, safety of transgenic crops

News release: Testbiotech says China study finding glyphosate-resistant plants show high potential for environmental spread affirms still too many unknown GMO risks, criticizes EFSA failure to investigate issue

Commentary: Dutch MEP Bart Staes writing for news site amplifies NGO report on GM soy from South America used for EU animal feed, highlights negative health, environmental impacts from cultivation of soy, criticizes hypocrisy of EU politicians forbidding growth of GM crops while allowing importation

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Mexican news site reports Parliamentary faction National Regeneration Movement introduces

motion to suspend biodiversity law discussion, claims it violates indigenous peoples' rights, puts greater emphasis on commercial exploitation than environmental protection or biodiversity

News: Panamanian news site reports Latin American Scientific Society of Agroecology president says agroecology is "banner of development" for Latin American social movements that aid small farmers left of of "intensive systems"

News release: National University of Colombia highlights presentations during agroecological seminar with researchers refuting claims of "superfoods," GM crops feeding world population, decrying introduction of transgenic seeds that cause loss of native crop varieties, stressing need for government investment in agroecology

News release: Biotechnology Information Council researcher says herbicide-tolerant crops help control spread of invasive species, do not accelerate "superweed" development

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Australian Broadcasting Corporation reports CSIRO researchers map genome of two bollworms resistant to pesticides and threaten crops globally

News release: Australian biotech group AusBiotech announces release of draft response to FSANZ consultation paper, which announced the agency would not make changes to food code regarding food produced using new gene technologies

[More Oceania items](#)

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 Date: Thursday, April 5, 2018 9:02:01 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included news coverage in the Philippines of the Stop Golden Rice Network's campaign re-launch. International news outlets reported on the sentencing of a man accused of stealing GM rice seed for transportation to China.

- Philippines-based newspapers and TV stations reported on an activist demonstration held Wednesday at the country's Department of Agriculture, where local and international activists protested against plans to field trial the genetically modified Golden Rice. Media outlets also amplified a statement from the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC), warning that Golden Rice would not cure hunger and could cause health problems. **See more**
- The U.S. sentencing of a researcher convicted of attempting to steal patented GM rice seed lines and smuggle them to China drew international coverage. The scientist, a Chinese national, was sentenced to 10 years in prison on conspiracy and theft charges for stealing from Kansas-based Ventria Bioscience Inc. **See more**
- The U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission announced it would hold a public hearing on April 26 to address how China's agricultural policies, including its regulation of biotechnology, affect U.S. economic interests and trade. This is the commission's fifth public hearing. **See more**

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North America

News: Wire services report Chinese scientist sentenced to 10 years for stealing and attempting to smuggle GMO rice into China; Reuters highlights ChemChina takeover of Syngenta as indicative of country's interest in ag biotech

Event: U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission announces public hearing to examine China's biotech policies, food security and agricultural trade policies' impact on U.S. firms, farmers, export opportunities

News release: Canada's ETC Group promotes upcoming release in May of four short animated videos that explore themes of food production, diversity, hidden costs and policy solutions addressed in its booklet, "Who Will Feed Us?," which comparing "peasant food web" to industrial agriculture

News: Futurism amplifies USDA's announcement that it won't regulate crops created with GE techniques such as CRISPR, notes that's significant departure from agency's approach to GMOs, explains how GE techniques work, asserts lack of misinformation surrounding GMOs will be good news for consumers

News: Organic Authority amplifies reports of Impossible Foods raising \$396M in funding to continue development of plant-based meat substitute made with GE yeast, notes production process leaves significantly smaller environmental footprint than conventional ground beef

News release: Monsanto reports "solid progress" in approval of merger with Bayer, highlights first-half

numbers indicating continued success in seed, pesticide business objectives

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News release: African Centre for Biodiversity promotes release of its research report, "Input supply in South Africa's smallholder farmer support programmes;" raises concerns about publicly funded programs supposed to assist smallholder farmers; claims Monsanto benefits from GM maize seed distribution

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Manila Times reports more than 100 Filipino farmers and activists from other countries protest against field testing Golden Rice; RESIST! Agri-TNC Network-Philippines spokesperson claims farmers will lose right to choose different seed varieties

News: Philippine TV news site reports angry farmers, other groups protest to oppose Golden Rice outside Philippines' Department of Agriculture, question the product's safety

News: Philippine news site reports some "scientists and farmers" oppose Golden Rice, which "allegedly" would help cure vitamin A deficiency, notes field test data show it is safe for consumption

News: Philippine news site reports Philippines' National Anti-Poverty Commission joins activists opposing IRRI's application to test Golden Rice, claims it will not reduce hunger, cure vitamin A deficiency, and may cause health problems

News: South China Morning Post amplifies Reuters report that Chinese scientist gets 10 years in prison for GM rice theft from research facility

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News release: France's Confederation Paysanne claims BASF marketing "Clearfield" GM rapeseed in France allegedly obtained by mutagenesis, which is exempt from ban on releasing GMOs into environment; NGO says the rapeseed is a GMO because the company uses cell cloning

Commentary: Greenpeace U.K. info site highlights U.S. government report indicating demands for post-Brexit trade deal may involve regulation, approval of GM crops, pesticides; Centre for European Reform analyst suggests U.K. may be better off sticking with EU regulatory approach

News: French TV channel reports trial of 36 Volunteer Reapers in Dijon postponed until Nov. 15 and 16 because of lawyer strike, points out defendants accused of destroying two test plots of GM canola at Dijon Cereals in November 2016; group claims plants weren't evaluated, labeled or clearly called GMOs

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Campaign: Citizens Coalition before the LGB promotes Change.org petition to Mexico's Congress of the Union urging it to vote against General Biodiversity Law that would allow country's genetic resources to be used without indigenous consent, citing importance of conserving Mexico's natural resources

News: La Jornada reports that Chamber of Deputies reviewing procedures for voting on General Biodiversity Law; adds that despite public concerns, the vote could proceed on Thursday (April 5)

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Cosmos magazine editor previews future magazine articles examining how gene editing, synbio may help deal with climate change; notes activists oppose even benign products such as Golden Rice

[More Oceania items](#)

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Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology developments included the start of protest events on "hidden GMOs" organized by anti-biotechnology activists in Dijon, France. Protests continued against a proposed biodiversity bill in Mexico.

- French media outlets reported on the start of protest events organized by VigilanceOGM 21. The events, which include film screenings and communal meals, were planned in support of nearly 40 activists called to trial for the 2016 vandalism of field of herbicide-tolerant rapeseed. Though the trial was postponed, the activists said the events will continue. Local Green politicians issued a statement of support, adding that European politicians should regulate according to the precautionary principle and stop "all GMOs." [See more](#)
- Advocacy groups in Mexico continued to organize in opposition to the General Law on Biodiversity. The National Indigenous Network held a news conference, claiming that the law would sell out traditional knowledge and genetic resources. Legislators in Baja California issued a statement criticizing the draft law. [See more](#)

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North America

Commentary: Mark Lynas, writing at Cornell Alliance for Science, amplifies activist conference convened to oppose Golden Rice; notes European government still funds participating NGOs despite criticisms of unscientific campaign

Commentary: American Council on Science and Health finds fault with anti-GMO groups lumping CRISPR-CAS9 techniques with gene introduction; notes scientists believe crop's safety based on end product, not mutagenesis

News: AgNet West reports Monsanto's \$125 million investment in gene-editing startup Pairwise aims to be first to offer produce developed using CRISPR in grocery stores within next 10 years, also notes DuPont hopes to release first product with ingredients from CRISPR corn within four years

News: The Packer reports USDA decides plants using gene-editing techniques that don't introduce genes from another species will not be regulated by USDA; decision potentially reduces plant breeders' development costs

News: Agriculture podcast promotes discussion with agricultural consultant about connection between organic movement, non-GMO movement, why many consumers refuse to use GMO products

News: Voice of America reports CRISPR technology can fight plant diseases, increase crop yields; Innovative Genomics Institute director notes food production will need to increase by 70 percent by 2050

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: EnviroNews Nigeria reports professor of microbiology at University of Abuja says biotechnology could transform agricultural sector, contribute to national growth, argues biotech offers new Green Revolution based on crops that provide higher yield, resist diseases, improved nutrient qualities

Commentary: ISAAA Crop Biotech Update profiles Ugandan businessman who calls on ag biotech stakeholders in East Africa to advocate for policies that will let private sector exploit technology, create job opportunities for youth; Erostat Nsubuga founded Agro-Genetic Technologies Limited

News: Burkina Faso news site amplifies story from German audio site that country's producers, researchers believe Bt cotton's high yields, resistance to pests makes its return inevitable, particularly with onset of climate change

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Philippine Daily Inquirer reports National Anti-Poverty Commission joins regional coalition of farmers, activists from different countries in opposing plans to commercialize golden rice in Philippines, arguing the GMO won't significantly address problems of hunger or vitamin A deficiency in nation

News: India's Qrius reports USDA's statement on gene editing, asks what CRISPR-created food means for India, notes it could open up floodgates for genome editing there, where scientists already using CRISPR to improve banana; report points out it remains to be if CRISPR foods would be labeled in India

Commentary: Columnist for India's Down to Earth argues U.S.-China trade war presents opportunity for India to boost soya bean production, adding India's GM-free soya line offers niche market

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: France's La Depeche reports on court date delay for Volunteer Reapers who took part in November 2016 destruction of two rapeseed test fields; GMO opponents still using occasion of trial to conduct public actions, film screenings, concert and parade to support Volunteer Reapers

News release: French news source runs release from Green political party EELV calling on public to support Volunteer Reapers of Dijon, mobilize around them, call for use of precautionary principle, suspension of hidden GMOs and for EU to regulate all GMOs, including the hidden ones

News release: Spain Society of Organic Agriculture promotes NGO representative's FAO Agroecology meeting presentation proclaiming agroecology should not include transgenics

Commentary: Association of cities in Italian wine growing regions amplifies independent researcher Tiziano Gomiero's contention that recent study of transgenic maize glosses over risks to human, animal, environmental health

Commentary: Belgium international development NGO outlines how Monsanto's effort to introduce GM cotton into Burkina Faso ended in disaster when market collapsed amid protests organized by Coalition for the Protection of African Genetic Heritage

Event: March Against Syngenta promotes march event set for May 19 in front of corporate headquarters to demand fair and organic agriculture free of pesticides and genetic engineering; NGO also promotes petition to Swiss Federal Council and Parliament asking new GE procedures be regulated as GMOs

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Mexican news source reports National Indigenous Network denounces Chamber of Deputies Environment Committee approval of biodiversity law, at press conference argue law legalizes

exploitation of indigenous resources

News release: Citizens' Coalition against the General Law of Biodiversity promotes press conference publicly denouncing biodiversity law, warning policy violates rights of indigenous communities

News release: Mexico Baja California state congress approve point of agreement calling on federal government to reject biodiversity law, citing concerns it will threaten environment, Mexico national heritage

News: Argentinian news source reports academic to speak before Chamber of Deputies about claims of causal relationship between human disease and use of agrottoxins; meeting to feature debate on issues involving food production, including use of transgenics, to inform draft law on agrochemical use

Commentary: University of Sao Paulo radio program highlights authorization of GM mosquito, noting faculty professor says mosquito is effective but should be part of integrated approach to mosquito population control

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: Australian news source reports new CEO takes over Grain Producers South Australia, says she wants to work on national policy; Caroline Rhodes adds that she wants members to understand practical effects of ending South Australia's long-standing GM moratorium

More Oceania items

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Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology developments included the start of the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization's Second International Agroecology Symposium in Rome, which will continue through Thursday. Australia's Review of the National Gene Technology Scheme kicked off Phase 3 consultations, inviting public comment on the draft findings from its third review.

- The FAO's agroecology meeting today continued to draw activist commentary, with several groups positioning their preferred farming systems as the appropriate response to sustainability concerns in agriculture. ActionAid, for example, called for patents on plants and seeds to be abolished while Friends of the Earth International claimed that agriculture should reinforce smallholder farmer land rights and move away from commodities farming. **See more**
- Australia opened Phase 3 consultations on its Review of the National Gene Technology Scheme, publishing a report on findings developed through the previous phases. The report noted that "future proofing" the scheme would require technical updates and noted the potential for a tiered approach to regulation to more accurately reflect levels of risk. Comments on the draft are open through May 24. **See more**

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North America

News release: U.S. Rep. Rosa DeLauro sends letter to U.S. Government Accountability Office (GOA), requesting examination of regulatory framework surrounding cell-cultured foods, noting potential introduction into the food supply raises important questions

Commentary: American Farm Bureau Federation highlights USDA's announcement it has no plans to regulate plants modified through genome editing, as long as they aren't plant pests or developed using plant pests, notes AFBF working with USDA to signal plant breeders about need for innovative technology

News: Indiana newspaper reports AquaBounty Technologies upgrading defunct Bell Aquaculture fish farm with plans to grow GE salmon for human consumption, which U.S. FDA approved in 2015; AquaBounty's annual report points out anti-GMO activist groups have pressured retailers to boycott GM salmon

[More North America items](#)

Africa

There were no noteworthy biotechnology developments in Africa during today's monitoring. Click the link below for the latest items.

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Filipino news outlet reports briefly on recent launch of Stop Golden Rice International campaign by delegates of civil society organizations; notes call to strengthen global campaign against corporate control of agriculture, GMOs and release of golden rice in Asia

Campaign: Korea's Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice announces Campaign for National Petition for Dismissal of GMO Markers and School Meals from April 3-6 at Gyeongsang National University

News: Indian Express reports farmer leader P Ayyakannu's 100-day protest against GM crops arrived in Thanjai, the activist submitted a petition to District Collector A Annadurai claiming that GM crops pose several health risks such as infertility

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: FAO summarizes 2nd International Agroecology Symposium in Rome, highlights FAO Director-General Jose Graziano da Silva's call for transformative change, and belief that agroecology can help improve global food production

Commentary: ActionAid issues call to 'scale-up' and 'scale-out' agroecology, in context of U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) 2nd International Symposium on Agroecology; also call on governments to repeal intellectual property rights rules on seeds

Commentary: Friends of the Earth International touts its report on community forest management and agroecology, argues decision-makers attending UN FAO's meeting on agroecology in Rome must understand that transforming to agroecological system involves more than technical changes to farming

News release: French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD) promotes its role at FAO International Symposium on Agro-ecology to achieve Sustainable Development Goals, set for April 3 through 5 in Rome; CIRAD will focus on knowledge, training to foster agro-ecological transition

Commentary: IFOAM's "Organic Without Boundaries" blog gives tips for convincing policy-makers to support organic agriculture, such as positioning it as promising high-value market in countries where environmental, health issues low on agenda of political majority, showcasing success stories

Commentary: Former anti-GMO activist Mark Lynas writes for New Scientist, compares refusal to accept GMO safety to climate change denial (subscription required)

News release: French NGO promotes walk and picnic to be held April 4 to show support for member of Volunteer Reapers convicted in court of Dijon, urges support for Reapers, calls for halt to GMO field trials in France

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News release: Mexico's Chamber of Deputies announces PRD deputies won't accept that other parties impose General Law of Biodiversity, call it necessary to open dialogue with citizens, specialized groups, indigenous communities

News release: Mexico's National Center for Social Communication (CENCOS) announces representatives of indigenous peoples, groups to hold news conference April 3 to explain opposition to General Law of Biodiversity about to come up for vote in Chamber of Deputies

Audio: Radio France Internationale posts Spanish-language report on Argentina, where NGO Renama working to promote agroecology, notes UN FAO posted report on its official website about Argentinian community that doesn't use agrochemicals or transgenics

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Announcement: Australia's National Gene Technology Scheme announces it is accepting online submissions for Phase 3 Consultation through May 24

Report: Australia's National Gene Technology Scheme publishes preliminary report on Third Review of the Gene Technology Scheme, summarizes technical findings, regulatory findings, governance findings, social and ethical findings and international context

[More Oceania items](#)

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology developments included ongoing stakeholder and advocacy response to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's recent statement on products of gene editing.

- A USDA statement outlining why certain gene-editing products would not be regulated by the agency continued to draw commentary today. The American Seed Trade Association welcomed the news, saying that the statement makes official the approach USDA has taken in reviewing recent gene-edited products. Previewing likely advocacy response, conspiracy blogger Jon Rappoport called the decision "criminal" and warned against a wave of new edited foods. [See more](#)
- Activists in Mexico coordinating under the campaign Coalición Ciudadana ante la Ley General de Biodiversidad previewed a day of protests against the Chamber of Deputies' efforts to progress the country's biodiversity law. A spokesperson for Semilla de Vida warned that the law sold indigenous genetic resources to corporations and said that a petition against the measure had received over 50,000 signatures. In advance of the scheduled vote tomorrow, activists urged protestors to use the social media hashtag #AltoalaLeydeBiodiversidad to voice their concerns. [See more](#)

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North America

[News: AgWired reports American Seed Trade Association \(ASTA\) welcomes USDA Secretary Perdue's statement regarding oversight of plant products produced via gene editing, includes audio interview with ASTA president and CEO Andy LaVigne](#)

[News: The Scientist reports USDA has no plans to regulate plants developed through genome editing, but will continue oversight of transgenic plants; notes no determination of whether gene-edited plants will require labeling](#)

[News: The Progressive Farmer amplifies Bloomberg News report USDA secretary has announced gene editing products, advanced breeding technologies will not require same regulatory oversight as gene-transfer technology](#)

[Commentary: Anti-GMO blogger Jon Rappoport criticizes USDA Secretary Perdue's announcement that gene edited plants will not be regulated, amplifies concerns raised by GMWatch's Claire Robinson about lack of human health studies](#)

[Commentary: Kevin Folta welcomes retraction of study claiming to demonstrate unintended mutations in CRISPR mice, laments that the damage has already done, noting media coverage of the study negatively influenced public perception of gene editing](#)

[Commentary: University of Illinois maize breeding and genetics professor Stephen Moose writes opinion piece for local news outlet, promotes upcoming screening of Food Evolution documentary, emphasizes importance of communication about GMOs](#)

News release: Canadian Biotechnology Action Network, The Council of Canadians, Ecology Action Centre and Living Oceans Society call on Canadian gov't to halt any further assessments of GE salmon until more steps are taken to improve transparency, including establishment of mandatory labeling

Commentary: Medium op-ed exposes Russian Factor GMO initiative as potential Putin disinformation effort; questions why U.S. and EU collaborators decline to comment and media fails to follow-up

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Ugandan science journalist Lominda Afedraru writes for Genetic Literacy Project, profiles South Sudan refugee Mary Yangi's efforts to support herself by farming maize, highlights her hope for biotech approvals to help combat fall armyworm

Commentary: Ag expert Isaac Ongu writes for Uganda's Daily Monitor, criticizes MP Syda Bbumba's language on GMOs, which she described as 'demonic,' hopes she will use more positive language about bacterial wilt-resistant bananas

News: Ghana News Agency reports anti-GMO CIKOD group advocating to include agroecology curriculum in local schools; notes ongoing programs in Ghana and Burkina Faso funded by Groundswell and Cargill Foundation

News: AgroPages report on Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service's (Kephis) rejection of Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organisation's (Kalro) application for biotech maize field trials, stalling the process in spite of prior approval from National Biosafety Authority

News: Nigerian newspaper reports security head claims Boko Haram mercenaries hired by G7 countries as part of conspiracy to drive farmers from land so they can be given non-replicating GM seed when resettled, forced into buying GM seed in future

Announcement: African Union Commission issues call for papers for Sixth Congress of African Economists, and will accept submissions through June 30, 2018, with theme of fighting corruption for sustainable transformation; sub-topic includes ag development policy

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: Former economics professor at IIM Bengaluru, Bharat Jhunjunwala, writes for The Hans India, examines ongoing trade war between the U.S. and China, examines increased need for protectionism, highlights Monsanto's IP rights on GM seeds

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: France's Liberation reports on debate surrounding regulation of products of new breeding techniques, as EU Court of Justice decision is expected in the coming weeks, highlights Corporate Europe Observatory's investigation of lobbying efforts

Commentary: Spanish pro-GMO NGO Fundacion Antama amplifies Royal Society study on British citizens' perceptions of genetic technologies, in general British citizens favor its use to produce cheaper drugs and crop nutrition, and favor a global regulatory framework

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Mexico's La Jornada reports on Citizens Coalition before the General Law of Biodiversity's

announcement of plans to issue pronouncement against the law's approval, Adelita San Vicente of NGO Semilla de Vida noted their petition has gathered over 50,000 signatures

Commentary: Gabriel RC of Mexico's Regeneracion encourages readers to join #AltoLeyBiodiversidad and post a video in opposition to the Biodiversity Law and privatization of natural resources on Twitter

Commentary: Guillermo Marin, a researcher and cultural promoter of the Toltecayotl, amplifies Greenpeace's rejection of Mexico's General Biodiversity Law, highlighting call for consultations with indigenous communities, points to threats to biodiversity

News: Mexican news outlet reports on Mayan communities' efforts to preserve native seeds, especially corn, highlights "Feasts of Native Seeds," launched in 2002 to oppose use of non-native seeds

Commentary: GMWatch blames GM soybeans for environmental disaster reported in The Guardian; syndicated story never mentions GM plants in reporting how Argentina's conversion to soybean cultivation has led to rise in water table, appearance of destructive new river

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Australia's Farm Online reports on House Liberal member and former grains farmer Jim Chown's recent statement comparing anti-GMO activists to ISIS operatives, pointing to Charles Benbrook's influence in legal dispute over GM contamination

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 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - April 2, 2018
 Date: Monday, April 2, 2018 4:04:37 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Caitrin,

Transparency has become the hot topic in food safety.

