

From: Jay Byrne
 To: Diane Wray-Cohen@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Feb. 28, 2018
 Date: Wednesday, February 28, 2018 9 05:08 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 significant U.S. media coverage of an Iowa study on the role of Russian-backed media outlets criticizing biotechnology. In Europe, anti-biotechnology activists promoted a legal opinion claiming that products developed through mutagenesis and new plant breeding techniques should be regulated as GMOs.

- Media outlets in the U.S. amplified a recent study from Iowa State University in which researchers identified the prominent role Russian-backed online news platforms played in spreading and amplifying anti-biotechnology messages. *Gizmodo* reported on the story, quoting Sustainable Pulse producer Henry Rowlands, who alleged that U.S. news outlets downplayed GMO risks because of powerful business interests. In *The Hill*, World Food Prize president Kenneth Quinn summarized an interaction with *Russia Today* and linked the issue to larger concerns about American democracy. [See more](#)
- European activists amplified a new statement from the anti-biotechnology NGO Testbiotech, which summarized a legal opinion from environmental lawyer and University of Bremen professor Ludwig Kraemer. Kraemer argued that the advocate general of the EU Court of Justice misinterpreted current GMO regulations when he recommended new methods of mutagenesis not be regulated as GMOs, highlighting the law's citation of a "long history of safety" in its initial exemption for mutagenesis-derived crops. [See more](#)
- *Reuters* reported that sources close to the EU competition commissioner said regulators were planning to approve Bayer's purchase of Monsanto following the latest concessions from Bayer. The article quoted a Friends of the Earth spokesperson on concerns about industry consolidation, and amplification from *RT* highlighted the "merger from hell" hashtag campaign against the deal. [See more](#)

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

North America

Commentary: World Food Prize president Kenneth Quinn writes in *The Hill* that current Russian information warfare campaign has its roots in Vietnam War, says Russia's goal is "to exacerbate every political difference among Americans"; Quinn cites experience he had with RT host on GMOs

Commentary: Gizmodo's George Dvorsky examines Iowa State University study findings that Russia is attempting to sway U.S. public opinion against GMOs, highlights response from Henry Rowlands on Sustainable Pulse, believes Russia's actions are cause for alarm

News: MIT Technology Review reports on Iowa State University study finding that Russian funded news sites RT and Sputnik publish articles with "negative or distasteful" information about GMOs, some with fake conspiracy theories, highlights Russia's GMO ban

News: Business Insider reports on Bill Gates' recent assertion that GMOs are "perfectly healthy" during a Reddit AMA, a view supported by scientific consensus, highlights long history of genetic modification, and medical applications like insulin

News: Technology news outlets report on Bill Gates' recent Reddit AMA, he described GMO foods as "perfectly healthy," voiced disappointment that some people view non-GMO foods as better

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Reuters reports talks between Burkina Faso and Bayer on reintroduction of GM cotton are on hold pending Bayer's acquisition of Monsanto, according to director of Sotifex cotton company, Wilfried Yameogo, who noted importance of addressing fiber length

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: Prime Sarmiento of the Philippines' Business Mirror examines Food Standards Australia New Zealand's (FSANZ) approval of golden rice, highlights potential nutritional benefits, as well as concerns raised by Testbiotech, welcomes the current debate

News: Press Trust of India reports on RSS affiliate Swadeshi Jagran Manch's call on gov't to remove royalty fee on Monsanto's Bollgard-II Bt cotton seeds, arguing that the technology has become ineffective at controlling pink bollworm

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Reuters reports that Europe's antitrust regulator is set to approve Bayer's purchase of Monsanto, according to unnamed sources; report quotes Friends of the Earth campaigner critical of farming data monopolies

News release: Testbiotech announces publication of legal dossier by legal expert Ludwig Kraemer, examining EU Court of Justice advocate general's opinion on products of new breeding techniques, criticizes lack of distinction between GE and conventional breeding

Commentary: Italian NGO Il Salvagente opposes Parliament's Commission for Economic and Monetary Affairs' proposal to ban free-from labels such as "non-GMO" and "without palm oil," argues it goes against consumers' interests for more transparency

News release: Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU) announces results of study on public opinion on GM foods, it found that half of U.S. and a quarter of Norwegian participants were willing to eat GM foods if they provided nutritional benefits

News: German consumer magazine Oko-Test reports health food provider Rapunzel starts online petition to oppose introduction of new GE techniques in country, calls for genome editing methods to be regulated and products clearly identified

Commentary: Member of German anti-GMO NGO coalition points out organic groups reject use of CRISPR to breed plants, but director of Research Institute of Organic Agriculture in Switzerland praises CRISPR technique, complains Urs Niggli's opinion on CRISPR often cited in media over more representative voices

Announcement: Spanish government-owned public TV service promotes Feb. 28 program featuring Vandana Shiva, notes her book, "Who Really Feeds the World?", criticizes those who poison environment and humans, worsen climate change

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Uruguay's La Diaria reports Municipality of Montevideo clarifies it was already mandatory to label transgenics, recent announcement means inspections to check compliance with labeling law begin in September, with no extensions; manual to be published giving details of label graphics required

News: Mexican news outlet reports on Veracruz State Agricultural Union of Corn Producers president Luis Angel Contreras Carrera's recent statement that Mexico is the world's fifth largest producer of corn and a top user of pesticides, he promoted use of biotech

News: Mexico's Sin Embargo reports on National Confederation of Agricultural Producers of Maize of Mexico's (CNPAMM) call for gov't strategy to rescue domestic corn production, voicing concern about high imports of transgenic corn from the U.S.

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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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Feb. 27, 2018
 Date: Tuesday, February 27, 2018 9:03:13 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology developments included news that the European competition commissioner met with environmental activists critical of Bayer's purchase of Monsanto. The U.K.'s rural affairs regulator launched a public consultation on Britain's post-Brexit farming policy.

- European activists with WeMove.eu, Friends of the Earth Europe, SumOfUs, Aktion Agrar and MISERIOR met with European competition commissioner Margrethe Vestager today to discuss opposition to Bayer's purchase of Monsanto. Last-minute, international email campaigns for signatures against the merger warned that the reduced competition would harm biodiversity efforts and impact farmer livelihoods. In social media accounts of the meeting, the groups noted that over 1 million people had signed the campaigns. A separate Friends of the Earth Europe news release claimed that a majority of Europeans oppose the merger. **See more**
- The U.K. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs released its long-awaited consultation paper on British farming policies following the country's withdrawal from the European Union. Among other provisions, the department proposed redesigning farmer payments to reward technology adoption - including the use of plant biotechnology - in farming operations. Media reports on the announcement largely focused on the broader recommendation to link farmer payments to sustainable farming practices. **See more**

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North America

News: [The Hill reports on Iowa State University study demonstrating Russia's attempts to sway U.S. public opinion against GMOs in effort to hurt U.S. ag interests, of seven news sites, U.S. versions of RT and Sputnik produced over 50 percent of GMO-related articles](#)

News release: [GMO Answers comments on report in The Des Moines Register that Iowa State University researchers find misinformation campaigns about GM crops ongoing, stem from various sources; spokesman says GMO Answers has posted answers by 200 independent experts to 1,500 questions about GMOs](#)

Commentary: [Cary Funk of Scientific American analyzes American Academy of Arts and Sciences report on public trust in science, emphasizes importance of seeing how people view science issues that connect with their lives, such as GM foods and vaccines](#)

Commentary: [Forbes writer Omri Ben-Shahar amplifies recent Italian meta-analysis demonstrating yield advantage and safety of GM corn for humans and the environment, believes the assessment is the kind of conclusive science needed to resolve a public policy debate](#)

Video: [Joseph Mercola touts his GMO Awareness Week campaign in YouTube video, interviews Organic Consumers Association Executive Director Ronnie Cummins, who says consumers are waking up to hazards of GMOs and toxic chemicals used with them](#)

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Ghana's Joy reports on Crop Research Institute of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) scientist Charles Afriyie Debrah's statement that GM crops are safer than conventional ones because they undergo more safety testing

News: Ghana's Joy reports on Monsanto's assurance that problems associated with GM cotton in Burkina Faso will not be repeated in other African nations, Monsanto's Jonathan Jenkinson emphasized importance of continuous breeding program for improvements

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science blogger reports Burkina Faso cotton farmers want to bring back GM varieties phased out by government in 2015 because of problems with short fibers; farmers say they lose money without Bt cotton because of the need for more applications of insecticides

Campaign: African Centre for Biosafety asks supporters to submit comments opposing application for commercial release of Dow-DuPont stacked GM maize during 30-day public consultation

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: United News of India reports political group called for reduction in Bt cotton trait fees, requiring Mahyco Monsanto Biotech Ltd. to pay compensation for crop losses to pink bollworm

News: Asia Times reports on debt burdens driving farmers to suicide in Punjab, highlights losses to Bt cotton crops due to their increased vulnerability to whitefly, also highlights criticisms of gov't debt relief packages

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Announcement: EU Commissioner for Competition, Margrethe Vestager, announces meeting with SumOfUs, WeMove.EU, Friends of the Earth Europe, Misereor and Aktion Agrar to hear their views and receive signatures on Bayer-Monsanto deal

News release: Friends of the Earth Europe announces results of YouGov survey which found that 54 percent of EU citizens oppose the Bayer-Monsanto merger, released on same day that FOE and other NGOs met with Competition Commissioner Vestager

News: New Europe reports on EU Competition Commissioner's estimate that Bayer Monsanto decision will come in "first half" of 2018, concluding that April 5 deadline could be moved to June

News release: U.K. Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs releases consultation advising post-Brexit shift from CAP direct payments to environmental management incentives, ag-tech investment; comment period open thru May 8

News: Farmers Weekly shares stakeholder responses to Defra farming consultation; Soil Association, animal groups welcome initiative while farm and labor groups voice skepticism

Commentary: Hilaire Picault of France's Detours examines recent Italian study on GMO safety, highlights French Institute for Nutrition's assessment that only some mycotoxins have acute toxicity, and at high doses, points to concerns raised by Greenpeace

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Mexico's Oaxaca Digital reports on Democratic Revolution Party's (PRD) concerns about General Biodiversity Law, highlights opposition from Secretary of Sustainability of the National Executive

Committee, who argued it will put natural resources into the hands of transnational companies

News: Mexico's Sin Embargo reports on Citizens Coalition against the General Biodiversity Law, composed of nearly 100 organizations, it shared a list of several objections to the law, including claim that it will lead to privatization of indigenous genetic resources

News: Uruguay's Montevideo Portal reports municipal officials to present mandatory labeling for all transgenic products, establishing all foods that contain GMOs must be identified by label with letter T, compliance to begin six months after regulation takes effect

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: The West Australian reports second year of GM cotton trials is under way in the Ord Valley, in joint effort by CSIRO principal research agronomist Stephen Yeates and Ceres Farms, trials have been expanded from 3.7 to 16 hectares to compare results on a larger scale

[More Oceania items](#)

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Feb. 26, 2018
 Date: Monday, February 26, 2018 9:04:49 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology developments included news that an Indian state was meeting with producers to assess next year's Bt cotton seed availability. In Mexico, controversy over a draft biodiversity law spiked on news that the Chamber of Deputies was expected to review the legislation.