While **CropLife International** and the **European Crop Protection Association** are launching a joint initiative that will give the public greater access to safety studies, regulators in the United States are also focusing on changing their scientific transparency policies – a subject discussed in this week's newsletter in pieces by Steve Savage and Steve Milloy.

Other pieces highlight the back-and-forth over GMOs in Uganda, new research making endocrine disruption claims and a visit to the U.S. by Indian activist Vandana Shiva.

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In This Issue

- [Stakeholder Spotlight](#)
- [Stories Worth Sharing](#)
- [What's Trending?](#)
- [Calendar highlights](#)

Stakeholder Spotlight: International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements



IFOAM Executive Director Markus Arbenz will be among the presenters next week at the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization's **2nd International Symposium on Agroecology** in

Stories Worth Sharing

Steve Savage: USDA Pesticide Data Program provides important transparency on food safety that gets twisted by activists

Steve Milloy: U.S. EPA should be praised for moving away from "unaccountable, dodgy science" based on political agendas

Michelle Miller: Wisconsin university will pay Vandana Shiva \$20,000 to spread her anti-GMO lies

Isaac Ongu: Opposition to GMOs in Uganda fueled by "threat to organic's profits"

Authors reverse findings from paper claiming CRISPR gene-editing technique could result in unintended mutations

Science 2.0: Activist researcher Barbara Demeneix has "anti-science mentality" that everything is an endocrine disruptor

Kevin Folta: U.S. congressional report spreads "conspiracy nonsense" and "blatant misinformation" about glyphosate

Devang Mehta: I'm quitting GMO research due to "relentless suspicion" of technologies proven to be safe

Chandre Dhamawardana: Sri Lanka ban on paraquat and glyphosate makes poor stay hungry while rich search for "clean food"

Rome. The NGO is touting the three-day symposium as an opportunity to spread its message that there's a "broad consensus that agroecology can be instrumental" in reaching environmental sustainability goals and combating rural poverty.

Last week, IFOAM and the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) promoted their joint report, "Socioeconomic Impacts of GMOs on European agriculture," that claims biotech and organic crops cannot coexist due to the threat of cross-contamination and that banning GM crops is an "efficient strategy."

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about IFOAM, which touts more than 1,000 affiliates in 120 countries.

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STAKEHOLDER
PROFILES**

[Charles Laverty: California's Prop 65 cancer warnings an example of "bad science driving bad policy"](#)

[KNOW GMOs: New study explains "halo effect" of GM crops on nearby non-GM fields](#)

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What's Trending?

[U.S. Department of Agriculture clarifies that it will not regulate plants altered using gene editing](#)

[Former Socialist ecology minister resigns from French pesticide commission to highlight demand for glyphosate ban](#)

[Vote scheduled Tuesday on Mexico's general biodiversity law](#)

[Activists mark one-year anniversary of chlorpyrifos ban reversal with campaign against EPA Administrator Pruitt](#)

[Stakeholders demand pesticide reductions as April 5 deadline nears for EU Pollinators Initiative](#)

Calendar highlights

April 3-5	April 4	April 5
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition "Our Farms Our Future" conference	CRIIGEN's Christian Velot lectures on endocrine-disrupting chemicals	Tyrone Hayes lecture at San Jose State University
April 7	April 9-13	April 9-14
Tufts University annual Food and Nutrition Conference	FAO regional conference for Asia and the Pacific	Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues meets in China

CLICK HERE TO ACCESS FULL EVENTS CALENDAR

<p>Stakeholder database</p> <p>More information on the people and organizations influencing the food and agriculture debate</p>	<p>Monitoring portal</p> <p>Catch up on the latest news and other developments impacting regulations on agriculture.</p>	<p>Bonus Eventus community</p> <p>Connect with academic experts and researchers, journalists and agriculture allies.</p>
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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Global biotechnology developments over the weekend included activist and GMO advocate statements on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's earlier announcement that it will not regulate some gene-edited products. A Purdue University study found China could cut U.S. soy exports to the country by up to 71 percent if it retaliates to U.S.-imposed tariffs on Chinese goods.

- Several media, activist and biotech advocate sites commented on the USDA's announcement that it will not regulate gene-edited products that can be produced via conventional breeding methods. GMWatch said the agency is relying on "an inadequate framework to justify looking the other way when it comes to risks posed by new genome-edited products." *Wired* reported that the products may not be subject to labeling requirements, and *MIT Review* called it a big win for the biotech industry but noted there may be complications when it comes to exporting the products. [See more](#)
- *Politico Pro* reported that a Purdue University study found that U.S. soy exports to China could drop by 71 percent if Beijing imposes trade restrictions in retaliation to U.S. tariffs on its products. The analysis, commissioned by the U.S. Soybean Export Council, noted that about 62 percent of all U.S. soy exports go to China. [See more](#)

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For a more extensive compilation of recent biotech items, [click here](#)

North America

News: Retraction Watch reports Nature Methods has retracted a 2007 paper suggesting CRISPR-Cas9 may cause widespread collateral damage to the genome; retraction follows expression of concern by the journal shortly after the paper was published

Commentary: U.S. Right to Know's Stacy Malkan criticizes SciBabe for defending chemicals in food, promoting pesticides, including chlorpyrifos, and GMOs, not revealing her funding sources, notes her previous work for American Council on Science and Health and the Genetic Literacy Project

Commentary: CropLife highlights growth of glyphosate-resistant weeds spurring development of dicamba-resistant soybeans, cotton, cites issues in 2017 with off-target damage to amplify ag industry belief of most problems caused by ill-timed spraying, improper use, notes 2018 debut of DowDuPont 2,4-D-resistant crops

Commentary: Site that promotes conspiracy theories lists eight things "everyone should know" about GMOs, cites lack of "unbiased" research, claims scientists "pretty divided" on topic, notes many people want GM foods labeled and concludes jury still out on their safety, effects on health

Commentary: Organic Consumers Association's Ronnie Cummins calls for boycott of factory farms, including fish farms, declaring animals, fish fed GM, pesticide-tainted grains, dosed with antibiotics, hormones; Cummins contends farms source of disease, pollution

News: OZY reports DuPont Pioneer, other companies working on CRISPR-edited foods that could come to market as soon as five years from now, quotes researchers saying CRISPR could help grow food

sustainably for world's population, notes anti-GMO groups question possibility of off-target effects

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Uganda's Daily Monitor reports members of parliament attending Biennial National Agricultural Biosciences Conference urge speedy passage of country's biosafety bill; former Minister for Energy says GM crops needed to increase agricultural productivity and GDP growth

News: Kenya's Business Daily reports Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (Kephis) rejects Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organisation's (Kalro) application to conduct GM maize field trials, stating authorization is needed from National Environmental Management Authority (Nema)

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: India's Mint runs op-ed by co-founder of genetic testing business touting CRISPR technology's potential for gene editing plants, animals, humans, noting it's already being used to help treat human diseases, predicting it could help lessen famines; he notes study on mice suggesting CRISPR created unintended mutations

Interview: Vietnamese news site interviews ag expert who warns living in rural areas is unsafe due to herbicide-tolerant GMOs and pesticides, says he opposes importing GM seed

News: The Hindu Business Line reports Telangana state government, farmers union launch independent campaigns to discourage use of illegal Bt cotton or Roundup Ready Flex seeds; farmers have been using technology extensively despite absence of permissions in India

Commentary: Dr. Nandita Shah writes for The Hans India, advises readers to avoid eating GM soybeans, points to health risks and negative environmental impact

Commentary: Anti-biotech NGO GRAIN claims Asian public "alarmed" by Health Canada, FSANZ approval of Golden Rice, says it will lead to feeding trials with Asian children; says International Rice Research Institute leaving Asian people "in the dark"

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: U.K.'s GMWatch criticizes USDA's statement clarifying it won't regulate plants produced through innovative new breeding techniques, such as genome editing, argues USDA's statements about science "smoke and mirrors," patents on GE plants contradict USDA claim they're indistinguishable from traditionally bred plants

News: Deutsche Welle reports decision to break ties with Monsanto over GM cotton quality concerns angered farmers who enjoyed better yields from company's GM cotton; local firm says country is still open to biotech, hoping to cultivate seeds locally

Commentary: The Conversation runs piece by two English university scientists promoting adoption of agroecological farming to ensure adequate food supply for world, insisting dominant model of large-scale, one-crop intensive farming is failing, causes pollution

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Mexico's Sin Embargo reports lawmakers in Chamber of Deputies trying to advance approval of General Law of Biodiversity, notes Citizens' Coalition has criticized bill's provision to privatize country's

genetic resources and knowledge of indigenous peoples

Commentary: Telesur analysis examines how India's neoliberal policies prompting record-breaking farmer suicide rate, farmer uprising, citing cost of Bt technology among causes for farmer economic downfall

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: The West Australian news site reports WA minister compares anti-biotech activists to terrorist group ISIS, claims activists fabricated evidence for Steve Marsh contamination lawsuit

More Oceania items

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Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology developments included a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) statement clarifying that the agency doesn't regulate some products of new gene-editing technologies.

- In a statement released late Wednesday, the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service clarified that it does not regulate products of gene editing when the resulting crop could have been developed through traditional breeding methods. The report specifically noted several types of gene editing that, because they don't involve a plant pest or transgenic method, would not require oversight. The news was amplified on several business and science media sites. [See more](#)
- GM Freeze, on behalf of 25 other organizations, issued a statement criticizing Rothamsted Research's proposed field trial of a genetically modified camelina variety. The coalition group, which includes Soil Association, GMWatch, GeneWatch and others, claimed that the plants could cross with wild relatives and pass on traits that are dangerous to both the environment and to human health. [See more](#)
- A Ghanaian news outlet reported that Food Sovereignty Ghana's lawsuit against GM crop commercialization would move forward, following a judge's decision Wednesday that a 2015 ruling had not applied to all aspects of the lawsuit. The court rejected a claim by the Ghana National Association of Farmers & Fisherfolk (GNAFF) seeking to dismiss the suit and awarded damages to Food Sovereignty Ghana. The Human Rights High Court will hear additional arguments on April 13. [See more](#)

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North America

Announcement: USDA releases details on which plant breeding innovations it has no plans to regulate under biotechnology regulations, including plant varieties with genetic deletions, single base pair substitutions, insertions from compatible plant relatives and complete null segregants

News release: USDA announces Secretary Sonny Perdue's statement clarifying department's oversight of plants produced through innovative new breeding techniques, including genome editing, saying USDA seeks to allow innovation but asserts agency will carry out regulatory responsibilities

Commentary: Washington, D.C., law firm's blog reports remarks by director of U.S. FDA's Center for Food Safety at Future Food-Tech Summit; Susan Mayne highlighted importance of companies developing foods derived from GE plants consulting FDA early in process, working with agency on Nutrition Facts label

Commentary: Pro-GMO investment analyst asks why Monsanto is considered "evil" but DuPont has better public perception despite its involvement in creation of nuclear weapons and "dangerous" pesticides; notes lack of peer-reviewed research finding GMOs harmful

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Ghanaian radio station reports appeals court dismisses motion for stay in case against commercial release of GM cowpeas and GM rice filed in 2017 by Food Sovereignty Ghana; court sets hearing for April 13 on issues raised by parties to be set down for trial in landmark case concerning biotechnology in Ghana

News: Government-run Botswana Press Agency reports agriculture minister says it's not illegal to import and consume GMOs because no law prevents importation; he says ministry working on Biodiversity Act to be presented to Parliament this year, but until bill is enacted, little can be done to regulate GMO products

Commentary: Uganda's New Vision runs op-ed by director of Tropical Institute of Development Innovations calling for country to approve use of latest technologies, benefit from bioscience, asserting it could generate enough income to finance Uganda's entire budget every year

News: Nigeria's PM News reports on conference on maize production organized by Bayer, Bayer's Temitope Banjo highlighted goal of addressing major problems for maize farmers such as weeds and fall armyworm, noted new products will soon be introduced

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News release: CropLife Asia promotes 2018 general meeting in Singapore, where executive director called innovative technologies of plant science key component of solution to challenge of feeding continent's growing population

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Letter: U.K.'s GM Freeze releases letter sent with 25 other groups asking Defra not to allow Rothamsted Research to hold another open-air field trial of GM camelina, warning genetic modification and resulting novel traits represent unacceptable risk, including to human health

Event: Associazione Luca Coscioni promotes World Congress For Freedom of Scientific Research set for April 11-13 at European Parliament in Brussels, with theme of "Modern agricultural biotechnology calling" for April 12 session; Vytenis Andriukaitis, EU health commissioner, to give keynote address

Commentary: EuropaBio previews meeting of World Congress set for April 11-13 at European Parliament on theme of "Science for Democracy"; event will address issues including genome editing on humans and plants, with specific session April 12 addressing debate on modern agricultural biotechnology

News release: IFOAM EU touts its new study of socioeconomic impacts of GMOs on European agriculture, argues organic and conventional GMO-free sectors need to implement expensive measures to avoid contamination, concludes coexistence in breeding and seed production unfeasible

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Letters to the editor: Mexico's La Jornada runs letter from group of ethnologists and social anthropologists warning General Law of Biodiversity adds to process of implementing legal framework to favor dispossession of indigenous peoples, would take advantage of traditional genetic resources

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

There were no noteworthy biotechnology developments in Oceania during today's monitoring. Click the link below for the latest items.

[More Oceania items](#)

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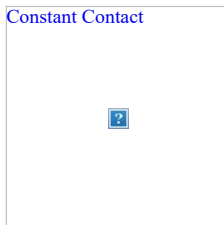
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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology developments included Italian reporting on the March 27 Citizens' Dialogue in Turin with European Health and Food Safety Commissioner Vytenis Andriukaitis.

- Italian news outlets reported on the March 27 Citizens' Dialogue with Commissioner Andriukaitis, which focused on health and nutrition. Local reports noted that the Commissioner urged citizens to trust science on controversial issues, including on the safety of GMOs. [See more](#)
- International activists highlighted several upcoming meetings promoting agroecology, including the Food and Agriculture Organization's Second International Symposium on Agroecology on April 3-5. In a news release, the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements noted that stakeholders plan to highlight the "broad consensus" on agroecological methods. CIDSE, an umbrella group for Catholic development agencies, promoted its event on establishing agroecological standards; Spain's Observatorio de Soberanía Alimentaria y Agroecología previewed a late May event in Cordoba. [See more](#)

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North America

Commentary: Henry Miller writes for Fox News, reflects on 1987 op-ed for the Wall Street Journal calling for more precise terminology, explains why "GMO" is a meaningless term, highlights problems with over-regulation of biotech

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project posts piece by Marc Brazeau of Food and Farm Discussion Lab explaining concept of "substantial equivalence," arguing suspicions about patenting of new food products nearly always based on misunderstandings of concept and how patents work

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science posts blog by author Victor Shorrocks claiming organic farming supporters condemn genetic engineering of food while ignoring mutagenesis, which has played major part in worldwide production of most crop varieties

Commentary: JD Supra runs analysis by attorney from St. Louis law firm warning USDA's forthcoming rules on National Bioengineered Food Disclosure Standard may impact defenses of consumer fraud lawsuits based on "non-GMO" or "GMO-free" labeling of products

Commentary: Civil Eats cites economic imbalance of corn farmers outspending their earnings due to ag industry monopoly on seeds, pesticides, amplifies European study indicating use of neonic seed treatments unnecessary, notes neonics "firmly established" as cause of bee decline

Commentary: The Hill runs op-ed by three members and supporters of Campaign to STOP GE Trees urging National Academies of Sciences, currently studying potential for biotechnology to address forest health, to reject idea, calling for ban on GE trees on grounds they are unproven and dangerous

Commentary: Garden Island op-ed by activist Gary Hooser recounts experience at human rights film

festival screening of "Poisoning Paradise," says he met with Swiss Parliament, U.N., others who expressed shock that Syngenta exports atrazine, paraquat banned in its home country

News release: Virginia Commonwealth University promotes its April 9 Earth Day event featuring Vandana Shiva speaking, taking part in panel discussion

More North America items

Africa

There were no noteworthy biotechnology developments in Africa during today's monitoring. Click the link below for the latest items.

More Africa items

Asia

Commentary: India's The Tribune runs op-ed by Kansas State University professor of plant pathology celebrating career of Norman Borlaug, citing his bond with Punjab and its Green Revolution, amplifying Borlaug's concerns that farmers wouldn't be allowed to reap benefits of biotechnology

More Asia items

Europe

Commentary: Swiss-based biotech researcher Devang Mehta writes for Massive Science, expresses relief that he will be leaving GMO research following completion of his PhD program; describes negative backlash and challenges in science communication

Commentary: Greenpeace Deutschland promotes its new survey showing most retail chains in Germany favor mandatory, legally binding labeling of meat following Lidl grocery chain's move to label its fresh meat; NGO asserts consumers want to know how animals were kept, says labels should disclose GE feed

News: EurActiv reports new Greenpeace survey suggests number of Germany's major retailers and meat producers favor legally binding label on meat, supporting NGO's push for more customer transparency; survey conducted after German Lidl grocery chain voluntarily stamped all fresh meat with origin labels

Commentary: Science Magazine's Martin Enserink examines launch of new Association for Responsible Research and Innovation in Genome Editing (ARRIGE), allowing various stakeholders to discuss and provide guidance on gene editing

Video: Russia Insight YouTube channel posts video from recent All-Russian Agricultural Forum showing how young scientists from Moscow Timiryazev Academy came up with plan for increasing market share of Russian vegetables that involves cutting certain genes with molecular scissors, without any GMOs

Event: European Academies Science Advisory Council (EASAC) announces April 26 event for launch of EASAC-IAP report on food and nutrition security in Europe; December report preview noted gene editing as a potential area for research

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Mexican news source reports Oaxacan state legislature urges national Congress to allow wide consultation with academics, civil society groups, indigenous communities and people before issuing new General Law of Biodiversity

Event: Spain's Observatory of Food Sovereignty and Agroecology promotes seventh International Congress of Agroecology to be held May 30 through June 1 in Cordoba; touts agroecology as system where production, distribution and consumption of food environmentally sound, nutritionally complete

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: Australian news outlet reports on Western Australia farmer Terry Enright's statement that entry of GM canola onto has fields has not caused any problems, in personal submission to State parliamentary inquiry into possible compensation for GM contamination

More Oceania items

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Global Biotech Snapshot

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Today's global biotechnology developments included a new international organic industry effort to encourage organic production in four African countries.