- *The Times of India* reported that the state of Maharashtra held a meeting of seed producers today to address concerns over the availability of Bt cotton seeds for the upcoming season. The article noted that seed producers had previously threatened not to produce and sell the Bt trait seeds if the state forced them to pay compensation to farmers for last year's Bt cotton failures. [See more](#)
- Activists and political leaders in Mexico spoke out against the proposed General Law on Biodiversity, anticipating the measure's approval by the Chamber of Deputies this week. Representatives from the National Action Party (PAN) and Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) said the current measure did not do enough to maintain protections on natural environments. Activists with Greenpeace, the Henrich Böll Foundation and others warned that the current law would allow international actors to exploit indigenous groups and national genetic resources. [See more](#)
- Iowa State University researchers, presenting at a local biotechnology conference, reported that Russian-backed media were part of a concerted effort to raise concerns over U.S. agricultural practices and establish Russian agriculture as an environmentally friendly alternative. Examining news stories on biotechnology, the researchers found that Russia-backed websites *Russia Today* and *Sputnik* were responsible for nearly 50 percent of negative GMO stories during the timeframe analyzed. *The Des Moines Register* highlighted the scientists' call for consumers to seek out credible sources for information on biotechnology. [See more](#)
- Brazil's Senate opened a public consultation period on proposed changes to the country's GMO labeling requirements, which would not require a GMO label on products where GM ingredients make up less than 1 percent of the total. Previous GMO requirements had not specified a minimum presence threshold, thus requiring a label on any GMO presence. The Senate's public response system as of Feb. 26 stood at nearly 2 to 1 against the changes. [See more](#)

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North America

[News: Des Moines Register reports on Iowa State University study linking anti-GMO articles to Russian sites RT and Sputnik, indicating that Russia is attempting to hurt U.S. ag interests by spreading material questioning GMO safety](#)

[Commentary: Steven Cerier writes for Genetic Literacy Project, examines ways in which anti-GMO movement is attempting to target new breeding techniques, points out similarities to conventional crops, explains dangers of rejecting them](#)

[Commentary: Food and Farm Discussion Lab posts column by University of Kentucky Extension professor arguing genetic engineering less disruptive to plants than conventional breeding, pointing to strategy of](#)

"knocking out" plant susceptibility genes that benefit microorganisms, using genome editing

News release: Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory promotes work by its scientists using genetic modification to triple number of grains produced by sorghum plant, generating more flowers and seeds by lowering level of key hormone, pointing way for strategy to increase yield of sorghum, other staple grain crops

News release: Cargill announces collaboration with Precision BioSciences to use its genome-editing technology to further reduce saturated fat levels in canola oil, with product intended for quick-service restaurants and food ingredients industries; Cargill aims to offer lowest fat levels on specialty oils market

Commentary: Canadian Council on Food Safety and Health predicts debate over genetic modification of food crops likely to intensify as U.S. FDA declares new GM rice from China to be safe, notes Huahui 1 rice engineered to resist insect pests, cites unpopularity of GMO crops with Chinese consumers

News: Successful Farming reports on Bayer's recent AgVocacy Forum where crop research and development head Adrian Percy voiced excitement at current ag investments, highlights developments in CRISPR, and confidence in Bayer-Monsanto deal

[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: Times of India reports on Maharashtra gov't convening of seed producers' associations meeting, to discuss availability of seeds for next growing season, Kalyani Goswami of National Seed Association of India argued Monsanto should pay for damage to Bt cotton

Commentary: M M Sharma of Vaish Associates, Advocates writes blog post for India's Economic Times, calls on Competition Commission of India (CCI) to block Bayer-Monsanto deal, highlights link between Monsanto cotton and farmer suicides

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Klaus Taschwer of Austria's Der Standard amplifies Italian meta-analysis demonstrating benefits and safety of GM corn, notes that while the researchers' conclusions clearly demonstrate superiority of GM corn, it will not change Austria's position

Commentary: Italy's "Doctor Wine," Daniele Cernilli, amplifies findings of Italian meta-analysis on safety of GM maize, anticipates responses from anti-GMO groups Slow Food and Coldiretti, criticizes pre-established conclusions and anti-scientific ideology

News: French health news outlet reports on Italian meta-analysis in Scientific Reports which found that GM maize is harmless in addition to having health and economic benefit of reduced mycotoxin content, provides summary of Seralini's rat study for context

Report: European Food Safety Authority publishes assessment of Monsanto herbicide-tolerant and insect-resistant GM maize variety for renewal of authorization, taking new data into consideration, EFSA finds no evidence of new hazards

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Editorial for Mexico's La Jornada amplifies various NGOs' concerns that Chamber of Deputies' Environment and Natural Resources Committee intends to approve General Biodiversity Law, in spite of violations of indigenous rights and threats to ecosystems

News: Mexico's 20 Minutos reports on National Action Party (PAN) and Party of the Democratic Revolution's (PRD) proposed changes to General Law of Biodiversity, arguing that it is currently "incompatible with the protection of the environment"

News: Agencia EFE reports an alliance of peasant, indigenous and civil organizations, and academics and Mexican citizens, launches alert against General Law of Biodiversity, arguing it will create a legal vacuum that can be exploited by biotech industry and others

Announcement: Brazil's Senate Agency calls for public comment on bill to exempt food labels from reporting GM content below one percent, highlights Sen. Vanessa Grazziotin's call for adherence to precautionary principle, and Sen. Cidinho Santos' comments about importance of establishing a tolerance

Commentary: Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolas de Hidalgo professor Leopoldo Chassin Ramirez writes for local news outlet, criticizes Francisco Bolivar Zapata's new book on benefits of biotech, wishes scientists would adopt a "less forceful position and give space to the precautionary principle"

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Commentary: Australian geneticist Fahad Ali writes for The Age, explains importance of embracing new gene editing technologies like CRISPR, dispels myths about using gene editing to create genetically "superior" humans

[More Oceania items](#)

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Caitrin.Martin@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - Feb. 26, 2018
 Date: Monday, February 26, 2018 6:12:30 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Caitrin,

The verdict is in: Italian researchers reviewed the usage of genetically modified corn over more than 20 years, concluding that the crop provides clear yield and health benefits over the non-GM alternative. The findings are highlighted on this week's newsletter in pieces by Paul McDivitt, Jakob Owens and Mark Lynas. [Newsweek](#) also published an article on the study.

Among other items, researchers Alison Van Eenennaam and Nina Fedoroff call for changes to U.S. biotechnology regulations, and officials from Bayer and CropLife International - respectively - warn about efforts in Europe to restrict neonics and endocrine-disrupting chemicals based on politics instead of science.

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In This Issue

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

Stakeholder Spotlight: Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa



Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa is [promoting](#) a meta-analysis of 50 case studies from 22 African countries that claims their view of technology-eschewing [agroecology](#) can help meet United Nations sustainable development goals. The NGO's

Stories Worth Sharing

Paul McDivitt: [Two decades of data prove GM corn increases yields and provides health benefits](#)

Jakob Owens: [Italian research should put rumors to rest about benefits of GM corn](#)

Alison Van Eenennaam/Nina Fedoroff: [Proven safe, biotechnology should be regulated "from common sense instead of fear"](#)

Mark Lynas: [Italian analysis gives "powerful scientific evidence" that GM maize is inherently safer and more productive](#)

David Zaruk: [Pesticides are a "valuable precautionary tool" in sustainable agriculture](#)

Howard Minigh: [If politics trump science on EU EDC regulations, it will have serious impact on trade and discourage innovation](#)

Ross Pomeroy: [Like papayas and bananas before, genetic engineering should be used to save coffee](#)

French magazine: [Activists skew facts in claiming EU pesticide authorization tests are linked to industry](#)

Bill Wirtz: [Tangled web of intermingled EU activist groups has "complicated relationship with the truth"](#)

study claims agroecology has benefits for yields, food security, nutrition, health, education, poverty reduction, environmental regeneration and climate resilience without the use of modern crop protection and biotechnology tools.

It's the latest move from the pan-African, anti-GMO activist group that has joined with the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements and GRAIN to block biofortified foods and campaign for agroecology instead.

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Martin Gruss: "No provably positive benefits for bees" from EU neonic ban

Lominda Afredaru: Prospects of gene editing in Uganda are exciting

William Reville: No "single unique culprit" for bee colony collapse, extensive use of honeybees could damage environment

University of Minnesota grad students ask U.S. government to update biotechnology regulations to allow more efficient research

Geoffrey Kabat: Campaigns against glyphosate, coffee, BPA take isolated findings out of scientific context to scare the public

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What's Trending?

European Parliament pressured to approve anti-neonic resolution / EFSA to release neonic risk assessments

Mexican Academy of Sciences Biotechnology Committee member's new book details benefits of GMOs

Monsanto subpoenas documents from NGO Avaaz about glyphosate, IARC

Generations Futures report claims 75 percent of French produce is contaminated with pesticides

Quebec government to restrict usage of neonics, atrazine, chlorpyrifos

Calendar highlights

February 27	February 28	February 28
Academie Royale de Belgique lecture on EDCs	Greens-led discussion on modern agriculture challenges (Germany)	European Food Safety Authority releases neonic risk assessments
March 3	March 5-7	March 5-9
University of California-Davis bee symposium	World Congress on Plant Biotechnology and Agriculture (Paris)	CBD Workshop on Detection and Identification of Living Modified Organisms for Francophone Africa

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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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Feb. 23-25, 2018
 Date: Sunday, February 25, 2018 10:58:45 PM

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Global biotechnology developments over the weekend included Italy's environmental ministry holding a conference on new breeding techniques. A book touting biotech crops was released in Mexico, receiving widespread attention.

- Several Italian ministries, the National Committee for Biosafety, Biotechnology and Life Sciences and Rome's Ministry of the Environment hosted a conference on new breeding techniques in Rome on Thursday. The Ministry of the Environment announced the event "represented a moment of fruitful exchange between the scientific community, administrations and stakeholders" on the European Union's regulatory framework. **See more**
- Mexican news sites widely reported the release of Francisco Bolivar Zapata's book that advocates the use of GM crops. One columnist wrote that while public opinion is polarized, GM crops are safe "beyond a reasonable doubt." He also said the idea that GMOs threaten native corn has been disproven since the indigenous crops have been grown alongside hybrid corn since the 1960s. **See more**

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North America

Commentary: Los Angeles news source op-ed discusses "abusive" California Clean Environment Initiative, notes proposed ballot measure's opposition to GM food, attempt to create new class of legal violations called "toxic trespass," which would occur when pollen of GMOs impinged on another's land, air or water

News: Reuters reports Mexico bought 10 times more corn from Brazil in 2017 than previous year amid concern NAFTA talks could disrupt U.S. supplies; U.S. farmers, food processors, grain traders trying to protect more than \$19 billion in sales to Mexican buyers of corn, soybeans, dairy, poultry