- The International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements announced that it was targeting Ghana, Burkina Faso, Togo, and São Tomé and Príncipe in its Organic Marketing for Development program. The effort aims to establish organic farming advocacy and education groups in the countries, as well as promote policies "fostering organic market development." [See more](#)
- In a non-peer reviewed "pre-print" paper, U.S. researchers updated a May 2017 paper with findings that certain gene-editing techniques in mammals did not introduce unintended mutations. Amplifying the study, *Genetic Literacy Project* noted that the updated assessment reverses the group's previous findings that prompted significant controversy and advocacy amplification. [See more](#)
- A Brazilian news agency noted that African leaders were visiting the region to learn how local agricultural producers were controlling Fall Armyworm. An Embrapa spokesperson noted the pest is not an issue for Brazil because of the country's integrated pest management efforts, including the use of genetically-modified crops. [See more](#)

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North America

News release: Americans for Farmers and Families, pro-NAFTA food, agriculture coalition begins "Retaliation Hurts Rural Families" project in effort to protect industry from retaliation to Trump's steel, aluminum tariffs

Study: bioRxiv publishes preprint of article by team of U.S. university researchers following up previous publication, finding whole genome sequencing of multiple CRISPR-edited mouse lines suggests no excess mutations; first publication suggested CRISPR editing might introduce unintended mutations

Commentary: The World Food Prize posts Borlaug Blog by 2017 Laureate, Akinwumi Adesina, president of African Development Bank, who touts Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation platform, scaling up bio-fortified crops across continent to fight malnutrition

Commentary: Food Tank announces advocacy efforts to make agroecology "solution" to climate change with U.N.; cites multi-million-dollar funding from AgroEcology Fund to foster political and economic environment in emerging markets to promote practices

Commentary: Joseph Mercola touts regenerative agriculture as next big trend, return to what organic farming originally intended, including protection of biodiversity, rebuilding of topsoil; he calls for boycotts on all GMOs, claims government agencies furthering interests of large biotech companies

Commentary: "Farm Babe" Michelle Miller writes for AgDaily, opposes Vandana Shiva's upcoming speech

at University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh in April, criticizes her spread of lies and fear about modern farming methods, encourages readers to attend and speak out

Announcement: FDA announces extended deadline for proposed collection of information regarding guidance on consultation procedures for foods derived from new plant varieties, measure requires Office of Management and Budget (OMB) review and clearance

More North America items

Africa

News release: Nigeria's National Biosafety Management Agency (NBMA) announces African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF) commends its regulatory standard for modern biotech, following recent AATF delegation visit

Interview: Senegal's Le Quotidien talks to president of Senegalese Association of Farmers' Seed Producers, who asserts attendees from eight African countries at Subregional Trade Fair for Peasant Seeds are fighting for legal recognition of peasant seeds

News release: GRAIN posts declaration of Sixth West African Peasant Seed Fair held in March, with participants affirming importance of strengthening peasant seed systems to guarantee their food sovereignty, calling on West African governments to drop support for introduction of GMO seeds

More Africa items

Asia

Commentary: Shailesh J. Mehta School of Management researcher Sarthak Gaurav writes for India's Mint, argues neither gov't nor the markets have been able to help vulnerable farmers, points to increased costs associated with Bt cotton, and health risks of pesticides

News: Alternative news site Citizen Truth examines possible link between Monsanto and number of farmers committing suicide in India, asserts dependence of India's cotton farmers on Monsanto's seeds has changed farming practices, affecting large swath of agricultural sector

News: Agrimoney reports Pakistan makes progress towards updating seed approval, intellectual property regulations to officially allow GM seed planting in 2018; Pakistani farmers view GM crops more favorably than consumers

More Asia items

Europe

News release: International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements promotes launch of Organic Markets for Development (OM4D) project in four West African countries, with goal of establishing organic farming and related markets systems that enable smallholder farmers to improve their living conditions

Event: France's Kaizen magazine promotes March 29 conference at Goethe Lyon Institute on theme of "Tomorrow's agriculture: which seeds to feed?", with speakers arguing seeds must remain natural, free, reproducible and transmissible for autonomy of food, peasants

News release: European Coordination Via Campesina promotes events, meetings building toward adoption of UN declaration on rights of peasants, other people working in rural areas, highlights recent and upcoming events, including session of Human Rights Council in Geneva, event in German Parliament

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Brazil's EBC Radio reports government agency helping 35 African countries deal with Fall Armyworm through integrated pest management techniques, including use of transgenic products, insecticides, biological insecticides and crop management

Commentary: Slow Food Mexico recaps Regional Forum held in February on food security and sovereignty in Yucatan Peninsula, culminating in Declaration of Merida, with speaker highlighting Corn Collective Lawsuit that led to provisional suspension of permits for planting transgenic corn

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Campaign: Friends of the Earth Melbourne urges supporters to submit comments to Food Regulator Food Standards Australia New Zealand calling for regulation of new GM techniques in animals, plants, microbes, warns of effects on food chain, environment with no safety testing or labeling

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Diane Wray-Cohen@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - March 26, 2018
 Date: Monday, March 26, 2018 9:02:21 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included a new activist report urging the European Union to reassess its sourcing strategies for animal feed.

- U.S. advocacy group Mighty Earth, coordinating with France Nature Environnement and Sherpa, launched a new report claiming EU animal feed demands are causing significant environmental and health problems in Latin America. Specifically, the groups highlight soy production in Argentina, arguing that glyphosate used on GM soy in the region has harmed farmers and their families in the region. [See more](#)
- Philippines-based advocacy group MASIPAG urged local regulators not to allow Australia's approval of Golden Rice to affect the country's assessment of the crop. The group claimed that Golden Rice promoters were planning to take advantage of "weak" local regulations and loopholes to get the crop approved. [See more](#)

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For a more extensive compilation of recent biotech items, [click here](#).

North America

Commentary: Financial analysis site Stratfor examines growing competition between the U.S. and China in biotech sector, highlights Chinese acquisition of Syngenta, developments in gene editing, and potential U.S. national security concerns

News: Lansing State Journal reports on Michigan State University professor Alison Bernstein's involvement in "Science Moms" documentary, and her Mommy, PhD blog, to help dispel pseudoscientific claims about GMOs and vaccines

Commentary: Gary Truitt of Hoosier Ag Today amplifies recent survey by Bayer and the National 4-H Council which found that a large percentage of teachers do not teach Agri-Science, argues that agricultural science and tech should be included in STEM curriculum

Campaign: Beyond Pesticides urges readers to tell state AGs to join investigation of Bayer-Monsanto merger, noting risk claims linked to glyphosate, neonics; highlights Friends of the Earth survey suggesting widespread opposition of farmers to merger

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Zimbabwean news outlet reports on African Agricultural Technology Foundation's (AATF) promotion of hybrid seeds, stating they can boost yields by 20 percent, highlights Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture's funding of Seeds2B project

Commentary: Nigerian ag biotechnologist Abdulrazak Ibrahim writes for Genetic Literacy Project, highlights potential applications of CRISPR in Nigeria, such as reducing populations of malaria-carrying mosquitoes, calls for stakeholders' workshop on CRISPR

Report: African Centre for Biodiversity publishes seed policy paper, "Towards national and regional seed policies in Africa that recognise and support farmer seed systems," to synthesize policy issues emerging from the Centre's research and advocacy work

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Philippine Daily Inquirer reports on Stop Golden Rice Network's call on gov't to reject "foreign safety stamps" on golden rice, arguing foreign approvals could be a ploy to exploit the Philippines' weak regulations and policy loopholes on GMOs

Commentary: Financial analysis site Stratfor examines growing competition between the U.S. and China in biotech sector, highlights Chinese acquisition of Syngenta, developments in gene editing, and potential U.S. national security concerns

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Le Monde reports on investigation by NGO Mighty Earth on negative impacts of GM soybean monocultures in South America, Mighty Earth will make its findings public on March 27, along with NGOs France Nature Environment (FNE) and Sherpa

News: France's RFI reports on NGO Mighty Earth's investigation which found that buying meat in Europe can contribute to deforestation in South America, notes consumers may not know if animal products come from animals given GM feed, due to differing labeling laws

Report: Mighty Earth publishes report, "The Avoidable Crisis," which documents negative environmental impact of South American soybean production to meet EU animal feed needs, highlights negative health impacts of glyphosate use on GM soy

News release: France Nature Environnement (FNE) announces results of new international survey, led by Mighty Earth, demonstrating negative environmental impact and human rights violations associated with South American soybean production for European feed

News: The Times (U.K.) reports on former anti-GMO activist Mark Lynas' call on Britain to embrace GMOs post-Brexit, pointing to environmental advantages and safety of GM crops, highlights his arguments against organic production

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Event: National Autonomous University of Mexico's (UNAM) Center for Interdisciplinary Research in Sciences and Humanities (CEIICH) to host round table debate cycle on GM foods (April 11-13, 2018)

News: Uruguayan news outlet reports on University of the Republic's dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Diego Pineiro's recent speech in which he attributed recent growth in ag productivity to use of biotech packages, highlighted issue of royalty payments

News: Brazilian ag news outlet reports on Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (Embrapa) researcher Leandro Vargas' rebuttal to article in journal Agronanalysis linking GMOs to herbicide-resistant weeds, he notes problems arise from inappropriate use, not GMOs

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

There were no noteworthy biotechnology developments in Oceania during today's monitoring. Click the

link below for the latest items.

More Oceania items

More Bonus Eventus Resources

Stakeholder database

More information on the people and organizations influencing food and agriculture issues.

Events calendar

See where news could be happening next. Or let allies know about an upcoming event.

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 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - March 26, 2018
 Date: Monday, March 26, 2018 4 00:55 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

From non-GMO labels to the new push for "regenerative organic" certification, what's with all the terminology all over our food packaging?

Hank Campbell and Michelle Miller explore these topics in separate pieces highlighted on this week's newsletter. Campbell uses an old Dr. Seuss tale to explain how the organic labeling is taken to give a product value that it doesn't actually carry. And Miller explains the confusion that comes with warnings about GMOs and products' GMO absence claims.

Other articles touch on the "Poisoning Paradise" film, California's warnings on glyphosate causing cancer, and an organic fungicide that European regulators have found to be more harmful.

To view items on this newsletter, log in on the [Bonus Eventus Community](#) page. To create an account, fill out the Request Membership form on the front page of the site. To share articles, click on the Twitter icon.

Please [contact us](#) if you have any questions.

In This Issue

[Stakeholder Spotlight](#)
[Stories Worth Sharing](#)
[What's Trending?](#)
[Calendar highlights](#)

Stakeholder Spotlight: Public Eye



The Swiss anti-corporate NGO Public Eye (formerly the Berne Declaration) was in the news recently for sponsoring the viewing of the film "[Poisoning Paradise](#)" at a human rights festival in Geneva where it alleged multinational

Stories Worth Sharing

[Hank Campbell: Regenerative organic certification another meaningless decoration, like stars for Seuss' Sneetches](#)

[Andrew Porterfield: Popular organic fungicide has "more toxic rap sheet than glyphosate"](#)

[David Zaruk: "Poisoning Paradise" film crafted by lawyers as "pure jury-bait" for anti-pesticide litigation](#)

[Michelle Miller: No need for GMO labels because most food labels are "misleading, wrong, or just a marketing tool"](#)

[Gilbert Arap Bor: Biotechnology "innovation can't come soon enough" to deal with food insecurity, turmoil in Kenya](#)

[Pierre Petelle: Quebec's "rogue regulations" on pesticides hurt farmers and innovation without protecting the environment](#)

[Henry Miller: Russia has many ways of attacking the U.S., including influencing attitudes on GM crops](#)

[The Oklahoman: California's Prop 65 slaps cancer warnings "haphazardly on everything in sight"](#)

[Council for Agricultural Science and Technology: U.S. regulations](#)

agribusiness giants including Monsanto, Bayer and Syngenta were engaged in crimes against humanity for their development and commercialization of toxic GMOs and hormone-disrupting pesticides.

Public Eye, perhaps best known for its annual protests against capitalism at the Davos World Economic Forum, claims to represent progressive Swiss interests in keeping technologies, trade and corporate interests away from the poor in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about Public Eye.

CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES

based on undocumented risks pose "unreasonable barriers" to innovation [?](#)

Marco Cappato: World Congress for Freedom of Scientific Research next month in Brussels will include ag biotech workshop

Video: U.K. crop specialist calls pyrethroid spraying brought on by neonic ban "worst thing for pollinator health" [?](#)

CLICK FOR BONUS EVENTUS MONITORING

What's Trending?

European Union nearing implementation of criteria for endocrine-disrupting chemicals

Bayer-funded study identifies enzymes that allow bees to process neonics differently, leading to variance in toxicity

World Water Day sparks commentary on pesticide contamination, drought-tolerant crops

French studies find farmland birds in decline; researchers claim correlation to rise of industrial agriculture and neonics

EU regulators approve Bayer purchase of Monsanto, with BASF set to take on some assets

Calendar highlights

March 26-27	March 27	March 28
Garnet Plant Gene Editing Workshop	Forum for the Future of Agriculture (Brussels)	Friends of the Earth Australia Pesticides in Food Forum

CLICK HERE TO ACCESS FULL EVENTS CALENDAR

<p>Stakeholder database</p> <p>More information on the people and organizations influencing the food and agriculture debate</p>	<p>Monitoring portal</p> <p>Catch up on the latest news and other developments impacting regulations on agriculture.</p>	<p>Bonus Eventus community</p> <p>Connect with academic experts and researchers, journalists and agriculture allies.</p>
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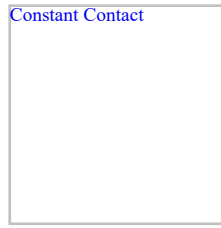
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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Global biotechnology developments over the weekend included ongoing activist and media response to the European Commission's approval of Bayer's purchase of Monsanto. In Mexico, a vote on the country's biodiversity law prompted criticism from food sovereignty groups.

- News outlets offered ongoing analysis of the European Commission's decision approving Bayer's takeover of Monsanto. *Bloomberg View* noted activist opposition to the deal but argued that European regulators were likely seeking to ensure that European companies remained competitive in the global agricultural industry. A *Xinhua* report noted agricultural companies were facing looming challenges from climate change and population growth. Meanwhile, activists with Pesticide Action Network urged U.S. consumers to contact the country's regulators in opposition to the deal. **See more**
- Mexican activists issued a statement criticizing the Green Ecologist Party (PVEM) for allowing a vote to proceed on the country's biodiversity law despite the lack of a quorum. The Campana Nacional Sin Maiz No Hay Pais called the move a "betrayal" of indigenous peoples and warned that the bill's failure to include public consultations was unconstitutional. The bill is scheduled for a broader vote on April 3. **See more**

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North America

Commentary: Pesticide Action Network says it's encouraged by U.S. antitrust division's concerns that Bayer-Monsanto deal could hurt competition, following its message campaign to Department of Justice (DoJ), urges supporters to take action

Commentary: Nature editorial emphasizes importance of a nuanced approach to engaging the public on controversial scientific issues, such as gene editing, supports engagement that is "more about consultation and democracy, and less about the marketing of science"

Commentary: Harvard's Sheila Jasanoff and Arizona State University's J. Benjamin Hurlbut write opinion piece for Nature, they call for establishment of a global observatory for gene editing, as an international network of scholars and organizations to support society's values

Study: Food Policy publishes corrected proof of study evaluating price of non-GM food, authors find that if food manufacturers reformulate products with non-GM ingredients, costs to consumers could be substantial

Audio: Kevin Folta's Talking Biotech podcast features "Pandora's Picnic Basket" author Alan McHughen, he believes arguments against GMOs have not changed much over the past 20 years, notes they are based on ideologies rather than science

Commentary: Sierra Club writer promotes new regenerative "beyond organic" label by Rodale as counter to greenwashing and growth of industrial organic; cites Non-GMO project, Certified Humane and other similar labeling schemes to protect "authentic" organic farmers and consumers

News release: Sen. Lisa Murkowski highlights her contributions to recently passed funding bill, including continuation of GE salmon import ban until FDA finalizes labeling guidelines

More North America items

Africa

Commentary: Uganda news site profiles Mark Lynas, describes reversal from anti-GMO movement leader to GMO advocate in light of GMO resistance in Uganda; quotes Lynas on benefits of GMOs

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science's Joseph Opoku Gakpo criticizes Peasant Farmers Association of Ghana's (PFAG) anti-GMO scare tactics, notes PFAG's statements on GMO safety run counter to stance taken by various respected institutions in Ghana

News: Zimbabwean news outlet reports on African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF) Director for Commercialization, Donald Mavindidze's recent statement lamenting lack of political will to use GM technology to help Zimbabwean farmers, he emphasized safety

Study: CIAT, Africa Rice Center researchers suggest blending agroecology, sustainable agricultural intensification approaches may be best way forward, notes differences in farming concepts, genetic engineering roles, land use, soil health, and scale of operation

Commentary: International Center for Tropical Agriculture site reports researchers publish paper that takes middle ground in debate between agroecological or sustainable agricultural intensification

More Africa items

Asia

News: Xinhua News Agency report on Bayer-Monsanto merger amid ag industry challenges including climate change, human population growth notes Monsanto CEO Hugh Grant touting ability of firms to be "innovation drivers" to help farmers face challenges

News: Press Trust of India reports Indian environmental minister says GEAC has not allowed GM soy imports into India; Coalition for a GM-free India had claimed GM soy imported from U.S., Ukraine

More Asia items

Europe

News: French leftist news source reports European Commission approves Bayer-Monsanto merger, creating largest company in world in pesticides, seeds; notes commission considered only economic factors, ignored environmental, public health considerations

Commentary: Bloomberg View columnist cites EC's desire to compete globally to explain EU approval of Bayer-Monsanto merger despite activist complaints

News: Germany's Handelsblatt reports on BASF's emergence as an unlikely beneficiary of Bayer-Monsanto deal, BASF's acquisition of Bayer's divestments will boost its agribusiness by one-third

Report: EU vegetable oil and protein meal industry association, FEDIOL, writes position paper on EU Commission's Protein Plan initiative, argues that while non-GM status is not a criterion for sustainability, EU can provide consumers with more choices in non-GM crops

News: Feed Navigator reports on European Feed Manufacturers Federation's (FEFAC) call on EU Commission to invest in tools quantify impact of policies on protein supply, FEFAC policy advisor Nicolas Martin discusses strategies incorporating crop-based biofuels

Commentary: Study Circle of Agricultural Techniques and other farmer associations write open letter to Belgian Ministers and Members of Parliament, speaking out against spread of misinformation and

demonization of farmers and agriculture

News: Italian ag news outlet reports on recent meeting in Brussels on strategies for improving sustainability and consumer transparency in Italy's wine sector, MEP Paolo De Castro highlighted potential contributions of new breeding techniques

News release: Bund Okologische Lebensmittelwirtschaft chairman urges new Federal Minister for Food and Agriculture to ban cultivation of GMOs, increase organic farming, emphasize precautionary principle

More Europe items

Latin America

News: La Jornada reports Mexican legislators may be presented biosecurity law on April 3 for voting, despite environmentalist opposition and questions about approval process; notes law could impact GMOs, ancestral knowledge of indigenous people

Commentary: Mexican politician with Party of the Democratic Revolution claims current draft of biodiversity law lacks consensus, clear legal authority, fails to adequately address biopiracy of traditional knowledge; vote scheduled for April 3

News: Mexico's Regeneracion reports on PRI and PVEM parties' approval of General Biodiversity Law without reaching a quorum, PAN deputy Elena Castro argued the move shows desperation, warned it will allow transnational companies to privatize genetic resources

News: Brazilian news outlets report on Federal Justice's order allowing release of Oxitec's GE Aedes aegypti mosquitoes to help reduce populations and therefore spread of disease, highlights National Technical Commission on Biosafety's findings supporting their safety

News: Reuters reports on 20th Federal Court of Justice in Brasilia's authorization for Oxitec's release of GE Aedes aegypti mosquitoes to help combat dengue fever, Federal Judge Renato Borelli ruled it poses no additional risks to humans, animals or environment

Commentary: Brazil's Regional Council of Nutritionists of the 9th Region - Minas Gerais praises Senate Social Affairs Committee's rejection of bill to remove GMO labeling requirements, urges supporters to send messages to Committee on the Environment before its vote

News: Colombian radio news site reports regional council declares area GMO-free site, activists say the move will protect native seeds and prevent environmental damage

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: Australian news site reports CropLife Australia CEO Matthew Cossey says consumers should rely on credible sources for information on food safety; NGO Gene Ethics director says country should have GM labeling requirement so people can be informed on what they eat

News: Australian news site amplifies market analyst report commissioned by grain producers which claims South Australia moratorium on GM canola does not impact farmers financially

More Oceania items

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More information on the people and organizations influencing food and

**Events
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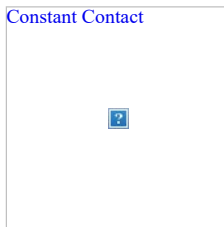
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 Date: Thursday, March 22, 2018 9:04:01 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included a new report on the negative consequences of current biotechnology regulations in agriculture. Nigeria concluded new GM crop field trials, and a European organic group promoted an analysis claiming that GM crop moratoriums protect local farmers from coexistence costs.