Commentary: Ross Pomeroy of Real Clear Science supports genetic modification of coffee to make it more resistant to coffee rust, which is worsening with climate change, highlights success of GM papaya in Hawaii, worries about consumer opposition

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science writer says Italian GMO meta-analysis adds to research showing GM crops boost yields, highlights GMOs on the market and in development that deliver benefits to farmers, environment consumers

Commentary: Zoe Williams of The Guardian writes critical review of Nassim Nicholas Taleb's latest book, "Skin in the Game," points out flawed logic in section hypothesizing that one family member switching to non-GMO food will impact the whole neighborhood

News: The Cornell Daily Sun reports a Cornell-led project awarded \$35 million to research and promote cassava use in sub-Saharan Africa by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the U.K. government; funding to support the Next Generation Cassava Breeding Project for five years in its second phase

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: African news site reports civil society groups hold press briefing to oppose GMOs, ask to consider indigenous seeds over GM seed; activist claims Ugandan biosafety bill doesn't have needed safeguards

Commentary: Patrick Jaramogi of Uganda's The Investigator examines "unknown dirty secrets" about GMOs, claims Monsanto spent millions of dollars to get Uganda's biosafety bill passed, amplifies claims about GMOs by Jeffrey Smith

News: African news source details fall armyworm's impact in Zaka corn output, emphasizing pests' resistance to chemicals

News: Tanzania's Daily News reports funding from Gates Foundation to help Cornell University expand international efforts to deliver improved cassava varieties to farmers in sub-Saharan Africa; cassava genomic information now publicly accessible on open database, researchers worldwide comparing results

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: Natural News claims US FDA approves China's GM rice without independent testing, notes China will not commercialize crop at home, says Seralini rat study showed real effects of GM crops

Commentary: Editorial in India's Financial Express notes problems of weed resistance and pink bollworm attack associated with spread of illegal Bt cotton are a result of gov't policies against Monsanto, and are in spite of Monsanto's warnings

Commentary: Writing for Countercurrents, anti-violence activist Robert Burrowes writes about numerous types of pollution, including agricultural runoff in oceans, dangers of pesticides, GMOs to human health, environment

News: Pakistan Today reports lack of understanding about agricultural technology impeding adoption of new advances in field; chairman of Pakistan Agriculture Research Council says media needs to carry pro-technology message to farmers, policymakers

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Vermont's Rutland Herald reports on University of Vermont researcher Eric von Wettberg's work using traditional breeding methods to develop more stress-resistant chickpeas, he notes that India wants to avoid use of GM chickpeas, as its main export market for them is Europe

Commentary: Nico Catalano of Italy's Il Sud Est criticizes study demonstrating benefits and safety of GM corn, argues it ignores larger questions of agroindustry control of the food system, monocultures, and widespread pesticide use associated with Green Revolution

Commentary: France MEP reaffirms France's National Front opposition EU-Mercosur trade deal, claiming it is death to country's ag model, threatens farmer viability, lowers EU food standards

Commentary: U.K. grocery news site columnist amplifies BBC program on divide over GM animals, noting GMO opposition has led AquaBounty to not label GM salmon out of fear customers would be unfairly attacked

Commentary: Italy environmental ministry conference on NBTS it co-organized with country's biosafety committee represented productive exchange between science community, administration, NGOs on EU framework

News: Italy's Edmund Mach Foundation announces its presentation of research on new genetic improvement techniques applied to apple trees, with goal of making the fruit more disease-resistant,

thereby reducing chemical inputs

News release: Italy's Council for research in agriculture and analysis of the agrarian economy (CREA) announces meeting on February 21 to discuss use of modern biotech, including new breeding techniques, for producing more food in a sustainable way

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Event: Nicaraguan NGO Alliance Seeds of Identity announces Feb. 20 forum to raise awareness of GMOs' "risk for agriculture" in the country; claims transgenics threaten human health, the environment, family farming

News: Brazilian news agency reports on progress of bill in National Congress that opponents say would weaken GM controls, including GM labeling requirements; Greenpeace official claims scientific community has not reached consensus on safety of GMOs for human health and environment

News: Reuters reports Mexico bought 10 times more corn from Brazil in 2017 than previous year amid concern NAFTA talks could disrupt U.S. supplies; U.S. farmers, food processors, grain traders trying to protect more than \$19 billion in sales to Mexican buyers of corn, soybeans, dairy, poultry

News: Agencia EFE reports on Mexican Academy of Sciences Biotechnology Committee member Francisco Bolivar Zapata's new book on benefits of GMOs, at a recent presentation of the book, he pointed to 20 years of safe use

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News release: GE-Free NZ announces it is considering legal appeal to reverse decision on Golden Rice approval by FSANZ and Food Safety minister; claims studies done by Dow and Syngenta are unpublished, unreliable

Commentary: Friends of the Earth (FOE) says Australia's Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation and University of Adelaide scientists are part of US military funded global network researching gene drives, and intend to use technique against invasive rodents; FOE warns of "potentially catastrophic ecological consequences"

Commentary: University of Sydney's Isobel Ronai and Macquarie University postdoctoral research fellow Kate Lynch write for The Conversation, they argue proposed changes to Australia's biotech regulations will increase oversight of new technologies like CRISPR

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Today's global biotechnology developments included reports that French farming groups staged several protests against a proposed trade deal between the EU and Mercosur countries. Activists in Europe, Australia and Asia protested the Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) approval of a genetically modified rice with increased vitamin A content.

- French news outlets reported that farmers' groups were protesting a proposed EU-Mercosur trade deal, following the Tuesday resumption of negotiations in Asuncion, Paraguay. The protests, which took place in several agricultural towns, highlighted farmers' warnings that competition from these countries would undermine French efforts to create a high-quality, environmentally friendly farming sector. Separately, European grains and sugar trade groups warned the deal would promote unfair competition for European growers. **See more**
- The FSANZ approval of foods derived from genetically modified "Golden Rice" was published in the country's Gazette, marking the decision's official start date. Apparently anticipating this publication, activist groups MASIPAG, GRAIN and the Stop Golden Rice! Network criticized the approval. The groups cited an analysis from Testbiotech, which claimed that consumers would need to eat unrealistic quantities of rice to gain nutritional benefits. **See more**

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North America

News: Iowa newspaper reports on speech by Monsanto's Robert T. Fraley, known as "father of agricultural biotechnology," at local ag conference; Fraley says Monsanto's research facilities in Iowa part of world's most sophisticated gene sequencing and mapping, predicts GE tools will transform ag

News: Legal site reports New York federal judge dismisses GMO labeling class action suit against Dannon Company for labeling its products "natural"; notes current federal law does not require that end products from animals fed with GMO feed be labeled as "GMO"

News: Business Insider reports U.S. Cattlemen's Association files petition with USDA arguing meat substitutes grown in labs using animal cells shouldn't be labeled as "meat" because such products don't come from animals, warning that labeling cultured products as "meat" would confuse consumers

Campaign: U.S. Right to Know solicits donations to fund investigations into food and chemical companies, highlights its assessments against Monsanto's alleged involvement in Henry Miller's recent Newsweek piece, and The Atlantic's partnership with DowDuPont

News release: Vigilance OGM promotes its participation in launch of "Modified" documentary, noting films debut Feb. 27, attacks Canadian government's inaction, objection to GMO labeling

News release: Avaaz responds to 168-page subpoena demanding all communications regarding Monsanto or glyphosate, Avaaz Deputy Director Emma Ruby-Sachs accuses Monsanto of corporate bullying and violating Avaaz's First Amendment rights

Commentary: EcoWatch report highlights Monsanto's subpoena of Avaaz communications regarding glyphosate; Avaaz expresses concern scope of subpoena would include names, email addresses of anti-Monsanto petitioners

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Writing for Global Farmer Network, Zimbabwe farmer says recent attendance at FAO meeting revealed need for farmers to learn about new technologies, attend events to lobby for ag tech/GMOs to move from lab to the field

News: Zimbabwe's Financial Gazette reports Oil Expressers Association chairman, Busisa Moyo, calls on gov't to review its ban on GM soybean production, noting import costs could be significantly reduced by adopting GM soy in local production

Commentary: Ugandan science journalist Lominda Afedraru writes for Genetic Literacy Project, recounts her recent visit to National Agriculture Crops Resources Research Institute in Namulonge, highlights exciting African advances in gene editing research

News: Black Star News reports on Eastern and Southern Africa Small Scale Farmers Forum (ESAFF)-Uganda chair Mario Munguaciel's call on Ugandan President Museveni not to sign the biosafety bill, emphasizing importance of Ugandan control of seeds

Commentary: Food Tank reports on ongoing fall armyworm threat in Africa, highlighting FAO's most recent early warning bulletin, FAO is implementing technical cooperation projects in several countries, focus areas include eliminating highly hazardous pesticides

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science blogs about work at Donald Danforth Plant Science Center in St. Louis, African research facilities to genetically engineer cassava to resist two viral diseases common in Africa, as well as to enhance nutritional value of cassava

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: India's Financial Express reports on U.S. efforts to increase ag exports to India, U.S. Agriculture Under Secretary Ted McKinney called on India to relax its rules on imports of GM crop-based products, he pointed to success of GM cotton in India

News: India's Economic Times reports on USDA under-secretary, Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs Ted McKinney's recent promotion of allowing imports of U.S. GM soybean meal, he highlighted benefits of biotech, noting importance of GM cotton for India

News: Indian news site reports West Bengal firm Keventer Agro Ltd. to provide high-yielding, GE banana tree saplings to farmers in Bihar

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News release: European Confederation of the Maize Production reasserts opposition to any corn or ethanol concessions in EU-Mercosur trade talks, says Brazil, Argentina already have competitive advantage to use GMOs, atrazine, neonics that European farmers are denied

News: French news site reports farmers demonstrate in Bar-le-Duc against possible trade deal between EU and Mercosur countries, assert deal would bring unfair competition from South American farmers that use atrazine, GMOs, hormones in beef

News: Franceinfo reports on Vandana Shiva's recent call for an ecological revolution against GMOs while

promoting her new book in Marseille, "The Virtuous Circle," co-written with Nicolas Hulot, she also accused Monsanto, Bayer and Syngenta of ecological crimes

Announcement: EU Parliament Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety issues motion for resolution rejecting EU Commission draft decision for placing on the market a Dow AgroSciences GM maize variety, noting concerns about glufosinate and Bt toxin

Announcement: EU Parliament Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety issues motion for resolution rejecting EU Commission draft decision for placing on the market a Monsanto stacked-trait GM maize variety, noting concerns about glyphosate and Bt toxin

Announcement: Rothamsted Research announces field trial for GM camelina; crop will produce omega-3 normally found only in fish oil, also will have enhanced plant architecture, photosynthesis capability

Interview: European Seed interviews Teresa Babuscio, Secretary General of grain and cereal trade association COCERAL, on debate surrounding products of new breeding techniques, she notes regulating them as GMOs would keep smaller companies out

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Reuters reports on confirmation by farmers' group Argentine Rural Society and the Argentine Seed Producers Association, which represents Monsanto, of agreement that farmers will pay perpetual royalties to replant GM seeds, ending a long dispute