- The Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST) released a new study that pointed to regulatory obstacles as a major barrier to small business and university participation in agricultural innovation. The study reviewed biotechnology regulations for the U.S. and major trading partners, highlighting several problems with the "process-based" regulatory scheme and noting areas for reform. [See more](#)
- *News Agency of Nigeria* reported that the country had successfully concluded field trials of Bt cotton and cowpea and that the crops were expected on the market by the end of the year. In the article, Rose Gidado of the Open Forum on Agricultural Biotechnology (OFAB) noted that federal and international agency approval would still be required before the crops could be commercialized. [See more](#)
- A new report from the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements, developed under its "Keeping GMOs out of food" program, claimed that GMO coexistence with organic crops was not feasible given the costs required to adjust European supply chains to prevent contamination. It argued that maintaining a ban on GMOs in the EU was an "efficient" way to ensure coexistence costs were manageable for small farmers and companies. [See more](#)
- Pro-biotechnology groups and companies marked the occasion of World Water Day by highlighting biotechnology's potential for developing drought-tolerant crops. [See more](#)

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North America

Campaign: Council for Agricultural Science and Technology releases paper noting how process-based U.S. regulatory system based on undocumented risks is unreasonable barrier to agricultural innovation, especially for small businesses and universities

Commentary: Drovers amplifies Council for Agricultural Science and Technology issues paper detailing how the process-based U.S. regulatory system stymies innovation in the agricultural sector, providing sparse return on investments

News: Agweek reports University of Maryland study finds planting of Bt corn reduces crop damage, insecticide use in nearby fields of non-GE vegetable crops, brings positive impacts to growers, including organic producers; researchers say safety of Bt corn proven, also effective as pest management strategy

News release: GMO Free U.S.A. announces publication of report pointing out flaws in recent meta analysis demonstrating safety and yield benefits of GM corn, criticizes authors' reliance on industry studies

Commentary: Ohio newspaper's farm columnist amplifies Iowa State University study finding Russians trying to influence U.S. opinion by spreading anti-GMO articles, urges readers who run across anti-GMO information to investigate its source, suggests Russia may be using GMOs as wedge issue between U.S, EU

Commentary: Canadian Biotechnology Action Network notes AquaBounty repaying government grant with 10 percent of GE salmon sales, C-BAN worries that government responsible for regulating the product has stake in its success

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: News Agency of Nigeria reports on Country Coordinator, Open Forum on Agricultural Biotechnology (OFAB) Rose Gidado's announcement that Nigeria has concluded plans to use biotech to boost ag production and economy, noting Bt Cowpea and Bt Cotton will be on the market by year's end

News: Nigerian news source highlights launch of FAO campaign to address armyworm infestations on farms

Commentary: Kenyan farmer, lecturer says had Kenyan farmers had access to GM crops, it could have avoided suffering, hunger, turmoil associated with recent drought, but government procrastinates in approving GMOs; notes Uganda recently approved the technology, which will help their farmers

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: India's Financial Express reports Maharashtra gov't orders Bt cotton seed firms to submit seed samples for lab testing to obtain sale licenses, in effort to curb sale of illegal varieties on the market

Commentary: Vandana Shiva writes for The Asian Age, argues a return to indigenous seeds can help end farmer suicides, which she blames on seeds promoted by corporations with intellectual property rights, claims they worsen farmers' debts

Commentary: Independent journalist Pavan Kulkarni writes for Indian news outlet, warns about risk of corporations monopolizing healthcare and agriculture in developing nations, highlights efforts to promote patented seeds in Africa

Commentary: Chinese news site editorial says U.S. provides huge subsidies to soy farmers, giving them an unfair advantage over Chinese soy farmers and breaking WTO rules

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Pro-biotech Spanish NGO Fundacion Antama touts transgenic crops to allow more efficient use of water in agriculture, argues resistance to drought and tolerance to herbicides of transgenic crops allow for greater conservation of water, reduced pesticide pollution of water

Commentary: Anti-biotech NGO Inf'OGM says EU Commission rejects testing for gene-edited products, but Convention on Biological Diversity may address the issue internationally, but notes group's interim report says LMOs are "not distinguishable from counterparts"

Commentary: Slow Food Europe says European Commission approves Bayer's Monsanto purchase, says decision is surprise "given huge opposition," says concern centers on concentration of world food production by handful of firms

Study: International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements research paper claims biotech, organic crop co-existence is "unfeasible" due to costs, threat of cross-contamination, says banning GM

crops is "efficient strategy"

More Europe items

Latin America

Announcement: Brazilian Senate's news site announces Committee on Social Affairs (CAS) rejects proposed measure to end mandatory GMO labels on food packaging, Senator Vanessa Grazziotin warned that GM foods lead to increased use of harmful pesticides

Commentary: Latin American Coordinator of Field Organizations (CLOC) promotes its plan with La Via Campesina to build Institute of Latin American Agroecology, calls agroecology a way of living to fight and resist capitalism, and to produce food in the healthy territory base of food sovereignty

Commentary: Spain's GRAIN runs lengthy analysis of Mexican research team's findings of transgenes and glyphosate present in processed foods and tortillas made from industrial maize throughout Mexico, claims consumption of GM corn containing glyphosate can have serious health consequences

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: Australian news source reports national Competition and Consumer Commission approves Bayer-Monsanto merger in wake of similar green light from EU regulators; ACCC earlier cited concerns deal might lessen competition in supply of weed management systems in Australian canola crops

Letter to the editor: Australian news site posts CroLife CEO commentary, says fear campaigns by activist groups and unscientific regulations prevent agricultural innovations from positively impacting humanity

News release: New Zealand NGO GE Free Northland calls on Northland Regional Council to place precautionary and prohibitive GMO provisions in its new Regional Plan to prevent outdoor GE trials in the region, claims trials threaten other ag and forestry activities

More Oceania items

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 Date: Wednesday, March 21, 2018 9:05:11 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included international coverage of the European Commission's approval, with conditions, of Bayer's acquisition of Monsanto. In Ghana, a lawsuit challenging GM crop commercialization moved forward.

- The European Commission announced that it has approved Bayer's purchase of Monsanto following months of negotiating over concessions, though final approval remains contingent on an assessment of BASF's purchase of the Bayer seed business. The news was reported across wire services and international media outlets. Activists immediately criticized the decision, with commentary from ETC Group, Friends of the Earth and several Green Party MEPs warning of industry consolidation. [See more](#)
- Food Sovereignty Ghana announced that its latest lawsuit challenging GM crop approvals in the country would be heard in the Court of Appeal on March 28, with a hearing in the Human Rights High Court scheduled for April 13. Food Sovereignty Ghana previously filed a lawsuit in 2015, which was later dismissed. The group launched its latest lawsuit in November. [See more](#)
- A Liberal Party victory in South Australia's elections over the weekend has prompted local commentary on whether the region could reassess its moratorium on GM crops. The moratorium is currently in place until 2025, following a Labor Party decision to extend the ban after it was scheduled to expire last year. [See more](#)

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North America

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science's Nkechi Isaac recounts recent interview with Nigeria Academy of Science President Mosto Onuoha, highlights his argument that current conventional farming methods are not sufficient to feed the growing population

Commentary: Frank Giles of Growing Produce amplifies news coverage of Iowa State University study on Russian anti-GMO propaganda efforts in the U.S., voices concern that anti-GMO forces are now targeting new breeding techniques like CRISPR

News: Ag Daily managing editor looks at how agriculture will feed U.S. population in year 2050, highlights efforts by agribusinesses to improve sustainability of farming, points out how GE crops lend themselves to no-till practices, notes new meta-analysis showing long-term safety of GMOs

News: Vice reports Canadian government provided 8.2 million dollars in taxpayers' money toward development of AquaBounty's GE salmon that became first GE animal sold for human food; critics call for mandatory labeling of GE fish in Canada, transparency about taxpayer funds supporting private companies

Commentary: Organic Consumers Association's Ronnie Cummins solicits funds in advance of World Water Day for campaigns against factory farms with GMO monocultures, use of glyphosate, atrazine, other pesticides

Commentary: WholeFoods magazine reports Natural Products Expo West saw discussion on future of USDA Organic standard, importance of soil health to sustainable agriculture after a recent decision to allow labeling of hydroponically grown crops as organic

Commentary: Common Dreams writer reports environmental, consumer groups voice alarm to EU green light of Bayer-Monsanto deal; SumOfUs pledges to continue opposition fight with U.S. regulators

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News release: Ghanaian news source runs notice from Food Sovereignty Ghana that court hearing on its lawsuit against commercialization of GMOs in country set for March 28 at Court of Appeal, with return hearing before Accra Human Rights High Court on April 13

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Report: USDA Foreign Agricultural Service annual GAIN Report on grain and feed in Philippines show country's gains in production largely due to GE seeds, predicts wheat imports, corn production to decline this year but rice production to increase

News release: ISAAA promotes Pocket of Knowledge about concept of substantial equivalence between GM and non-GM crops, how crops are tested, declarations of safety based on this concept by trusted scientific organizations

News release: ISAAA's Crop Biotech Update promotes new book by Purdue University's Jessica Eise and Ken Foster, "How to feed the world?", notes it covers technology among factors that must be addressed to achieve global food security

News: Press Trust of India reports nation's agriculture minister says scientific organic farming to double farmers' income, urges stakeholders to bring about "revolution" in organic farming equal to that of the Green Revolution

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News release: EU Commission announces its approval of Bayer's acquisition of Monsanto under EU Merger Regulation, the Commission must first complete an examination of proposed buyer of Bayer's divestment package, BASF, before the merger proceeds

News: Wire services report on EU's approval of Bayer-Monsanto merger after securing remedies worth over six billion Euros, highlighting Bayer's planned sales of several of its businesses to BASF

News release: Friends of the Earth Europe criticizes EU Commission's approval of Bayer-Monsanto deal, argues the merged company will become the "Facebook of farming," food and farming campaigner Adrian Bebb argued it will hurt farmers and consumers

Commentary: Politico Pro analysts' takeaways on Bayer-Monsanto EU approval notes deal worries policymakers that Bayer motivation to replace glyphosate will thin, leaving BASF to challenge company's seed, pesticide products

News: RT reports Bayer-Monsanto merger wins antitrust approval from EU, prompting criticism from environmental groups alleging Commission ignored the million people calling for a block on the deal

Commentary: German NGO Testbiotech calls Italian meta-analysis published in Nature's Scientific Reports, which found GE maize produced better yields than conventional, "substantially flawed" due to bias in data selection, methodological problems, points to industry involvement

News release: Italy's Luca Coscioni Association promotes World Congress for the Freedom of Scientific Research to take place April 11-13 at European Parliament in Brussels, focusing on theme of "Science for democracy" and interaction between scientific evidence and decision-making

More Europe items

Latin America

Commentary: Editorial in Bolivia's Los Tiempos criticizes gov't for not giving GMOs the attention they deserve, noting they are used in the country in spite of official prohibition, believes it is not right that little is known about negotiations due to public impact

News: Mexico news site reports EU approves Bayer-Monsanto merger, making company 'giant of transgenics'

Commentary: Ecuadorian NGO Observatorio Del Cambio Rural (OCARU) promotes recent launch of La Troja Manaba: School of Political Education and Food Sovereignty, with an alliance of several other groups, to promote agroecology and peasant ag

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: Australian news source reports Victoria and Western Australia grain producers are hoping new South Australia government will lift GMO ban, noting liberal party pledged to reevaluate issue if it won

More Oceania items

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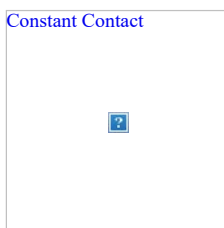
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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Today's global biotechnology developments included commentary on Health Canada's approval of Golden Rice. Bolivian agricultural producers presented a report on GM crops to consider for cultivation.

- Biotechnology supporters and detractors responded to Health Canada's approval last week of the vitamin A-enhanced Golden Rice variety GR2E. In a statement, the International Rice Research Institute noted that this follows approval from Food Standards Australia New Zealand. Canadian anti-biotechnology activist groups Vigilance OGM and Canadian Biotechnology Action Network criticized the agency for using resources to assess the crop even though it is not intended for sale in Canada. [See more](#)
- Bolivian agricultural producers presented a proposal Monday to President Evo Morales requesting that the government consider approving the cultivation of several key crops. The producers noted that most neighboring countries already cultivate GM varieties and that adoption would level the playing field for the country's agricultural sector. [See more](#)
- *Agence France-Presse* reported that the European anti-trust regulator is expected to approve Bayer's purchase of Monsanto on Wednesday (March 21). The merger remains controversial, particularly in the EU, with criticisms of the deal today from Italy's 5 Star Movement and German NGO Arbeitsgemeinschaft bauerliche Landwirtschaft. [See more](#)

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North America

News: Radio Canada International reports on Health Canada's approval of Golden Rice, amplifies Canadian activists' claims of waste and MASIPAG concerns over international approval loopholes

News: AgDaily reports on Health Canada's approval of Golden Rice, after determining that it poses no greater risk to human health than rice varieties currently available on the market, International Rice Research Institute does not intend to sell it in Canada

Commentary: Henry Miller updates a 2017 op-ed on Russian GMO-opposition in light of current events, writing for The Daily Caller, points to Russia's attempts to influence U.S. public opinion in several areas, highlights efforts to discredit U.S. ag and GMOs

Interview: Vox interviews Melinda Gates, who voices excitement about potential use of genetic engineering to help eliminate malaria, highlights Gates Foundation's work to develop drought- and flood-resistant seeds to help mitigate effects of climate change

Commentary: Sustainable innovation consulting firm analyst says gene editing is a useful tool to maximize food yields in a resource-stressed world, says new technologies are worth exploring

News: Bloomberg reports on former U.S. Treasury undersecretary for international affairs Tim Adams' assessment that the U.K. may be stuck waiting for a U.S. trade deal, taking a backseat to NAFTA

[renegotiation; Adams also pointed to policy clash on GM crops](#)

[More North America items](#)

Africa

There were no noteworthy biotechnology developments in Africa during today's monitoring. Click the link below for the latest items.

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

[News: Reuters reports India's cotton planting area could drop by 12 percent this season as farmers switch to soybeans, highlights increasing challenges of pest damage as pink bollworm develops resistance to GM Bt cotton](#)

[News: Reuters reports on Chinese seed firm Yuan Longping High-Tech Agriculture's announcement of launch of corn seed joint venture with China National Agrochemical Co Ltd, a unit of ChemChina; China is targeting GM corn commercialization by 2020](#)

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

[News: Agence France-Presse reports the European Commission is expected to announce approval Weds. \(March 21\) of Bayer's purchase of Monsanto, notes activist opposition](#)

[Interview: Italian environment news site interviews 5 Star Movement MEP Eleonora Evi about plans for environmental policy, Evi reiterates the party's opposition to free trade agreements like CETA, and opposition to GMOs and the Bayer-Monsanto deal](#)

[Interview: Italy's Letture interviews attorney Luca Simonetti about his new book, "Science in Court," in which he examines risks when scientific issues such as vaccines or GMOs are handled by the courts and Parliament](#)

[News: Politico Pro EU reports on EU Parliament Ag Committee's call on Brussels to boost soybean production to lower reliance on South American imports, they noted any imports should be GMO-free and meet certain social and environmental standards](#)

[Commentary: Sebastian Lakner of Georg-August University Gottingen writes for Agricultural and Rural Convention, analyzes new German gov't food and agriculture policies, highlights plans to boost organic farmland, ban GM crops and reduce glyphosate use](#)

[Event: Dutch NGO Action for Solidarity, Equality, Environment, and Diversity Europe \(ASEED Europe\) to host discussion \(March 23\) on GMOs in agriculture and on the difference between 'old' GMOs and new GE techniques, highlighting regulatory issues](#)

[News: Dutch news outlet reports on EU court ruling in favor of Testbiotech, the court found that the term "environmental issues" from Aarhus Regulation must be interpreted broadly to include human health risks, EU Commission must reexamine objections to GMO approvals](#)

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

[News: Bolivia's La Prensa reports Bolivia imports at least 11 types of GM food in spite of domestic ban on production, importation and commercialization of GMOs, highlights Santa Cruz producers' call on gov't to authorize GM crops to boost production and lower costs](#)

Commentary: Greenpeace Brazil voices opposition to Senate's Social Affairs Committee's likely adoption of Bill 34/2015 to relax GMO labeling standards, removing requirement of the yellow triangle "T" label, argues it violates consumers' right to know

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Announcement: Australia's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator issues invitation for public comment on Risk Assessment and Risk Management Plan for commercial release of GO Resources' GM safflower varieties with high oleic acid composition, comments must be received by May 15

[More Oceania items](#)

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included a new GMO labeling campaign in Korea and continued discussion on a EU court decision allowing activists to challenge GMO approvals.

- Last week, activists in Korea held a news conference calling for "full" labeling of foods with GM ingredients, claiming that current mandatory GMO labeling guidelines contain too many exemptions and aren't diligently enforced. The coalition group, which included over 57 organizations, launched a petition to push for stronger GMO labeling laws, the removal of GMOs from school cafeterias and the approval of a "non-GMO" labeling standard. **See more**
- In Europe, commentary on the Testbiotech lawsuit challenging GM crop import approvals continued. *Feed Navigator* reported that the European Commission was assessing its options and had two months to decide whether to file an appeal. French anti-biotechnology group Inf'OGM summarized the opinion, asserting that the decision could address some of the "flaws" in the current approval process. **See more**

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North America

Commentary: Blake Hurst of National Review promotes latest advances in genetic engineering such as CRISPR, criticizes current regulatory environment, argues the price and productivity gap between organic and modern ag will only continue to increase

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project posts op-ed by chief science officer at ag tech firm who argues advances in genetic engineering such as Bt crops will reduce pesticide usage, water pollution, calls for stakeholders to work together, overcome uneasiness about GMOs to realize potential benefits

Commentary: Writing on Medium, Ph.D. student in biological design amplifies Melinda Gates' interview at South by Southwest Conference in Austin, Texas; she touts need for innovation in ag biotechnology, says a GM cereal crop that could fix nitrogen from atmosphere back into soil would be game-changer

Event: Lansing State Journal previews Michigan screening of Science Moms, noting Michigan State University professor featured in film; screening to be followed with panel of film's stars (March 20)

Commentary: ACSH's Hank Campbell writes humorous piece comparing Dr. Seuss story, characters to organic food industry's efforts to claim new benefits, such as Regenerative Organic Certification, charges industry most concerned about its profits, asserts Seuss himself would be shocked by their "food bigotry"

News release: Organic Consumers Association renews call on World Water Day for international boycott of Ben & Jerry's, claims company supports an industrial dairy system responsible for water pollution crisis in Vermont partially due to atrazine, glyphosate, 2,4-D used on GM corn

More North America items

Africa

Campaign: African Centre for Biodiversity launches petition demanding that South African gov't reject Dow's application for approval of a triple-stacked GM maize variety, voices concerns about risks to the environment, and health risks of associated herbicides

Announcement: Nigeria's National Biosafety Management Agency posts public notice of application for permit to conduct confined field trial of GM herbicide-tolerant soybean, lists display sites where field trials may be viewed by public

Campaign: Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa amplifies West African Peasant Seed Committee's declaration calling on regional governments to abandon support for GMO or GE seeds, disallow intellectual property rights on peasant seeds, protect collective rights of peasants over their seeds

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Announcement: Friends of the Earth Korea (Korea Federation for Environmental Movement) announces 57 organizations launch petition demanding complete GMO labeling and withdrawal of GM foods from school meals, voices concern about health risks

Campaign: Korean NGOs launch petition demanding full GMO labeling, argues that lack of labeling infringes consumers' right to know, also demands ban on GM food in school meals

News release: Consumers Union of Japan posts report for annual event celebrating country's GMO-Free Zone movement, points out area of country officially registered as GMO-Free has increased, now represents 2 percent of Japanese farmland

Commentary: Coalition for GM Free India criticizes Food Safety and Standards Authority of India for inaction, in spite of its affidavit filed last year with Supreme Court stating that sale of GM food is not permitted due to lack of regulatory framework

News: The Hindu Business Line reports NGO writes letter to Food Safety and Standards Authority of India arguing its recent notification on organic farming would be detrimental to growth of organic farming in country, would deter farmers from making shift to organic farming by mandating certification for most

News: Pakistan's Dawn reports on various efforts to alleviate hunger through biofortification, Ayub Agriculture Research Institute plans to develop iron and zinc-rich wheat varieties, a University of Agriculture, Faisalabad researcher warned it is better to avoid GMOs

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Feed Navigator reports EU Commission weighs options in response to EU court decision supporting campaigners right to challenge GMO approvals; Commission has two months to appeal

Commentary: Inf'OGM says EU court decision validating Testbiotech's request for internal review on GMO approvals extends NGOs' rights to GMO reviews, could correct flaws in EU GMO risk assessments

Commentary: Pascal Perri of PNCeconomic writes for France's Institut Sapiens, promotes report criticizing the Precautionary Principle's application in ways that are anti-science and inhibit innovation, lists six recommendations to promote innovation

News: Feed Navigator reports on Agrifirm Group Director of Public and Cooperative Affairs, Ruud Tijssens' assessment about Europe's need to boost feed protein self-sufficiency, he noted continued high demand for non-GM feed increases need for local production

More Europe items

Latin America

Commentary: Writing in Mexican news source, Mexico National Action Party senator says Biodiversity law still needs work, should not be passed in expeditious manner to avoid human rights violations, ecosystem attacks

News release: Brazil's Embrapa announces its scientists have joined startup to develop transgenic sugarcane varieties to control borer, manage crop with glyphosate; project aims to incorporate characteristics of agronomic value into varieties of top commercial importance

More Latin America items

Oceania

Announcement: Australia's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator announces receipt of application from Nuseed for limited and controlled release of GM canola variety with altered oil content and herbicide resistance

Commentary: Remy Herrera and Lau Kin Chi write for Economic and Political Weekly to promote new book, "The Struggle for Food Sovereignty: Alternative Development and the Renewal of Peasant Societies Today," highlights arguments against GM seeds

More Oceania items

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From: Jay Byrne
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 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - March 19, 2018
 Date: Monday, March 19, 2018 4 04:04 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

As activists across Europe plan their annual weeklong attack on pesticides, we open this week's Favorable Outcomes newsletter with one science communicator's explanation of why it's important to stand up against such shenanigans.