News: Mexican news site examines risks of transgenic and gene-edited foods, quotes Center for Research and Advanced Studies professor who confirms risks are there, but end products are thoroughly studied, found risk-free, and no health hazards reported in 20 years

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Announcement: Food Standards Australia New Zealand announces publication of Amendment 177 to Commonwealth of Australia Gazette, making Food Standards variations for foods derived from Provitamin A GM rice and GM omega-3 canola

News release: GRAIN and Stop Golden Rice! Network issue call for solidarity against Golden Rice commercialization in Bangladesh and the Philippines, highlighting several organizations' opposition to Food Standards Australia New Zealand's approval

Commentary: Prime Sarmiento of Science and Development Network examines Testbiotech report claiming that Food Standards Australia New Zealand approval of Golden Rice does not sufficiently prove its safety, highlights FSANZ's previous assurances

News: Successful Farming reports on Australian Office of Gene Technology Regulator's proposal to deregulate products of gene editing, Clovis Palmer of Burnet Institute in Melbourne argues the technology is still in its infancy and needs heavy scrutiny

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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 NGO promotion of a lawsuit asking the Mexican government to more strictly enforce biosafety procedures. In France, *Le Monde* warned that the country's GMO ban had been compromised by a legal loophole. An Italian study on GM maize safety continued to generate widespread response.

- Advocacy groups organized under Unidos Por la Selva Maya continued to criticize weak federal enforcement of biosafety measures, pointing to the widespread use of illegal GM soy in the Yucatan Peninsula. Speaking with *Regeneracion*, lawyers with the campaign argued that investigators should punish farmers and should consider the culpability of seed developers and sellers. The interview followed Greenpeace's Friday announcement that it had filed a lawsuit demanding tighter enforcement of a court-ordered GMO moratorium. **See more**
- French newspaper *Le Monde* reported on the fall 2017 discovery of genetically modified ingredients in some animal feeds, claiming that the discovery had caused a "panic" in tracing and disposing of the illegal products. Reporter Stéphane Mandard summarized the timeline of the discovery, noting that the European Commission was currently arbitrating a legal disagreement over whether GM feed additives manufactured in Europe for sale outside the EU should fall under existing GMO regulations. **See more**
- International stakeholders continued to respond to a European meta-analysis affirming the safety of GM maize. Agricultural researchers with the University of Milan blogged optimistically about widespread media coverage of the study, though they added that political change seemed unlikely. In the U.S., technology and science sites *Futurism* and *Discover* reported that the analysis adds to the weight of evidence on GMO safety. **See more**

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North America

Commentary: Futurism's Jakob Owens amplifies recent Italian study in Scientific Reports demonstrating safety and other benefits of GM corn, notes while some questions may still be raised about use of GMOs in agriculture, this study puts some serious concerns to rest

Commentary: Canadian ag news outlet editor says demand for sustainable ag lends to costs and opportunities for farmers, notes efforts inside and outside ag to redefine sustainability as non-GMO poses challenge for farmers

News: Agri-Pulse feature highlights cross-stakeholder innovation in precision breeding market, noting lack of U.S. federal R&D investment, lower cost of commercialization opens door for bigger role for start-ups

Commentary: North America grain marketplace website co-founder says China decision to reject GMO shipments could be response to U.S. tariffs on China exports and wariness of GMOs; suggests growers consider tapping market for non-GMO

Video: Food science professor, former EPA advisor tell Alliance for Food and Farming chair

communication on conventional-organic debate should not undermine healthfulness, safety of conventional produce

Commentary: Civil Eats' Twilight Greenaway profiles Iowa organic farmer Ron Rosmann, Rosmann explained impact of biotech and Roundup on groundwater contamination, highlights ongoing nitrogen and phosphorous pollution

[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: India's Outlook reports on Union minister Parshottam Rupala's promotion of modern biotech at conference organized by Karunya University, pointing to benefits of increased crop yields, improved nutrition, and reduced pesticide use

News: The Hindu BusinessLine reports on recent National Banana Festival in Thiruvananthapuram, initiatives to boost genetic engineering, molecular breeding and other aspects for biotic and abiotic stress management were discussed

Commentary: Salil Siriwat of Tilleke & Gibbins law firm provides analysis of Thai Ag Ministry's draft bill to update the Plant Variety Protection Act, to bring Thai law into compliance with UPOV 1991, notes Thai Farmers Association will likely review it

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Le Monde's Stephane Mandard argues distribution of animal feed made with illegal GM biomass demonstrates a loophole in EU legislation, as well as dysfunction in national and EU supervisory authorities, argues safety has not been established

News: Le Figaro reports on Le Monde story that illegal GMOs were found in animal feed, quotes Greenpeace France representative who criticized lack of food traceability

News: Italy's Corriere Della Sera reports on recent provincial assembly in Brescia, where Provincial Farmers Union (Upa) president Giovanni Garbelli called for abandoning populism and following path of science with regards to genetic engineering

Commentary: University of Milan-Disaa Ag History Professor Luigi Mariani and agronomist Alberto Guidorzi write for Italian blog, Agrarian Sciences, welcoming findings of Italian meta-analysis on GMO safety in Scientific Reports

News: Italian news outlet reports on AgriEthos Agri-Food System Research Center President Luigi Cerciello Renna's call for caution around GMOs, following Scientific Reports study on GMO safety, warning against being too influenced by a study based on statistics

Announcement: Academy of Sciences Switzerland's Genetic Research Forum announces new video and information on its Synthetic Biology topic portal, with focus on gene drives, it summarizes how gene drives work, potential applications, and ethical questions raised