We also highlight a series of articles on a California judge's decision that cancer warnings are not necessary on glyphosate products and a review of Mark Lynas' new book detailing how and why he turned from an anti-GMO protestor into a biotechnology advocate.

To view items on this newsletter, log in on the [Bonus Eventus Community](#) page. To create an account, fill out the Request Membership form on the front page of the site. To share articles, click on the Twitter icon.

Please [contact us](#) if you have any questions.

In This Issue

[Stakeholder Spotlight](#)
[Stories Worth Sharing](#)
[What's Trending?](#)
[Calendar highlights](#)

Stakeholder Spotlight: ClientEarth



With anti-chemical NGOs pushing to make European hazard-based precautionary principle rules the de facto global regulatory standard, this week we profile the eco-litigation organization ClientEarth.

In 2007, ClientEarth was founded in Europe by a Yale-educated Wall Street attorney who wanted

Stories Worth Sharing

[Hank Campbell: Anti-science "Poisoning Paradise" event stuffed with trial lawyers' publicity stunts](#)

[Joe Schwarcz: No reason to worry about scary-sounding tests that find glyphosate in wine](#)

[Cameron English: "Blatant contradiction" by anti-glyphosate activists frustrates scientists seeking to spread good information](#)

[Wall Street Journal: Judge overrules "bad science" with decision to block cancer warning labels on glyphosate](#)

[David Zaruk: Why is the public so "filled with rage" against corporations that have provided modern way of life?](#)

[Lominda Afedraru: Uncertainty surrounding Ugandan biodiversity law provides roadblock to producing biofortified bananas](#)

[William Odinga: Workshop encourages scientists to "boldly" defend their work on biotechnology, leave lawmakers no doubt](#)

[Dominic Lawson: "Seeds of Science" a gripping account of Mark Lynas' turn from anti-GMO protestor into biotech advocate](#)

[Richard Zuber: Judge's ruling against glyphosate cancer labels a victory for scientific integrity and farmers](#)

[Joan Conrow: Kenya pyrethrum backers spreading false claims about](#)

to bring U.S. environmental litigation advocacy tools to the United Kingdom and EU. Since that time, it has hired more than 60 lawyers and formed subsidiary offices in Belgium, France and Poland. It also became a formal U.S. 501c3 to facilitate raising funds from the United States and extended its litigation and lobbying program reach from Europe to Africa and China.

ClientEarth was in the news this week announcing a campaign in partnership with anti-chemical NGOs including Chemical Secretariat and Pesticide Action Network to help accelerate adoption of pending endocrine disrupting chemical criteria and maximum residue limits - which could result in disruptions costing tens of billions of dollars in global agriculture and other trade with the European Union.

Learn more about ClientEarth [HERE](#).

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GM crops

[Alex Berezow: Middle school teacher who defends GMOs shows bravery amid harsh cyberbullying](#)

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What's Trending?

[Activists publish epidemiology journal article claiming European regulators violated own rules in glyphosate reviews](#)

[Court to allow activists to challenge European Commission approval of GM crops](#)

[NGOs exert pressure on European Commission to schedule neonic ban vote this month](#)

[U.S. approval of Bayer-Monsanto merger hits antitrust snag, expected to take months longer](#)

[Canadian comment period on neonics ends today](#)

[United Nations' IPBES panel to release global reports on biodiversity, soil health](#)

Calendar highlights

March 20-30	March 20	March 20, 22 and 23
Pesticide Action Week across Europe	IFPRI Global Food Policy Report launch	Michael Antoniou/Claire Robinson Swiss lectures on NBTs (March 20 in Basel, March 22 in Bern, March 23 in Neuchatel)
March 21	March 21-22	March 22
Rebecca Nesbit lecture - "Save the Honeybee?"	Chicago Council on Global Affairs Global Food Security Symposium	EU Parliament hearing: Impact of endocrine disruptors on public health
March 22-23	March 25	March 26-27
European Commission Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed discusses neonics, EDCs	3rd Biennial National Agricultural Biosciences (NABIO2018) Conference in Uganda	5th Plant Genomics and Gene Editing Congress: Asia

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Global biotechnology developments over the weekend included Mexico's Climate Change Commission opposing the proposed biodiversity law and a Brazilian court declining to stop agricultural activities on a farm in a lawsuit that claims the owners violated the law by planting GM crops and using pesticides indiscriminately.

- Mexico's *La Jornada* reported the Mexican Chamber of Deputies' Climate Change Commission rejected the proposed General Biodiversity Law, saying it needs to include consultations with indigenous groups, environmental NGOs and animal advocates. The proposed law is being supported by Mexico's Green Party. **See more**
- Brazilian media reported that a judge declined a prosecutor's request to stop agricultural activities at a farm partly owned by federal Judge Gilmar Mendes. The farm is in an environmentally protected area, and the prosecutor charges pesticides were used "indiscriminately" and that transgenic crop use is forbidden in the area. However, Judge André Gahyva said there is no provision against GMO or pesticide usage on the farm. **See more**

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North America

Commentary: University of California-Berkeley cell biologist says humans have modified genome since dawn of agriculture via selective breeding; says now biotech offers more precise way to alter genome, has paid off with GM chymosin to make cheese without killing calves, and synthetic meat intended to replace animal agriculture, which harms environment.

Commentary: Joseph Mercola claims university researchers circumvent conflict of interest rules, exchange positive study results for funding, claims Kevin Folta accepted money from Monsanto after he said he didn't take any

Commentary: U.S. Right to Know's Stacy Malkan warns against "wild stampede of new GMOs" that tamper with nature in new, possibly riskier ways, says agrichemical companies have long histories of hiding health risks of products like Agent Orange, chlorpyrifos, atrazine, dicamba

News: Ars Technica amplifies University of Maryland study finding Bt corn also controls pests in vegetable crops planted nearby, while also reducing use of pesticides on those crops; article suggests growers may plant other crops attacked by European corn borer and corn earworm near fields of Bt corn

News: Successful Farming amplifies Iowa State University study finding Russia funded online articles questioning safety of GMOs; researchers say Russian effort possibly intended to hurt U.S. agriculture interests, bolster Russia's position as "ecologically clean alternative" to GE food

Commentary: Sustainable Pulse posts Russian media article claiming that, contrary to Iowa media study findings, Russia is trying to prevent U.S. from "establishing global GMO dictatorship," claims American media do not cover GMOs enough

News: Reuters reports Bayer says progress being made in talks with Russia's competition watchdog FAS about company's planned takeover of Monsanto; Bayer says it has moved toward agreement with FAS to support competitiveness of Russian agriculture, including transfer of technologies

More North America items

Africa

Commentary: National Biotechnology and Biosafety Consortium secretary writes for Nigerian news site, says GM crops can help meet challenges presented by farming in Nigeria, including climate change, pest attacks, growing population

News: Produce news site reports Ugandan researchers developing vitamin A-enriched, pest- and disease-resistant GM banana prepare to taste test the crop, but notes biosafety bill still under scrutiny

News: Kenyan news outlet reports on study which found that Kenya's top three GMO labs are highly contaminated with disease-causing germs, highlights concerns about the labs' ability to prevent GM material from escaping into the environment

Commentary: Columnist for Zambia Daily Mail, a pharmacist, discusses country's response to CRISPR technology, says there has been rush to condemn it despite its proven results and vast potential to transform medicine, agriculture, points out CRISPR being used in experiments trying to develop drought-resistant crops in East Africa

More Africa items

Asia

Review: Ecological Indicators publishes literature analysis highlighting knowledge suggesting physiology, functional genomics and molecular breeding may help integrating GE and breeding approaches to improve drought tolerance in soybean crop

News: Times of India reports on Coalition for a GM-Free India's complaint filed with Food Safety & Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) demanding urgent action to curb sales of illegal GM food, alleging that certain brands of imported foods are being openly sold

Commentary: India's Free Press Journal reports organic food is more nutritious, better for health and environment; actress Juhi Chawla, brand ambassador for The Women of India Organic Festival, says people who switch to organic never want to touch chemicals again

News: Pakistani news outlet reports on Mark Tester's work using new GE breeding technologies to develop salt-resistant crops at King Abdul Aziz University of Science and Technology in Saudi Arabia, potentially allowing use of sea water in agriculture

Commentary: Indian news site claims food at supermarkets might damage health, notes Coalition for a GM-free India filed complaint that some package food containing GM soy, canola, cottonseed oil being sold in India

More Asia items

Europe

Review: The Times' Dominic Lawson praises Mark Lynas' "Seeds of Science" book, calls Lynas most "morally conscientious person in Britain" for turning from activist opposing and vandalizing GM crops to fervent biotech supporter

News: German news outlet reports on EU court's ruling in favor of Testbiotech, finding that civil society organizations may challenge EU GM crop approvals, acknowledging health concerns can be considered since GMOs are involved in the natural environment

News: The Guardian reports on director of Roslin Institute in Edinburgh, Eleanor Riley's work with gene-editing to overcome common livestock diseases, Riley notes public opinion on GE animals is improving, highlights environmental and animal welfare benefits

News release: European Food Safety Authority announces recent productive talks with delegation of French ministers, members of the Assemblée nationale and diplomats, regarding ways to strengthen food safety and address consumer concerns

Commentary: French news site amplifies Maryland Bt corn study, notes the crop is resistant to pests and requires less pesticide, is good for the environment, has little impact on biodiversity, but cautions GM safety must take place over long period of time

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Mexican news site counters claims that GMO corn causes cancer in humans, argues GM technology necessary to feed world because traditional methods will be insufficient, cites sources debunking Seralini study and touts scientific consensus there's no evidence that GMOs cause cancer

News: La Jornada reports Mexico government joins opposition to Biodiversity Law; national biodiversity commission coordinator says bill prioritizes agri, pharma business economic interests ahead protections for indigenous communities

Announcement: Mexico's Climate Change Commission, chaired by deputy Maria de los Angeles Rodriguez Aguirre, approves opinion on General Law of Biodiversity calling for expansion of consultation process, including with indigenous communities

News: Cuba-based Prensa Latina reports judge grants Costa Rican deputy an injunction forcing Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock to conduct public consultation on planting GM crops

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News release: Murdoch University professor encourages Australia to update GMO definition to account for decades of safe use and increased yields, differentiate them from gene-edited products

News: Australian farming news site reports University of Adelaide research finds consumers believe organic food is healthier, more nutritious, safer than GM food despite scientific evidence to contrary; notes clear, accurate labels incite distrust

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included activist claims that Mexico's environment commission was planning to approve the country's biodiversity law despite criticism from indigenous groups. India's agrarian crisis continued to generate commentary on Bt cotton efficacy in the country.

- Mexico's *La Jornada* reported that the Environment and Natural Resources Commission (Comarnat) was expected to "fast track" the draft General Law on Biodiversity despite criticism from indigenous groups and the Commission on Indigenous Affairs. The Coalición Ciudadana ante la Ley General de Biodiversidad issued a statement criticizing the proposal, adding that the group had filed a formal request for consultation. **See more**
- The farmer march to Mumbai continued to generate reporting on the difficulties facing smallholder farmers in India, with articles in *Asia Times* and *The Print* summarizing the underlying economic problems contributing to the unrest. Both reports noted that pest pressures on Bt cotton and other environmental factors added to - but were not the root cause of - most of the farmers' concerns. Commentary from *Financial Express* columnist Vivian Fernandes noted that local seed firms were likely to regret urging the government to control cotton royalties and prices now that their own sale prices were being regulated. **See more**

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North America

Commentary: Global Farmer Network board member, an Iowa farmer, warns President Trump's proposed tariffs on imported steel and aluminum would hurt his farm business, likely sparking a trade war that will be bad for farmers who depend on exports for their livelihood, also notes Trump linked tariffs to NAFTA

News: CNBC reports farmers fear Chinese backlash targeting U.S. agricultural exports as consequence of U.S. tariffs on imports from China

Commentary: ACSH's Alex Berezow profiles middle school teacher whose Facebook page, "We Love GMOs and Vaccines," made him target of cyberbullying, points out University of Florida plant geneticist Kevin Folta also was targeted by anti-GMO activists, calls for rejection of cyberbullying

Commentary: Boulder Weekly columnist says Iowa State Russia GMO media analysis suggests Russia may be building anti-GMO narrative to establish Russia 'clean food' reputation to deliver economic gains to country

Commentary: Triple Pundit op-ed by former Grasslands Alliance senior scientist criticizes beef feedlots, claims they spread superbugs, pollute water, use pesticides that endanger pollinators, GM grains that cause decline in monarch butterflies

More North America items

Africa

Commentary: President of Uganda Science Journalists Association blogs about training session that gave journalists opportunity to see GM crops for first time, quotes fellow journalist saying scientists must communicate boldly to defend their work rather than allowing activists to spread incorrect information

News: Zambian news site reports National Biosafety Director notes Cartagena Protocol now in effect, crucial to address GMO handling and transit; notes Zambia has yet to pass biosafety law, another important step in addressing biotech use

Commentary: Hivos East Africa posts op-ed by NGO's Green Society program director arguing for caution in use and promotion of GM crops, citing concerns about decline of agrobiodiversity, soil fertility, smallholder agriculture, calling for giving priority to options that reduce environmental impacts

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: Financial Express columnist Vivian Fernandes says Indian seed companies now see they erred in asking government to control cotton seed prices to settle dispute, should have sorted out issues with Mahyco Monsanto on their own

News: Asia Times reports farmers group marches to Mumbai to protest agrarian crisis, says pressures drive farmers to suicide as low food prices, pest attacks, Bt cotton failure cause financial crunch

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Pro-biotech Spanish NGO Fundacion Antama promotes new guide to understanding basic concepts of CRISPR technology, including CRISPR-Cas and CRISPR-Cas9, current and potential applications, difference from transgenic techniques

News release: Germany's Small Farmers Association (AbL) voices opposition to Bayer-Monsanto merger, demands that EU Competition Commissioner Margrethe Vestager, Federal Minister of Economics Peter Altmaier and Federal Minister of Agriculture Julia Klockner take action to block the deal

News release: Germany's Organic Association for Organic Food and Agriculture (BOLW) announces statement by chairman Felix Lowenstein on coalition government ag and nutrition policies, calls for law to implement GM cultivation bans, believes CRISPR should be regulated

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News release: Mexican NGO RED MOCAF announces Mexico's Environment and Natural Resources Commission will seek to "fast track" the General Biodiversity Law on March 15 despite a lack of consultation with indigenous people groups

News: La Jornada reports Mexico's Environment and Natural Resources Commission will seek to fast track General Biodiversity Law on March 15 despite protests from various groups

News release: Venezuela's Science and Technology Commission of the National Assembly announces approval of final report of the Seed Law, Commission president, deputy Luis Lipka emphasized importance of having the law adapt to modern technology

News: Brasil De Fato reports on observations of Day of the Consumer this week, including a round table talk by civil society organizations on March 18, Carla Bueno of Permanent Campaign Against Agrochemicals and Life discusses risks of pesticides and GMOs

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Announcement: Australia's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator issues notification of license application from CSIRO for field trial of rust disease-resistant GM wheat over five growing seasons between September 2018 and September 2023

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Today's global biotechnology developments included news that an EU court sided with anti-biotechnology activists in allowing their legal challenge to recent GM soy approvals. A U.S. study on Bt maize benefits continues to gain international coverage.

- The European Union General Court affirmed that civil society groups may challenge the European Commission's approval of GM crops and food under Europe's Aarhus Convention, which allows the groups to participate in environmental policy decisions. Anti-biotechnology group Testbiotech had filed a lawsuit challenging the commission's approval of GM soy imports, arguing that GM soy had not been adequately reviewed for health impacts. The Commission initially rejected the complaint, arguing that the Aarhus Convention did not allow challenges to decisions based on health. The ruling implies that the European Commission must reassess its approval of the crops based on the Testbiotech challenge. [See more](#)
- European news outlets continued to amplify a study led by a University of Maryland researcher, which documented significant follow-on benefits from the cultivation of Bt maize over 40 years. Austria's *Der Standard* noted that farms neighboring the Bt maize fields were likely to see reduced pest populations. Similarly, Spanish agricultural outreach group Fundación Antama amplified a write-up from the Cornell Alliance for Science that described the benefits as a "halo effect" of the transgenic crops. [See more](#)

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North America

[Commentary: Futurism's Claudia Geib amplifies MIT article on efforts to shift authority over GE animal regulations from FDA to USDA, highlights importance of ensuring safety for humans and the environment, examines several benefits and animals under development](#)

[Commentary: Frank Giles of Growing Produce examines several GE solutions that could benefit specialty ag, highlights several developments to combat citrus greening in oranges, points to challenges brought by proliferation of Non-GMO Project labels](#)

[Commentary: Beyond Pesticides amplifies reports of severe monarch butterfly population decline, highlights link to increased use of herbicides on GM crops, leading to decline in milkweed habitat, promotes organic ag](#)

[More North America items](#)

Africa

[Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science writer says Uganda biotech communication workshop harnessed discussion with media, scientists on ways to improve public awareness of GMOs, notes Parliament to review Uganda biosafety bill this week](#)

[News: Kenya's Standard Digital reports public has 30 days to submit comments on trial of GM cotton at](#)

nine research stations, notes trials will study performance of Bt cotton, enhanced with genes from naturally occurring bacteria to protect cotton against caterpillars, especially African bollworm

Commentary: Kenya's Business Daily runs op-ed by CEO of Green Earth Trust claiming nation's reluctance to approve release of GMO crops shows lack of consensus among stakeholders that genetic modification can solve food insecurity, arguing possible adverse effects of GMOs on human health not studied

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Hindu Business Line reports government cottonseed price cut may force seed makers to diversify; seed makers also voice concerns in country's dependence on foreign technology for Bt seeds

News: Indian textile industry news outlet reports government forms committee to investigate illegal cultivation of herbicide-tolerant or Bollgard-III cotton in four states, notes such cultivation not approved by Genetic Engineering Approval Committee

Commentary: India's The Statesman runs op-ed arguing scientists concerned about consumption of GM foods, cattle feed, seeds, citing evidence they could harm environment and human health, pointing out many GM crops tied to broad-spectrum herbicides linked to serious health problems for humans, soil

Commentary: Sputnik columnist reports political groups criticize government for 'minimal' cuts to Monsanto Bt cotton royalties, arguing farmers should not pay for technology that does not work

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News release: Testbiotech praises EU court ruling confirming its right to submit legal cases on health risks of GM plants, Testbiotech's Christoph Then noted the decision is an important step towards strengthening the precautionary principle in the EU

News: Reuters reports on EU court ruling allowing civil society groups to challenge EU Commission's GMO authorizations, following Commission's rejection of Testbiotech's demand for review of decision to allow entry of GM soybeans by Monsanto and Pioneer

News: German ag news outlet reports on confusion created by differing standards for non-GMO animal feed, European Compound Feed Association (Fefac) calls on EU Commission to review national certification systems for GMO-free products

News: Reuters reports on Julia Kloeckner's appointment as German Ag Minister, replacing Christian Schmidt, Kloeckner is credited with negotiating the ag section of coalition deal for the new government, which includes plans to ban GM crops and glyphosate

News: Russia Today reports President Vladimir Putin tells farmers recent boost in Russian agriculture has made food sales abroad more profitable for nation than exports of military weapons; GMOs banned in Russia since 2016, Putin says he wants Russia to become world's largest seller of GMO-free food

Commentary: Kristin Halvorsen and Ole Johan Borge of Norway's Biotechnology Council write for local news outlet, promoting Council's call for broad debate on GMO legislation, highlighting proposal to exempt new GE techniques from current GMO regulations

News: Austria's Der Standard reports on University of Maryland study which found that Bt cotton reduces pest populations and insecticide use in neighboring crop fields, reports some of the authors have previously received funding from Bayer and Monsanto

Commentary: U.K.'s Financial Times runs op-ed by Jennifer Doudna, inventor of CRISPR-Cas9 technology, who asserts discovery has accelerated pace of modern research, leading to advances

shaping future of medicine, agriculture, notes chocolate manufacturers may see one of early uses of CRISPR-Cas9

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Bolivian news outlet editorial highlights many benefits of GMOs, such as increased productivity and reduced pesticide use, in addition to economic benefits, ahead of ag industry's plans to present biotech proposal to the government on March 19

News: Mexico's Sin Embargo reports on ag industry experts' warning that hindering exchange of ag products between the U.S. and Mexico as part of NAFTA renegotiation "would be a shot in the head," could impact consumers

News: Mexico's Gobernados reports on environmental analyst Octavio Klimek Alcaraz's call for consultation of new Biodiversity Law aimed at indigenous communities, due to issues important to them like traditional knowledge and use of natural and genetic resources

News: Mexican news outlet reports Mayan peasant NGO member joins actor Gael Garcia Bernal at UN to call for more justice for Mexico's indigenous peoples, voice opposition to transgenic soybean cultivation in Campeche

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News release: Soil and Health Association of New Zealand encourages New Plymouth District Council to adopt precautionary provisions regarding trial or commercial use of GMOs, says the Proposed Draft New Plymouth District Plan fails to mention GMOs

News: Australia's Farm Weekly reports topics of gene manipulation and development discussed during recent Grains Research and Development Corp.'s Grains Research Update in Perth, points out genetic modification of grain not accepted in all markets, posing threat to wheat modifications

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Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology developments included an announced settlement agreement in class-action lawsuit brought by farmers against seed maker Syngenta. In India, government officials announced new Bt cottonseed prices.

- A law firm and media outlets reported that farmers, grain handlers and ethanol plants had reached a \$1.5 billion settlement with Syngenta over what they claim was the company's mismanaged roll-out of its Viptera and Duracade corn seed. The lawsuit argued that, by marketing the corn seed before it had received export approval in China, Syngenta caused significant economic losses. A judge must still decide whether to approve the settlement. **See more**
- Indian officials announced that they had officially set Bollgard II cottonseed prices for the upcoming season, lowering overall prices and slashing trait royalties. Seed producers criticized the move, warning that it could make production of the seed unprofitable and risks reducing seed availability. A Mahyco Monsanto Biotech spokesperson added that the trait fee reductions undermined India's efforts to attract agricultural investment. **See more**

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North America

News release: Alabama-based law firm announces \$1.51 billion settlement reached in nationwide class action lawsuit against Syngenta covering all U.S. corn farmers; suit centered on company's GM corn seed; grain handling facilities and ethanol plants also covered; attorney from firm was co-lead class counsel

News: News wires report \$1.5 billion settlement is reached in class-action lawsuit over Syngenta's release of GM corn, leading to rejected shipments from China, believed to be the largest agricultural litigation settlement in U.S. history

News: Canada's The Scientist reports on PNAS study analyzing 40 years of data which found that Bt corn is associated with higher yields and lower insecticide use in neighboring fields, demonstrating offsite benefits to other host plants for pests like corn borer

Commentary: Concerned citizen writes guest opinion article for The Guardian (Canada), argues that Prince Edward Island should be a GMO-free province, citing environmental risks of GMOs, does not oppose GE salmon, but believes it should be labeled

News: Politico's Morning Agriculture column reports regenerative agriculture hottest topic at California natural and organics trade show, with attempts to establish certifications, such as proposed Regenerative Organic Certification pushed by Rodale Institute, Patagonia

Report: Regenerative Organic Alliance releases pilot version of its proposed framework for Regenerative Organic Certification, including guidelines for soil health and land management, animal welfare; guidelines specifically prohibit use of GM additives or aids, including seeds, products of gene editing

Transcript: Poisoning Paradise film critical of Hawaii GMO and pesticide development by agribusiness; activists, plaintiffs and litigators alleges companies violating human rights by exposing public to allegedly risky and untested health hazards

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science's Mark Lynas reports Ugandan scientists believe seeds for maize genetically modified to tolerate drought, resist insects should be ready for farmers within two years, could protect crops against stem borer and fall armyworm, but political stalemate over GMOs continues

Video: Deutsche Welle interviews Nigerian environmental activist Nnimmo Bassey, he blames pollution on corporate greed, and argues that GM crops are unnecessary and destroy biodiversity

News: Zambia news outlet reports on Zambia Alliance for Agroecology and Biodiversity's opposition to GM crops, ZAAB chair Emmanuel Mutamba pointed to recent report finding little evidence that GMOs contribute to equitable or sustainable development

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Indian financial media outlets report on gov't decision to cut Bt cotton seed prices and trait values, a Mahyco Monsanto Biotech spokesman emphasized importance of collaboration and predictable business environment for attracting investment into ag innovation

News: India's Financial Express reports on gov't decision to cut Monsanto GM cotton seed royalties by 20 percent, amid tensions with the U.S. following Donald Trump's imposition of tariffs on steel and aluminium imports, highlights Mahyco Monsanto Biotech's reaction

News: Indo-Asian News Service reports on seed producers' objections to Ag Ministry's order for cuts of Bt cotton seed prices and trait fees, highlights statements by Federation of Seed Companies of India President M. Ramasami, and by Mahyco Monsanto Biotech

News: The Hindu reports Alliance for Sustainable and Holistic Agriculture (ASHA) calls on gov't to work on non-Bt cotton and supply enough seeds, amid controversy surrounding cuts in seed prices and royalties

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Event: GMO-free Europe announces ninth European GMO-Free Regions Conference to be held Sept. 6 and 7 in Berlin, warns advent of GE technologies such as CRISPR-Cas likely to open new chapter of GMO debate, notes pending judgment by European Court of Justice could reshape legal situation

Commentary: Italy's AgriLegal examines regulation to restrict free-from labeling, such as "GMO-free" or "without palm oil," over concerns that such labeling can be misleading, argues that it goes against consumer interests for more transparency

Announcement: Russian government announces approval of action plan, "Development of Biotechnology and Genetic Engineering," for 2018 through 2020, says it's adopting plan in expectation of mass introduction into production of methods, products of biotechnologies; ag and environmental biotech noted

News: Russia Today reports India reduces royalties paid by local seed companies to Monsanto for its GM cotton by 20 percent, prompting company threat to pull out of country; government also lowers prices of GM cotton seeds by 7.5 percent to support farmers fighting pest infestations

Commentary: Ukraine's StopFake site runs "Kremlin Watch" column from European Values Think-Tank that includes item on Iowa State University study finding Russian news outlets exploited debate over GMOs in United States; column suggests anti-GMO coverage driven by Russian opposition

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Interview: Argentina's El Litoral talks to Buenos Aires senator who helped make documentary "Fumigated Peoples," which questions use of agrochemicals and effects on people in the Argentine Pampa; Pino Solanas claims production in scale of cereals with transgenic seeds requires array of toxic agrochemicals

News: Argentinian news source reports researcher Damisn Marino warns that glyphosate, other pesticides must be prohibited in Gualeguaychu at city council meeting, highlights alarming data gleaned about contamination of Parana River, warns schools of Entre Rios at risk due to agricultural activity

Event: Uruguay's University of the Republic promotes talk, "Transgenic Foods in Uruguay: analysis and labeling," to be given March 15 by molecular biology professor, open to public, with topics to include promises and realities of GMOs, labeling of transgenics

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Australian farming news outlet reports on CropLife Australia CEO Matthew Cossey's belief that Western Australia politicians have created unnecessary conflict between GM and non-GM growers in their support of inquiry investigating contamination compensation

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Today's global biotechnology developments included news reports that environmental activists could be behind a fire that damaged a seed research building in Italy. Sales of herbicide-tolerant cottonseed in India remained controversial.

- Italian news outlets reported that a DuPont-Pioneer seed research facility in Pessina Cremonese had been severely damaged by a fire over the weekend. Later reports noted that unidentified figures with Molotov cocktails were caught on security footage, leading investigators to suspect eco-terrorists were behind the fire. [See more](#)
- Officials in India's Telangana state announced that they had received complaints that local seed companies were selling an illegal, herbicide-tolerant cottonseed online and that the state task force investigating the issue had been alerted. Similarly, the Central government announced that it had formed a Field Inspection and Scientific Evaluation Committee to investigate illegal cottonseed sales. [See more](#)

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North America

News: AgWired promotes episode of SMART Farmer podcast with Scott Hamilton Kennedy, director and producer of "Food Evolution" documentary, who spoke about Commodity Classic presentation in California; Kennedy asserts he considers film "pro-science" rather than "pro-GMO"

Study: Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences publishes University of Maryland-led analysis finding Bt maize crops reduce pests and insecticide usage, economically benefit growers and have positive off-site impact

News: MIT Technology Review reports on Minnesota biotech company Recombinetics and other industry stakeholders' efforts to get Trump administration to give USDA authority to regulate gene-edited animals, highlights challenges in current FDA regulations

Commentary: Financial Post columnist warns GMO opponents must realize their beliefs are ideological and often slowing food production worldwide, leading to more hunger and food insecurity; writer argues for consumers to rethink their criticisms of ag industry, asserts farmers care about their land

Commentary: March Against Monsanto's Nick Meyer amplifies claims by Columbia University researchers that CRISPR gene editing process actually may cause hundreds of unpredictable gene mutations within cells of an organism, suggests CRISPR technology may not be as precise as supporters claim

News: Civil Eats reports official launch of new Regenerative Organic Certification at recent Natural Products Expo West trade show, notes Regenerative Organic Alliance is coalition of organizations and businesses; some in organic movement warn adding new label might not help

Commentary: Indiana ag news source discusses Trump's trade policies, points out EU still bans U.S. GMO products and opposes U.S. efforts to bring biotechnology to Africa; writer supports Trump's "get tough" attitude toward trade, says U.S. agriculture must decide how to use it

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project blogger updates Ugandan research on GM bananas engineered to resist pests and diseases, fortified with vitamin A and iron, notes vitamin A banana ready for scientists to perform taste tests; researchers apply to National Biosafety Committee for permit to cook and consume

Commentary: Daily Monitor columnist summarizes problems in Ugandan agriculture, notes local scientists are working on solutions but government delays acceptance

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Asia

News: Times of India reports on Telangana Seed Certification Authority director K Keshavulu's confirmation of complaint received about online sales of illegal herbicide-tolerant cotton seed, as well as glyphosate herbicides, although its use is only permitted in non-crop areas

News: Indian news outlet reports on Department of Biotechnology in the Ministry of Science and Technology's establishment of a Field Inspection and Scientific Evaluation Committee (FISEC) to investigate reports of illegal herbicide-tolerant cotton cultivation

News: India's Business Standard reports over 30,000 farmers will protest outside of Maharashtra Assembly, farmer leader Prashant Gawande blames failure of GM crop technology for cotton crop losses to pests

News: Asia Times reports over 40,000 farmers marched to Mumbai in protest of gov't breach of promise, small farmers are angered by crop failures, Maharashtra's cotton sector lost an estimated 30-70 percent of its cotton crop due to pest attacks

News: The New Indian Express reports Telangana farmers experiencing skin issues which ag scientists speculate are linked to pink bollworm or pesticides farmers use against pest

Commentary: Colin Todhunter writes for CounterPunch, criticizes India's regulatory system for GMOs, amplifies Coalition for GM-Free India's reports about illegal GM soybean cultivation, criticizes push for GM mustard cultivation

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Europe

News: Italy's Il Giorno reports on investigation into fire at DuPont Pioneer's research center in Pessina Cremonese, some suspect ecoterrorists, recalling attack on Monsanto's facility in Olmeneta last year

News: Italy's ANSA reports on large fire at DuPont Pioneer seed research center headquarters in Pessina Cremonese, the center has previously been the target of ecoterrorist actions, investigations are ongoing

News release: Italian NGO Associazione Luca Coscioni calls on scientists and citizens to mobilize for anti-prohibitionist legislation in Parliament, promotes upcoming World Congress for Scientific Research in April

Event: French NGO promotes conference set for March 20 in Saverne, France, on "Hidden GMOs," warning Monsanto, other companies have developed mutagenesis techniques, products from them may not be considered GMOs in the same way as products obtained by transgenesis

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Letter to the editor: Ecuador's El Universo runs letter from Florida agronomist defending need for biotechnology, GMOs, calling progress in production of food "unstoppable," arguing scientists forced to take technological leaps because pesticides have caused environmental damages

News: Mexican news outlet reports on Laguna coordinator of program for implementation of transgenic crops, Mario Valdez Berlanga's announcement of plans to plant seven hectares of GM alfalfa in La Laguna

News: Bolivian news outlet reports on Santa Cruz's Center for Tropical Technology Research's (CIAT) approval of 12 new commercial soybean varieties, CIAT executive director Luis Hurtado noted GMOs are more acceptable to producers and consumers

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

There were no noteworthy biotechnology developments in Oceania during today's monitoring. Click the link below for the latest items.

[More Oceania items](#)

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Caitrin.Martin@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - March 12, 2018
 Date: Monday, March 12, 2018 7:45:18 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Caitrin,

For the second time in as many months, an analysis of decades of data has come to the conclusion that genetically modified crops are beneficial. First, an [Italian meta-analysis](#) last month found GM corn to be beneficial and carry no evidence of health risks. Now, a [University of Maryland study](#) released today finds that Bt corn brings "significant" decreases in pesticide spraying regimens and overall damage in crops including sweet corn, peppers, and green beans. In a piece below, Murenga Mwimali argues that its time for leaders to start paying attention to such research and embrace biotechnology.

Also highlighted below are rebuttals to the European Food Safety Authority's assessments of neonics from David Zaruk and Angela Logomasini, plus further commentary on Russian influence on anti-GMO sentiment and criticisms of the International Agency for Research on Cancer. Several organizations also marked [International Women's Day](#) last week with profiles of [prominent women in food and agriculture](#) and efforts to [empower female farmers](#) in the developing world.

To view items on this newsletter, log in on the [Bonus Eventus Community](#) page. To create an account, fill out the Request Membership form on the front page of the site. To share articles, click on the Twitter icon.

Please [contact us](#) if you have any questions.

In This Issue

[Stakeholder Spotlight](#)
[Stories Worth Sharing](#)
[What's Trending?](#)
[Calendar highlights](#)

Stakeholder Spotlight: Gary Hirshberg



Leading mandatory GMO labeling and anti-pesticide advocate and organic industry mogul Gary Hirshberg is back in the news this week. His Stonyfield Organic brand

Stories Worth Sharing

[David Zaruk: EFSA review claiming neonics harm bees based on "scientifically worthless" guidance document](#)

[Iida Ruishalme and Alison Bernstein: IARC's reliance on hazard while ignoring actual risk only confuses public](#)

[Jonathan Jarry: Mike Adams' online empire - including Natural News - creates "alternate reality" for anti-GMO pseudoscience](#)

[Andrew Porterfield: Russia pushing anti-GMO propaganda in U.S. to boost its agricultural power](#)

[Hank Campbell: Environmental Working Group adds another board member from organic industry, further proving it is not independent](#)

[University of Maryland analysis finds Bt corn significantly decreases insecticide spraying and overall damage to several crops](#)

[Angela Logomasini: EFSA neonic reviews applied "excessively precautionary approach that makes little sense"](#)

[Julie Kelly and Jeff Stier: "Fundamental" changes needed to IARC before it engrains itself further into U.S. policy](#)

announced he would return to an operational role kicking off a major political advocacy campaign to promote organic interests in the 2018 U.S. elections.

Hirshberg was also named as a founder and angel investor in the natural health and supplement company Ancient Nutrition, seeking a multibillion-dollar payout bringing that company to market.

Learn more about Hirshberg [HERE](#).

[CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES](#)

[Lowell Catlett: U.S. Sen. Udall should remove hold, allow authorization of Pesticide Registration Improvement Act](#)

[Murenga Mwimai: African leaders should pay attention to studies finding GM crops safe, embrace Water Efficient Maize project](#)

[Deepak Pental: India "can't go back to pre-1900 agriculture"](#)

[Steven Cerier: New breeding techniques bring potential to produce disease-, drought- and pest-resistant crops](#)

[Video: New York Times' Nicholas Kristof has skewed view about chemicals found in activist group's urine test](#)

[Deniers for Hire: Center for Biological Diversity's Nathan Donley and his "misplaced faith" in IARC](#)

[CLICK FOR BONUS EVENTUS MONITORING](#)

What's Trending?

[Judge considers scientific testimony in case over claims that glyphosate causes cancer](#)

[University of Montreal researcher previews study claiming neonic impact hormones in humans](#)

[Indian cotton seed companies threaten to halt supply in protest of government plan to cut prices](#)

[Activist groups amplify poll finding most U.S. farmers fear Bayer's purchase of Monsanto will have negative impact](#)

[European Commission expected to propose neonic ban after EFSA risk assessments claim harm to bees](#)

Calendar highlights

March 13	March 13	March 13
Chemical Watch Global Business Summit (Amsterdam)	Royal Society Te Aparangi gene editing workshop (New Zealand)	Geneva Human Rights Film Festival screening of "Poisoning Paradise"
March 14-16	March 14	March 14
World Biotechnology Conference (London)	Plant Genomics & Gene Editing Congress: Europe (Rotterdam)	South by Southwest festival session - "GMO 2.0: Beyond Monsanto"
March 14-15	March 14, 15 and 16	March 17-20
EFSA open meeting of Panel on Plant Protection Products and their	Norway Biotechnology Council public forums on GMOs	Endocrine Society annual meeting (Chicago)

Residues

CLICK HERE TO ACCESS FULL EVENTS CALENDAR

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - March 9-11, 2018
 Date: Sunday, March 11, 2018 9:04:31 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Global biotechnology developments over the weekend included anti-biotech NGO GM Freeze launching campaigns to oppose GMO cultivation and to support GM food labeling in the U.K. Ministers in the U.K. are seeking post-Brexit powers that include control over GMO cultivation and labeling, animal health and welfare. A Mexican Chamber of Deputies commission rejected the General Biodiversity Law.

- GM Freeze launched two anti-biotech campaigns, "Safeguard Our Farms" and "Don't Hide What's Inside," to prohibit post-Brexit GMO cultivation and to promote GMO labeling in the U.K. Meanwhile, *BBC* reported British ministers are seeking to control 24 areas after the U.K. leaves the European Union, including power over GMO cultivation and marketing, pesticides and animal health and welfare. A Scottish minister called the move "a power grab." Scottish news site *The National* said if the U.K. government gains those powers, there soon would be "chlorinated chicken, hormone-injected beef and genetically modified vegetables" on Scottish plates. [See more](#)
- *La Jornada* reported the House Commission of Indigenous Affairs voted to reject Mexico's General Biodiversity Law after finding the proposal violates indigenous peoples' rights. Party of the Democratic Revolution leaders called for a detailed review of the proposed law that would include consultation with indigenous groups. The law has been approved by the Senate. [See more](#)

Reminder: to access the full text, archives and monitoring dashboard resources you need to log in to the [Bonus Eventus community portal](#) using your email address and personal password. Please contact us if you need any assistance or support.

For a more extensive compilation of recent biotech items, [click here](#).

North America

Commentary: Biotechnology Innovation Organization profiles several prominent women in science, food and ag in honor of International Women's Day, recognizes Alison Van Eenennaam, Emma Naluyima Mugerwa, Mary-Dell Chilton, Nina Fedoroff and Tamar Haspel

News: Farming news site reports Iowa study finds Russian state media conducting "coordinated campaign;" researchers speculate the campaign maligns U.S. agencies and creates division between U.S. and NATO allies

News: Western Canada ag news site highlights MIT study finding social media helps fake news spread faster than truthful reports, suggests study could explain difficulties convincing public about safety of GM food, pesticides despite scientific support

Commentary: The Western Producer's Sean Pratt amplifies Farmer's Business Network report showing negative impact of agribusiness mergers on farmers, network co-founder Charles Baron noted that as companies' market shares increase, so do prices

News: Mother Jones reports on Iowa State University study on Russian efforts to influence U.S. public opinion on GMOs, highlights American Council on Science and Health Senior Fellow Alex Berezow's belief that it is an attempt to hurt U.S. ag companies

Commentary: Pro-green organic advocacy blog refutes Henry Miller claims in Newsweek piece of organic food as "a deceitful, expensive scam" stresses pesticides, GMOs more harmful to environment, causing

superweeds

News: Science magazine reports Germany to increase R&D budget, but still plans to ban GM cultivation; says research leaders continue lobbying for legislation focusing on product benefits or drawbacks rather than technique used to make it

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Interview: EnviroNews Nigeria interviews University of Abuja microbiologist Isu Nnennaya Rosemary, she emphasizes importance of biotech and several benefits, including improved nutrition, highlights importance of communication

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Indian environmental news site reports farmer group demands investigation into GEAC inaction after agency denied receiving complaints about illegal GM soy cultivation in Gujarat, notes evidence suggests GEAC did receive complaints

News: Reuters reports Chinese commerce minister says China does not want a trade war with U.S., says "There are no winners in a trade war;" but notes it can handle a challenge and protect its interests

News: India's Business Today reports RSS affiliate Swadeshi Jagran Manch (SJM) calls on Ag Ministry to stop royalty payments to Monsanto for its Bollgard II Bt cotton seed technology, arguing that it was ineffective and led to widespread crop losses

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Campaign: EuropaBio encourages stakeholders to submit comments on EFSA's risk assessment on food before public consultation closes March 20

News: BBC reports U.K. government announces intentions to retain temporary control post-Brexit over 24 devolved areas including: standards for marketing, cultivating GMOs; registration, evaluation, authorization, restriction of pesticides

News: Scottish news site reports if U.K. holds onto devolved powers following Brexit, Scotland may have to give up controls over food safety, air quality, pesticide control, thus allowing GM crops, chlorinated chicken, hormone-injected beef

News release: The Royal Society reports its study shows U.K. public generally optimistic about gene editing capabilities to solve problems such as climate change, human health, inequality; points out public still has general fear regarding the technology

News: Bloomberg reports U.K. loses reciprocal standards arrangements with EU, U.S. upon Brexit, putting organic certifications, rules governing GM food, other items

Commentary: Independent researcher on organic issues, Tiziano Gomiero, writes for Italian news outlet, accuses Italian media of spreading disinformation about GMOs, labeling recent coverage of Italian study on GM corn as a "colossal media hoax"

News: Spain's El Confidencial reports on Brazilian gov't approval of GM Bt sugarcane variety developed by Canavieira Technology Center (CTC), to provide resistance to sugarcane borer pest, highlights challenge of public acceptance

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Reuters reports on Brazil's approval of Monsanto's new Intacta2 Xtend GM soybean seed, engineered with pest resistance and tolerance to dicamba and glyphosate, highlights ongoing litigation with Brazilian soy farmers over Intacta RR2 Pro patent rights

News release: Brazil's Landless Workers Movement (MST) publishes statement issued by women who participated in protests for National Day of Struggles of the Landless Women, voicing opposition to agribusiness

News: Bolivian news site reports at close of soy exposition, producers, exporters ask government to approve GM soy cultivation; research director notes Bolivia is only country in region that does not allow GM cultivation

News: Notimex reports on Party of the Democratic Revolution's (PRD) recognition of House Commission of Indigenous Affairs' rejection of the General Biodiversity Law, PRD called for a detailed review of the legislation

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Commentary: Pop Sugar's Rosy Pahwa examines debate about whether soy is unhealthy, highlights claims that GM soy can kill beneficial gut bacteria, harm the digestive system and cause allergies, advises readers to eat non-GMO, organic soy products

[More Oceania items](#)

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - March 8, 2018
 Date: Thursday, March 8, 2018 9 00 53 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included ongoing controversy over Bt cotton efficacy and price controls in India. Reporting on coordination between Bangladesh researchers and the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) continued. International Women's Day events in Brazil highlighted calls for food sovereignty and peasant agriculture.

- The National Seed Association of India warned government regulators that recommended prices for Bt cottonseed were unsupportable and could result in significant shortages of seeds for the upcoming planting season. In a letter to the central agriculture ministry, the seed producers contended that increased production costs and the increased prices for cotton fiber should incentivize a price increase. [See more](#)
- International Women's Day events in Brazil highlighted female farmers' calls for rejecting large-scale agriculture in favor of peasant food systems and agroecology. Among a large list of demands, including pension reforms and protests against the deposing of former President Dilma Roussef, statements from the Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra noted that women farmers asked for support against violence and displacement perpetrated by large landowners in the region. [See more](#)
- *United News of Bangladesh* reported on a visit by IRRI Director General Matthew Morell to the Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI), highlighting the collaboration between the two institutes on several improved rice varieties. The Bangladesh news outlet highlighted the BRRI field trials of Golden Rice and quoted officials who emphasized that it could have a significant impact on malnutrition in the country. [See more](#)
- In a report embargoed until March 12, researchers with the University of Maryland summarized 40 years of Bt maize production and found significant environmental benefits from the crop. Specifically, the researchers highlighted reduced crop damage, reduced adult moth populations and decreased insecticide use. The paper will be published in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. [See more](#)

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North America

Embargoed release (March 12): National Academy of Sciences announces University of Maryland study shows Bt corn significantly decreases insecticide spraying, adult moth activity, and overall damage to several vegetable crops

Announcement: Iowa congressional delegation sends letter to President Trump urging him to reconsider tariffs on Chinese goods, warn him it could start trade war that will hurt Iowa farmers - who export 60 percent of the state's soy to China - and other businesses

News: Politico Pro reports Iowa congressional delegation warns Trump his tariffs on imports could start trade war that Iowans cannot afford, note 60 percent of state's soy exported to China yearly

News: Mic reports on rising trend of regenerative agriculture as a movement to go beyond organic and promote dedication to healthy soil, highlights new collaboration between Dannon, Annie's and Ben and Jerry's to establish regenerative ag certification

Commentary: Organic Consumers Association's Ronnie Cummins asks for donations, writes about collaboration with Regeneration International to revolutionize farming, moving it towards regenerative agriculture, claims industrial farming is "dangerous disaster" that destroys food, farms, environment

Commentary: Iowa farmer Tim Burrack writes for Global Farmer Network, criticizes Russia's attempts to shift U.S. public opinion against GMOs, amplifying Iowa State University findings, notes Russia is trying to bring the U.S. down rather than catch up

Commentary: In Genetic Literacy Project, freelance ag writer examines researchers' hopes that gene editing may open doors for new animal and crop developments blocked by current biotech regulations, highlights calls for product-based assessments

More North America items

Africa

News: Ghana's Joy reports former deputy agriculture minister attends screening of "Food Evolution" in Accra, sponsored by Alliance for Science Ghana, urges scientists to simplify issue of GMO technology to help public understand it properly

News: Tanzania's The Citizen reports on debate surrounding ongoing GM crop field trials, University of Dar es Salaam's Richard Mbunda argued that GM research may lead to "food colonialism" in a paper presented at a recent symposium

News: Xinhua reports on announcement by Acting CEO of Kenya's National Biosafety Authority, Dorington Ogoyi, that the agency is finalizing draft guideline on GE animal research, he noted that Kenya is setting the pace for other African countries

More Africa items

Asia

News: The Hindu BusinessLine reports National Seed Association of India asks government not to reduce cottonseed price for upcoming season but to instead consider price hike to offset significant increase in production costs; seed industry warns price cuts could lead to severe shortage

News: Reuters reports Indian seed companies threaten to halt supply to eight million cotton farmers in protest of gov't plan to cut prices by 7.5 percent, National Seed Association of India's Kalyan Goswami noted producers would also not supply the 2019 season

News: India's Business Standard reports industry sources believe that Environment Ministry's order for Directorate General of Foreign Trade to stop all GM soybean imports without its approval will not be effective unless plant quarantine authority and customs department are involved

News: United News of Bangladesh reports director general of IRRI visits Bangladesh Rice Research Institute, discusses ways to strengthen collaboration between institutes on projects such as Golden Rice, C4 Rice, Zinc Enriched Rice, Transforming Rice Breeding

News: Global Times reports China still prohibiting cultivation of staple GM food crops, only allows GM cotton and papaya to be grown commercially, but imports GM soybeans, rapeseed, cotton and corn; agriculture minister says science must determine safety of GM foods first, but consumers have final say

Report: USDA Foreign Agricultural Service GAIN Report on Japan says its Consumer Affairs Agency expected to decide by end of March 2018 on labeling requirements for GE foods, with concept of tighter requirements for "non-GE" labeling expected to be focus of committee's next meeting

More Asia items

Europe

News release: EuropaBio announces launch of GMOinfo.eu website, offering information about GMOs in 10 different languages, suggests factual information about GMOs in Europe can be hard to find among mistaken perceptions, notes relatively small percentage of global GM cultivation in Europe

Commentary: "Risk Monger" David Zaruk writes for European Seed, examines why the organic lobby is against new breeding techniques, highlights their strategies and scaremongering campaigns, provides advice for plant researchers on how to respond

News: German news agency reports on debate on status of products of gene editing as both sides await EU Court of Justice's ruling, notes regulating products of CRISPR as GMOs could prove difficult as the end results are indistinguishable from those occurring in nature

Report: Netherlands Commission on Genetic Modification promotes new report, "The importance of maize and oilseed rape field margins for Lepidoptera," identifies species that could be found around GM maize fields, "exposed to Bt toxins by GM pollen deposition"

Commentary: The Butterfly Foundation uses Dutch nature site to promote COGEM report suggesting risks for butterflies in margins of fields planted in GM maize; NGO cites decreasing butterfly populations in Netherlands, where GM crops not permitted, calls for keeping country GM-free

Event: France's Volunteer Reapers promote act of civil disobedience April 5 and 6 in Dijon involving group's destruction of test plots of GM rapeseed, claim GMOs obtained by mutagenesis rather than transgenesis are "hidden," and have same effects as transgenics

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Movement of Landless Rural Workers notes 300 women members occupied a Mato Grosso farm, denounced threats from landowners, claim countless murders commissioned by the estate owners

News: Brazilian news source reports law that would make labeling of transgenic foods more flexible postponed in Senate committee, under criticism by consumer groups, which say science unable to identify all risks of eating GMOs, so products need up-to-date information on labels

News: Mexican news outlet reports on Commission on Indigenous Affairs' warning that General Law on Biodiversity could violate indigenous peoples' rights, especially the section on "Genetic Diversity," regarding traditional knowledge and genetic resources

News: Mexico's El Sol de Puebla reports Sagarpa OKs experimental release of Monsanto transgenic crops in Puebla, points out only four territories in country have issued no permits for release of GMOs, gives details of CECCAM report, "Thirty years of transgenics in Mexico"

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: New Zealand's Newshub reports protesters cement their feet in concrete outside MP's office in effort to stop CPTPP, warn agreement could give corporations ability to sue genetic engineering opponents in tribunals

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 Date: Wednesday, March 7, 2018 9:04:33 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included the launch of a new "regenerative agriculture" certification standard by anti-biotechnology group Green America. An Indian seed agency said it would launch criminal action against companies caught selling herbicide-tolerant cotton seeds. Greenpeace warned that Brazil's Social Affairs Committee could soon approve changes that relax the country's GMO labeling standards.

- Green America and The Carbon Underground announced a new regenerative agriculture certification program to identify food companies and farmers working to build soil health, restore the carbon cycle and improve crop resilience. DanoneWave announced it would seek the certification for products developed under "The Dannon Pledge" portfolio, including its non-GMO verified products. [See more](#)
- In India, the Telangana Seed Certification Agency instructed district collectors to initiate criminal proceedings against seed companies caught selling illegal herbicide-tolerant cotton seeds. The agency told *The Times of India* that the Union government had received complaints over the sale of the Bollgard3 variety, which had not been approved by the country's Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee. [See more](#)
- Greenpeace Brazil, previewing a vote today on the country's GMO labeling regulations, called for supporters to contact senators on the Social Affairs Committee and protest the proposed changes. Current guidelines call for a "transgenic" label on foods that contain any trace of genetically modified ingredients, while the draft bill would exempt foods where GMOs comprise less than 1 percent of the total. [See more](#)

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North America

[News release: Green America and The Carbon Underground announce launch of Regenerative Agriculture verification program, in partnership with Ben and Jerry's \(Unilever\), DanoneWave, Annie's \(General Mills\) and MegaFood](#)

[News release: DanoneWave announces participation in regenerative agriculture certification scheme developed by Green America, also highlights soil health investments at Cornell University and Ohio State University](#)

[Announcement: In emailed statement, Organic Consumers Association group previews launch of Regeneration Midwest Alliance to advocate for "systems-change approach" encouraging organic, soil-focused agriculture](#)

[News release: Stonyfield Organic announces new lobbying role for co-founder Gary Hirschberg, previews campaigns on mid-term voting and climate change, as well as protests against recent EPA policies](#)

[Announcement: New Jersey Assemblywoman for District 20, Annette Quijano, introduces bill into state Legislature to require labeling of foods containing GM material](#)

News release: University of Illinois' Realizing Increased Photosynthetic Efficiency project touts its GE research that created tobacco plants requiring 25 percent less water, altering expression of one gene found in all plants doesn't compromise yield, complements previous work to improve photosynthesis

Commentary: Reason's Ronald Bailey amplifies RIPE project's research on tobacco plants engineered to use 25 percent less water while maintaining yields, notes it could push back limits on growth claimed by those who argue people use more water than ecosystems can sustain without deterioration

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Emmanuel Mutamba of Zambia Alliance for Agroecology and Biodiversity (ZAAB) calls on Zambia to uphold its biosafety standards and resist pressure to weaken laws on GMOs, lists several concerns about proposed policy revisions

Commentary: Savio Kyambadde and David Torrey Peters write for Uganda's Dispatch, examining both sides of GMO debate, they highlight potential benefits such as drought tolerance, as well as concerns about Monsanto's business practices

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Times of India reports on Telangana Seed Certification Agency's call on collectors of 31 districts to take criminal action against those selling herbicide-tolerant Bt cotton, highlights concerns that indiscriminate use may lead to resistant weeds

News release: Coalition for GM-Free India accuses Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) of lying in its response to Right to Information (RTI) application for information on illegal GM soy, and of failing in its regulatory roles

News: Reuters reports on likelihood that India will impose yet another cut to Monsanto royalties for its GM cotton technology by 20.4 percent to compensate Indian seed makers, in addition to price cuts on seeds to help farmers who have suffered pest damage

Interview: GM mustard developer Deepak Pental speaks with Smart Indian Agriculture's Vivian Fernandes, expresses disappointment in resistance to the crop and warns that so-called organic farming practices can't meet future needs

News: Beijing Commercial Daily reports on Ministry of Agriculture spokesman Pan Xianzheng's recent statement that China has a "clear and consistent" GM management system, to ensure safety, noting that only GM cotton and papaya are approved for cultivation

News release: International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) praises Bangladesh Minister for Agriculture Matia Chowdhury's support of GM crop cultivation, including Golden rice, in acknowledgement of potential to help meet U.N. zero hunger goal by 2030

News: Saigon Times reports on Bangladesh's use of GM rice and Food Standards Australia New Zealand's approval of golden rice for food, reports that if Bangladesh relies on its own GM rice, rice imports from Vietnam may be reduced

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: U.K.'s Press Association reports Royal Society public dialogue, survey finds majority of respondents support use of gene editing to improve nutrition, disease resistance in plants

News: Science magazine reports some observers worry results of Italy's recent parliamentary elections

may hurt science; Five Star Movement, right-wing parties took anti-scientific stands in campaign; M5S calls for ban on cultivation of GMOs, but University of Milan stem cell scientist fights party's claims

Campaign: Eleonora Evi of Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy (EFDD)/Five Star Movement and five other MEPs from different parties voice objection to EU authorization of 22 new GMOs in spite of Parliament's rejections

News: Food Navigator reports European Parliament rejects Italian member's motion to ban certain "free-from" claims on food products on grounds they mislead consumers; motion understood to refer to palm oil or GM ingredients

Commentary: Greens/EFA campaigner writes for Green European Journal on perils of Bayer-Monsanto consolidation, says consolidation threatens crop diversity and food security and claims plant patents prevent small seed producers from innovating

Announcement: Volunteer Reapers solicits volunteers to help organize Reaper's Day festival to inform public of the environmental, human health risk of GMOs (March 30-April 1)

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Campaign: Greenpeace Brazil asks supporters to write senators to reject bill to remove GMO labels in advance of March 7 vote, notes policy threatens consumers right to know what they eat

Commentary: Alessandra Jacobovski and Naiara Bittencourt of Brazilian NGO Terra De Direitos oppose proposed changes to GMO labeling legislation, they emphasize consumers' right to information and to adequate food, pointing to GMO health risks

News: Mexico's El Financiero reports on recent Agro Forum, where representatives from Morena, the PRI and Por Mexico parties explained stances on GMOs, Morena's Javier Delgado opposes use, Por Mexico's Vicente Gomez pointed to issue of competitiveness, and PRI's Baltazar Hinojosa argued for openness

Commentary: Movement of Landless Rural Workers promotes rallies honoring National Day of Struggles of the Landless Women, denouncing neglect and paralysis of Agrarian Reform, calling for reform to strengthen peasant agriculture

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Australian Broadcasting Corp. reports study published in Nature Communications shows researchers at University of Illinois genetically engineered test tobacco crop that uses 25 percent less water than conventional, could become important tool as climate change intensifies

[More Oceania items](#)

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - March 6, 2018
 Date: Tuesday, March 6, 2018 9:01:18 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Today's global biotechnology developments included news that Argentina had approved new GM corn and soy varieties for cultivation following an agreement on royalties. Indian news outlets reported that the government was likely to impose a nearly 10 percent price reduction on Bollgard II cotton seeds.

- News outlets reported that Argentina approved two new GM corn varieties and a GM soy variety developed by Syngenta, Dow Chemical and Bayer SA. *Reuters* noted that the crop approvals follow a Feb. 22 agreement between farmer groups and seed companies over royalty payments, with farmers agreeing to pay trait fees for patented seeds produced in previous harvests. The agreement resolved years of controversy, including a 2015 surge in activism over payments for Monsanto's Intacta technology. [See more](#)
- In India, *Mint* and *The Hindu* reported that a government price-setting panel is expected to cut Bollgard II seed fees by nearly 10 percent. The country's lead seed body criticized the move, saying that the recommended prices include a 39 rupee royalty fees despite evidence that the seed trait was proving ineffective in some regions. Activist commentary in *Firstpost* emphasized these claims, arguing that cotton production has stagnated in the country following the introduction of Bt cotton seeds. [See more](#)
- Peasant mobilization groups in Europe and Latin America previewed protests and activities around International Women's Day tomorrow (March 8). CLOC-La Via Campesina called for a rejection of multinational agricultural companies and an emphasis on agroecology and "creole" seeds. [See more](#)

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North America

[Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project's Andrew Porterfield examines Iowa State University study on Russia's attempts to influence U.S. opinion on GMOs, highlights Russia's economic motives for doing so, and its history of disinformation campaigns](#)

[Commentary: Writing for Triple Pundit, green products certification company food-ag manager says interest in Non-GMO Project certification on the rise as consumers seek authenticity in food, question industry ethics](#)

[Commentary: The Non-GMO Project posts blog encouraging brand owners to get products verified by NGO to demonstrate commitment to transparency, take advantage of growing non-GMO market, cites surveys showing U.S., Canadian consumers want GMO labeling](#)

[Commentary: American Council on Science and Health writer says study finding CRISPR solves a reoccurring gene editing challenge in wheat establishes breeding technique as a promising tool for developing improved GM wheat](#)

[Interview: Elysium Health's science publication Endpoints interviews Nobel Laureate Sir Richard Roberts, he discusses his pro-GMO advocacy, explains importance of GM technology for developing countries, and damage caused by Greenpeace's opposition](#)

News: St. Louis Public Radio reports Center for Biological Diversity claims dicamba interrupts the growth of milkweed, other plants that monarchs feed on, promotes need to maintain hospitable conditions for milkweed, limiting pesticide use

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Nigerian Tribune reports on scientists' call on gov't to invest in ag biotech to improve farming standards and boost farmers' incomes, Applied Biotech in Nigeria and America's Nwadiuto Esiobu argued Nigeria will not advance without embracing biotech

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Mint reports anonymous source expects India ag ministry to cut Bt cotton seed prices, trait fees to help farmers struggling from pests, crop losses; seed groups say decision would threaten cotton seed production

News: The Hindu reports gov't panel recommends price decrease for Bollgard-II Bt cotton seed this season, with a Rs50 drop for dealers and seed-producing firms, and a Rs10 trait value reduction for Mahyco Monsanto Biotech Limited

Commentary: Rohit Parakh of India For Safe Food writes for Firstpost, amplifies FactChecker analysis of gov't data which found that Bt cotton yields have stagnated, points to negative health and environmental effects of associated chemical use

News: United News of India reports Coalition for GM-Free India charges Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) and Directorate General Foreign Trade (DGFT) with regulatory failure and irresponsibility over illegal GM soybean seeds

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Event: European Coordination Via Campesina promotes March 8 International Women's Day and struggle "for land, food sovereignty, water, seeds, and agroecology"

Campaign: SumOfUs launches French-language petition to European Commission urging it to reinforce current legislation, prohibit production of GMOs on its territory to prevent any movement of GMOs in Europe

News: Dutch news outlet reports on Uganda's development of GM bananas, highlights work of Stephen Buah and Priver Namanya at Uganda's National Agricultural Research Organization, and Namanya's frustrations at opposition from Western anti-GMO groups

Commentary: Editorial for French ecology news site Reporterre promotes new book by Vandana Shiva and Nicola Hulot, "The Virtuous Circle," highlights their arguments in favor of protecting 'common goods' such as water, air, land and seeds

Commentary: Italy's Guidasicilia amplifies statement by National Federation of Agricultural Products Traders (Compag) challenging Italy's anti-GMO policies, echoes argument that embracing technology will improve self-sufficiency, protect 'Made in Italy' brand

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Reuters reports Argentina approves varieties of GM corn, soy in wake of farmer-GM seed

producer agreement to pay royalties on second-generation seeds

News: Argentina's Agrovoz reports on gov't approval of new GM corn and soybean seeds by Bayer, Dow and Syngenta, with pest-resistance and herbicide-tolerance, Ag Minister Luis Miguel Etchevehere noted goal of promoting sustainability, productivity and ag exports

News: Argentina's Pagina 12 reports on Inter-American Court of Human Rights' (IACtHR) unpublished ruling that a healthy environment is a human right, calling on states to act in accordance with the precautionary principle

News: Mexico's SinEmbargo reports on Center for Studies for Change in the Mexican Field's (CECCAM) report on 30 years of transgenic use in Mexico, highlighting benefits to foreign companies Bayer and Monsanto, only four states remain GMO-free by law

News: Mexico's Inforural reports on SAGARPA's public consultation on proposed GM cotton and alfalfa cultivation in La Laguna, with participation of National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples, fulfilling regulatory requirements

News: Huffington Post Mexico reports on conservation groups' opposition to General Law of Biodiversity, Center for Biological Diversity's Mexico rep. Alejandro Olivera noted it would impact regulations on genetic issues, protected natural areas and mining

Event: CLOC-La Via Campesina calls for "mobilization, action and struggle" for March 8 International Women's Day events in Latin America, denounce "transnationals of agro-hydro-mining that usurp, poison our lands, kill our rivers, our creole seeds, destroying all the life they go through"

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: Australia farm news source reports analysis funded by grain, biotech groups finds no premiums in South Australia GM-free status; researchers say findings, proven GMO safety both support lift in GMO moratorium

Report: Grain Producers SA-commissioned independent analysis finds South Australia's GM-free status has produced no premiums to growers; NGO calls for lift on moratorium

News: Australian Broadcasting Corporation reports on recent Australian Bureau of Agriculture Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) summit, where executive director Steve Hatfield-Dodds emphasized importance of understanding what drives consumers, calling on ag industry to take the lead in GM debate

More Oceania items

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 Date: Monday, March 5, 2018 9 04 05 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Today's global biotechnology developments included the start of a new set of international rules on liability addressing damage from living modified organisms (LMOs). In Europe, a Swiss anti-GMO group announced a speaking tour by British activists as part of its "no new GMOs" campaign.

- The secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity announced that the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress entered into force today. The new rules set up systems for addressing damage caused by the transboundary movement of GMOs and sets up a "polluter pays principle." The protocol was ratified by Japan in mid-December, marking the 40th ratification and triggering its eventual adoption. **See more**
- The Swiss anti-biotechnology group Schweizer Allianz Gentechfrei, coordinating with the activist groups GMWatch and Gen Au Rheinau, announced a speaking tour by British anti-GMO campaigners Claire Robinson and Michael Antoniou, scheduled for March 20-23. The activists will address the "risks and necessary regulation" of new plant breeding techniques (NBTs). **See more**
- Beginning on Tuesday (March 6), farmers in India's Maharashtra state plan to march from Nashik to Mumbai, where they'll demand loan forgiveness programs over Bt cotton crop failures. A spokesperson for the farmers says that the state promised significant loan waivers but has yet to pay the promised amounts, and he called for cottonseed producers to compensate the farmers. **See more**

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North America

Announcement: Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST) announces plans to roll out new publication on biotech regulations on March 22-23, with goal of informing the public of importance of GE plants and animals for prosperity and food safety

Commentary: Economist Steven Cerier writes for Genetic Literacy Project, examines debate surrounding products of new breeding techniques, highlights potential to produce disease-, drought- and pest-resistant crops, and to boost nutrition

Commentary: Hank Campbell of American Council on Science and Health amplifies Iowa State University research on Russia's efforts to sway U.S. public opinion against GMOs using 'clickbait,' encourages readers to support groups promoting evidence-based science

News: Quartz reports on decline of "Big Food" era as Grocery Manufacturers Association loses several large member companies, Peter Lurie of Center for Science in the Public Interest believes GMA was "just too stubborn" on issues like GMO labeling

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Video: NTV Kenya reports on negative economic impacts of Cassava Mosaic Virus and Cassava Brown Streak Disease, Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO) scientists discuss developments in GM cassava

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: The Hindu reports farmers associated with All Indian Kisan Sabha will participate in 250 km Nashik-Mumbai march, demanding loan waivers to all farmers in the state, in addition to compensation to cotton farmers who suffered losses from pink bollworm

News: Times of India reports head of two-member team investigating prevalence of illegal HT cotton seeds, potential link with deaths due to pesticide inhalation, replaced ahead of Mar. 7 deadline for submitted report, notes potential need for work "to start from scratch"

News release: Convention on Biological Diversity announces Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress comes into force, requiring that response measures be taken in event of damage resulting from living modified organisms

News: Philippine Daily Inquirer reports on UP League of Agricultural Biotechnology Students' (UPLABS) annual National Biotechnology Summit from March 5-9, topics will include "Biotechnology in the Context of the Philippines" and "Regulation of Genetically Modified Organisms"

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Event: Swiss anti-GMO NGO Gen Au Rheinau to co-host lecture event on new breeding techniques with GeneWatch and SAG/StopOGM (March 20-23, 2018), featuring Dr. Michael Antoniou of King's College, London and Claire Robinson of GMWatch

Commentary: Claire Robinson of GMWatch writes for Independent Science News, criticizes EFSA's favorable assessment of Monsanto's new stacked-trait GM corn variety, argues that EFSA only considers potential risks of individual traits, but not in combination

News: Scotland's The National reports on open letter signed by over 20 organizations, including Global Justice Now and Friends of the Earth Scotland, and over 800 people, in opposition to U.K. Trade Bill, voicing concerns about allowing GM crops

Commentary: International Grain Trade Coalition (IGTC) Acting Secretariat Katy Lee writes for European Seed, provides highlights of IGTC's policy on plant breeding innovation, argues that regulatory decision making must be based on sound science

News: Euronews reports on demonstration against Bayer-Monsanto deal in Lyon, France, one protester voiced support for public health, the environment and farmers, noted they are fighting against agro-chemistry and agro-industry

Event: Demosphere announces concert by Jur and Julien (March 16, 2018) in support of GMO Volunteer Reapers, to support defense of their acts of civil disobedience in court

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News release: Brazil's Landless Workers Movement (MST) announces protest by over 1,000 women in front of Suzano pulp and paper mill, in opposition to large-scale eucalyptus production, aerial spraying, monocultures and use of transgenic seeds

News: Reuters reports about 100 Brazilian sugar mills have planted initial area of 400 hectares with GM

Bt sugarcane developed by Centro de Tecnologia Canavieira (CTC), CTC CEO Gustavo Leite noted goal of eventually reaching 1.5 million hectares

Commentary: Argentinian news outlet editorial emphasizes economic importance of the country's Ag export market, highlights role of science in development of seeds, plants and forms of cultivation, points to the Netherlands' successful ag sector, which employs GMOs

Commentary: York University PhD candidate Lina Pinto Garcia and Sabina Rasmussen write for Colombia's El Pais, calling on Ministry of Health to establish transparent dialogues on proposed release of GE mosquitoes in Cali, they also promote exploring alternatives

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: Australian subscription news outlet reports grain producers call on all parties to reopen debate GMOs within 12 months after the election, arguing that South Australia farmers are disadvantaged by the GM moratorium

More Oceania items

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 To: Caitrin.Martin@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - March 5, 2018
 Date: Monday, March 5, 2018 4:01:49 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Caitrin,

The question of whether there was Russian meddling in the 2016 U.S. presidential election has been a topic in the headlines for more than a year. But what about Russian influence on U.S. agriculture and attitudes toward biotechnology?

An [Iowa State University analysis](#) concluded that [Russian outlets](#) are behind "misinformation attacks" spreading anti-GMO sentiment in the United States. The [topic](#) is explored further in a series of articles in this week's newsletter.

Among other articles, Bill Gates refers to GMOs as "perfectly healthy" and Paul Driessen calls for the U.S. Congress to "get tough" on the pseudo-science promoted by the International Agency for Research on Cancer and U.S. National Institutes for Environmental Health Sciences director Linda Birnbaum.

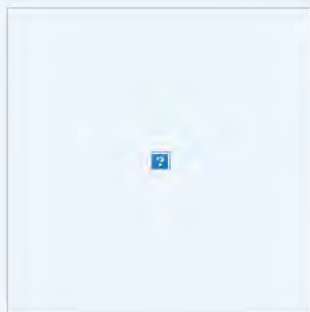
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Please [contact us](#) if you have any questions.

In This Issue

- [Stakeholder Spotlight](#)
- [Stories Worth Sharing](#)
- [What's Trending?](#)
- [Calendar highlights](#)

Stakeholder Spotlight: Charles Benbrook



"He's back! The Energizer Bunny of organic industry-funded advocacy and pesticide litigation consulting, Charles Benbrook has released another [industry-funded study](#) claiming organic foods are superior in health and

■ Stories Worth Sharing

[Carly Cassella: Americans "playing right into Putin's hand" by distrusting GMOs](#)

[Anastasia Bodnar: Add Russian influence to reasons people have "irrational fear" of biotechnology](#)

[Paul Driessen: Time for U.S. Congress to show "spine" and hold International Agency for Research on Cancer accountable](#)

[David Zaruk: NGOs' "silence the science" tactic in full effect against neonicotinoids](#)

[Brian McNicoll: U.S. Right to Know activist Carey Gillam just behind Russian outlets in spreading most anti-GMO rhetoric](#)

[Bill Gates: GMOs are "perfectly healthy," promising tool to fight world hunger](#)

[Peter Van Voorhis: "Unscientific work" of IARC finally being revealed as U.S. lawmakers stand behind farmers](#)


[Hank Campbell: Judge turns to science to block lawyers' bid to "get rich" off glyphosate cancer claims](#)

nutrition to their lower-priced conventional counterparts.


Other Benbrook research was also cited this week by an **activist report** by the **Center for Biological Diversity** alleging the herbicide dicamba is threatening monarch butterfly populations. An ag economist, Benbrook's professed expertise extends well beyond his areas of academic study to include consulting and reporting on hot-button food issues ranging from alleged endocrine-disrupting chemical health risks to supposed nutritional benefits of organic foods.

Called one of the top go-to paid advocates for the organic marketing industry, anti-GMO activist groups and pesticide litigators - learn more about Benbrook **HERE**.


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Abdulrazak Ibrahim: Nigeria should host national workshop to consider potential of CRISPR use in food production 

Chuck Dinerstein: By spreading Kristof's claims on chemicals, New York Times engages in "hyperbole at the price of scientific honesty" 

USAID: Blight-resistant potato could make "dramatic impact" on lives of Bangladesh farmers 

Terry Anderson and Henry Miller: Organic farming a prime example of inefficient water use in California 

Omri Ben-Shahar: Italian analysis of GMO corn benefits should be "conclusive" science needed to end public debate 

Australian geneticist Fahad Ali: "We need gene technology on our side" so it can save lives 

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What's Trending?

European Food Safety Authority neonic risk assessments drive call for ban from NGOs and lawmakers

Monsanto faces key hearing in lawsuit over whether glyphosate causes cancer

Ghana activists meet with members of Parliament to raise opposition to GMOs

U.S. EPA opens 60-day comment period on draft assessments of glyphosate

European Parliament approves measures to boost beekeeping industry, endorses request for European Commission to propose neonic ban

Calendar highlights

March 5-7	March 5-9	March 6-7
World Congress on Plant Biotechnology and Agriculture (Paris)	CBD Workshop on Detection and Identification of Living Modified Organisms for Francophone Africa	Africa Climate Smart Agriculture Congress
March 7-8	March 7-11	March 14
Plenary meeting of the EFSA Panel on Genetically Modified Organisms	Natural Products Expo West	South by Southwest festival session - "GMO 2.0: Beyond Monsanto"

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - March 2-4, 2018
 Date: Sunday, March 4, 2018 9:01:44 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Global biotechnology developments over the weekend included civil society groups announcing opposition to Mexico's biodiversity law. Food Sovereignty Ghana officials met with Parliament members to discuss the country's plant breeder's bill and GMOs.

- Mexico's *La Jornada* reported dozens of NGOs called for Mexican legislators to oppose the proposed biodiversity law. They claimed the proposal aims to "privatize the country's biological wealth and the ancestral knowledge of the native peoples." They also objected because indigenous groups were not consulted regarding the law. **See more**
- Representatives from Food Sovereignty Ghana and other NGOs met with Parliament members to state their positions against GMOs and to urge legislators to see that Ghana's biodiversity is not compromised by the bill. **See more**

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North America

News: AgriNews reports on Agri-Trend Group founder and CEO Robert Saik's belief that the non-science movement is today's greatest threat to global food security, Saik laments that several GM technologies are unavailable to farmers who need them

News: AgriPulse amplifies Iowa study findings that Russian state media, Facebook and Twitter trolls contributed to U.S. anti-GMO movement and linked to 2016 election manipulation efforts

Commentary: Pesticide Action Network debunks eight myths about GMOs, pesticides including pesticides needed to feed the world, dose makes the poison, pesticides aren't dangerous, GMOs reduce reliance on pesticides

Commentary: EcoWatch amplifies Center for Biological Diversity report warning expanded use of dicamba will put more than 60 million acres of monarch habitat at risk by 2019

News: High Plains Journal reports on Purdue University ag economist Jayson Lusk's recent speech at the 2018 Bayer AgVocacy Forum, Lusk believes support for GMO labeling stems from a disconnect of the demographics

Commentary: Terry Anderson and Henry Miller of Stanford's Hoover Institution write for Manhattan Institute for Policy Research's City Journal, they support allowing markets to allocate water, and taxes on inefficient water use, such as organic production

Commentary: Boulder Daily Camera writer questions county's use of glyphosate after officials passed anti-GMO regulations that demonized glyphosate, oversimplified challenges of complex industry

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Ugandan farmer Emma Naluyima writes for Daily Monitor, voices concern that govt may add restrictions on GMOs, notes that she would embrace GMOs that can solve a particular challenge on her farm, criticizes spread of misinformation

Commentary: Anti-biotech NGO Food Sovereignty Ghana reports meeting with Ghana Parliament members, claims Ghana can protect plant breeding rights without enacting Plant Breeders Bill, claims bill will facilitate biopiracy of country's plants

Commentary: Farmer and science journalist Michael J. Ssali writes for Uganda's Daily Monitor, amplifies articles calling to genetically modify coffee to adapt to climate change and prevent its extinction, help poor farmers in coffee-growing countries

News: Zimbabwe news site reports government banned less expensive GM maize imports to protect small-scale millers; grain miller reports saving \$4.5 million on foreign currency

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: India's Swarajya reports China has built \$150 billion lead over India in textile exports, analyzes how China rose to become market leader, points out India's cotton-based textile industry faced shortage of raw material until farmers began growing Bt cotton

Commentary: Pakistan Observer editorial calls on govt to take serious steps to achieve food security, emphasizing importance of boosting grain production to meet poultry feed needs, argues GMOs are key for safeguarding potential yields for a cheaper price

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Kristin Halvorsen and Ole Johan Borge of Norway's Biotechnology Council write for local news outlet, promoting the council's new guidance for assessing social benefits of GMOs, with hopes of improving predictability for applicants

News: Italy's Il Manifesto amplifies meta-analysis by Italian researchers that found GMO corn poses no risks to human, animal or environmental health, notes 75 percent of studies considered conducted in United States, cites doubts about their credibility, concerns about productivity and biodiversity

Commentary: Russia Today publishes list of Top 5 "most evil" corporations; Monsanto takes No. 1 spot; RT says Monsanto was first to develop GMO crops, herbicides used on them have killed millions of acres of crops, caused cancer, other health problems

Commentary: German NGO and La Via Campesina member opposes Bayer-Monsanto merger, claiming it would dominate the agricultural market and destroy fair competition

Commentary: French NGO Inf'OGM notes Poland tabled bill to reduce GM feed imports by requiring animal feed companies to get protein crops from EU members; points out bill contradicts recent draft law authorizing GM cultivation in Poland

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Roberto Garduno and Enrique Mendez write for Mexico's La Jornada, criticizing deputy Arturo Alvarez Angli's (PVEM) proposed approval of changes to biodiversity law without involving commissions of Indian Affairs and Climate Change

News: Argentine business news site reports Association of Soybean and Maize Producers in Brazil files lawsuit to nullify Monsanto's patent on GM soy Intacta seed

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: Australian investment news site notes agricultural producer NuFarm developed omega-3-rich GM canola oil; notes testing is underway

More Oceania items

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - March 1, 2018
 Date: Thursday, March 1, 2018 9 01:22 PM

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Today's global biotechnology developments included a new European campaign to pressure regulators to assess products of new plant breeding techniques (NBTs) as genetically modified organisms. Media outlets continued to respond to an Iowa study linking Russian media sites with anti-GMO activism.

- The anti-biotechnology umbrella organization Schweizer Allianz Gentechfrei announced a new campaign and petition to urge Swiss regulators to include products of NBTs under existing GMO guidelines. In a news release, the group noted that gene-edited crops are already being commercialized in the U.S. and could end up in European food unless the products are subject to mandatory labeling and approvals. [See more](#)
- Media outlets continued to respond to an Iowa State University study that highlighted the role of Russian media outlets in spreading anti-GMO propaganda. *Bloomberg* linked the study to a report issued by the U.S. House of Representatives, which claimed that Russia used social media posts to undermine natural gas and fracking policies in the U.S. Several agricultural news sites amplified the article from *The Des Moines Register*, as did *The Scientist* and *Food Beast*. Activist news outlets such as *Natural Blaze* criticized the report. [See more](#)

Reminder: to access the full text, archives and monitoring dashboard resources you need to log in to the [Bonus Eventus community portal](#) using your email address and personal password. Please contact us if you need any assistance or support.

For a more extensive compilation of recent biotech items, [click here](#)

North America

News: The Scientist amplifies Iowa State University study finding Russian government-funded news websites publish more articles about GMOs than U.S. outlets, typically portray them in negative light; study co-author says turning U.S. public opinion against GMOs would hurt U.S. agriculture, help Russia

Commentary: Foodbeast blogger amplifies Iowa State University study suggesting Russian government-backed news websites spread "misinformation attacks" casting GMOs in overwhelmingly negative light, notes Russian attacks on U.S. GMO crops could help it steal market share

Commentary: Media watchdog site Accuracy in Media amplifies Iowa State University study finding Russians fund articles questioning safety of GMOs, links Carey Gillam and U.S. Right to Know to Russian influence, points out The Huffington Post published the most anti-GMO articles among U.S. outlets

Commentary: Natural Blaze's Brandon Turbeville criticizes mainstream media, Iowa State University study for blaming Russia for fanning anti-GMO sentiment in United States, quotes GMWatch's response to study, coverage by The Des Moines Register

Commentary: Purdue University ag economist Jayson Lusk promotes new paper co-authored by University of Florida's Brandon McFadden and Tufts' Norbert Wilson on consumer views on GMOs, finds safety concerns are related to perceptions of who benefits

Commentary: Foodbeast blogger discusses Bill Gates statement that he finds it "disappointing" some people perceive non-GMO foods as better than GMOs, expresses hope support for GMOs from Gates, Neil deGrasse Tyson and others may sway public opinion

Roundup: Agricultural news outlets reported on opening session of annual Pork Industry Forum in Kansas City, with panel on gene editing, University of Missouri scientist whose team developed GE pig resistant to PRRS virus

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: GhanaWeb reports on former Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Ahmed Yakubu Alhassana's call for nationwide lecture to improve public understanding of GMOs, arguing that misinformation thrives when the public cannot understand complex scientific language

Commentary: Biologist writes piece in Medium calling on Nigeria to embrace CRISPR, saying technology could have "far-reaching consequence" in country's economy

Report: African Centre for Biodiversity publishes new report, "A review of participatory plant breeding and lessons for African seed and food sovereignty movements," argues conventional breeding has created separation between farmers and breeders

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: USAID's Feed the Future reports on efforts by its Biotechnology Partnership to battle late blight through introduction of GE disease-resistant potato in Bangladesh, notes introduction of Bt eggplant in country two years ago has helped farmers

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News release: Swiss NGO Schweizer Allianz Gentechfrei announces launch of petition as part of campaign, "No genetic engineering through the back door," urging Swiss Federal Council and Parliament to make new GE procedures such as CRISPR-Cas9 subject to Genetic Engineering Act

Interview: U.K.'s European Seed talks to officials of International Seed Federation about their views on new plant breeding techniques, whether and how they should be regulated in Europe, how to overcome regulatory divergence; ISF Secretary General Michael Keller warns against patchwork of regulations

Campaign: German NGO Aktion Agrar promotes petition asking German agriculture ministers to adopt different model of direct payments to farmers that would promote use of non-GE animal feed, less pesticide usage, fewer animals, soy moratorium in order to help prevent destruction of Amazon rainforest

Interview: Science and Development Network interviews Vandana Shiva following her recent speech at Bond conference in London, she explains how her study of physics influences her current work in promoting seed biodiversity

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Xinhua reports Mexican National Federation of Corn Farmer publicly calls on Mexican government to restrict corn imports under NAFTA, wants to create demand to grow market within country

Commentary: Mexico's La Prensa examines "latent danger" of GMO seeds, saying they are attributed to environmental damages and human health problems and have been banned in 170 countries

[More Latin America items](#)

News: Food Navigator reports on GE-Free New Zealand's threat of taking legal action challenging Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) and Minister for Food Safety's approval of Golden Rice, raising concerns about lack of safety data

More Oceania items

More Bonus Eventus Resources

Stakeholder database	More information on the people and organizations influencing food and agriculture issues.
Events calendar	See where news could be happening next. Or let allies know about an upcoming event.
Bonus Eventus community	Connect with academic experts and researchers, journalists and agriculture allies.

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