Commentary: Niels Louwaars of Plantum writes for European Seed, examines Dutch parliament's position that products of cisgenesis and CRISPR-Cas9 should not be regulated as GMOs, notes breeding sector is confident it will help steer the EU regulatory debate

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Mexico's Regeneracion reports on Colectivo Maya de los Chenes attorney Nayeli Ram rez's accusation that the biosecurity system is ineffective, citing planting of over 23,000 hectares of GM soybeans in the Yucatan Peninsula without permits

News release: Mexican NGO Semillas De Vida (Seeds of Life) announces deputies from Commission of Indigenous Affairs and Climate Change will issue opinion on General Law on Biodiversity, hopes they will listen to people affected by the legislation

News: Germany's Top Agrar reports on Austrian beet farming associations' concerns that Mercosur free trade agreement will flood the EU market with GM sugar from Brazil, endangering sustainable European sugar beet production

More Latin America items

Oceania

Commentary: Sustainable Pulse amplifies several NGOs' opposition to Food Standards Australia New Zealand's approval of Golden Rice for human consumption, highlights statements from Testbiotech, MADGE, GeneEthics and Food Sovereignty Alliance

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 the international screening of a documentary criticizing agribusiness investments in Argentina. Greenpeace criticized the role of conservative think tanks in developing a "shadow" free-trade deal between the U.S. and Britain.

- News outlets in Europe and South America highlighted the documentary "Viaje hacia los pueblos fumigados" (Journey to the Fumigated Peoples) in which director Fernando "Pino" Solanas claims Argentina's agricultural industry exposes local farmers to significant health problems. The film is being shown at the Berlin International Film Festival. Reviews in *Deutsche Welle* and the *Hollywood Reporter* specifically highlighted the role of GM soy in the documentary. [See more](#)
- Greenpeace issued a report claiming that U.K. and U.S. think tanks were conducting "shadow negotiations" in order to provide policymakers with a framework for a proposed free-trade deal. The announcement was based on an accidentally published policy document compiled by the U.K. think tank Initiative for Free Trade. The document noted that several think tanks - including the Cato Institute, Heritage Foundation, Competitive Enterprise Institute, Institute of Economic Affairs and Civitas - had confirmed their participation.. [See more](#)
- Activists in Nicaragua launched the umbrella campaign Alianza Semillas de Identidad, highlighting the importance of native seed varieties and rejecting the potential use of transgenic varieties. Coordinating with the new campaign, *La Prensa* published the first articles in a projected six-part series on peasant agriculture and the need for agroecological food systems. [See more](#)
- U.S. agricultural news outlets amplified a Feb. 2 open letter from University of Minnesota graduate students who called on lawmakers to relax restrictions on using genetic modification for non-food products such as fiber and fuel. The students pointed out that current regulations require significant financial investments, limiting the possibilities for academic and non-commercial contributors to develop new crop technologies and varieties. [See more](#)

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North America

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project's Paul McDivitt argues 21 years of data confirm GMO corn increases crop yields, provides substantial health benefits, rebuts anti-GMO claims from organic food advocates and environmentalists, cites new Italian meta-analysis comparing GMO corn to conventional varieties

Commentary: Writing for Cornell Alliance for Science, Mark Lynas says Italian meta-analysis finding GE corn improves yield, public health provides powerful scientific evidence that GE maize is safer than non-GE alternatives

News: Ag news site reports Italian researchers publish analysis finding GM corn increases yields, improves health compared to non-GE varieties, say results should move conversation on GM health concerns

News: AGDAILY reports Minnesota grad students letter asks U.S. representatives to deregulate GM crop approval process, argue process is too expensive, long for anyone besides big corporations

Commentary: Alison Van Eenennaam and Nina Fedoroff write for Des Moines Register, they point out flaws in current biotech regulation, which they note treats all new biotech products as hazardous, in spite of consensus on safety, call for product-based regulation

Commentary: Agweek runs op-ed by The Heartland Institute's Mischa Popoff arguing idea of GMO "contamination" of organic crops purely political, insisting organic activists want to sideline agricultural genetic engineering; calls on activists to stop creating controversy

Commentary: Convention on Biological Diversity thirteenth newsletter examines Joint Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, features articles promoting how partnership between different sectors promotes transparency, public participation in GMO decision-making

More North America items

Africa

News: Nigeria's New Telegraph reports on Open Forum on Agricultural Biotechnology Country Coordinator, Rose Gidado's warning that Nigeria could lose \$2 billion annually and its global position if it fails to commercialize GM crops undergoing field trials

News: Kenya's Daily Nation reports farmers fighting armyworm may get relief from Bt seeds that better resist worms, drought being developed by Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science blogs about Ugandan university students being stopped by police while marching to Parliament to protest proposed changes to nation's biosafety law; students say they fear some lawmakers want to impose strong penalties on scientists whose work is regulated by law

More Africa items

Asia

News: The Philippines' Business Mirror reports on Philippine Fiber Development Authority's (PhilFida) plans to plant at least 660 hectares of Bt cotton seeds from India this year, PhilFida's Edison RiÃ±en pointed to yield advantage and reduced pesticide use

News: Indian news outlet reports on upcoming agri-summit at Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University on Feb. 23, Ag minister Om Prakash Dhankar noted topics will include crop diversification, machinery in climate smart agriculture and transgenic crops

News: Vietnamese news source reports long-term effects of GM food on human body and environment not researched systematically, remains unknown, points out many GM ag products available in United States, claims GE technology makes it easier to use pesticides, which have cumulative effect on humans

More Asia items

Europe

News: Greenpeace's Unearthed site reports accidentally published documents show secret plans by trans-Atlantic network of conservative think tanks to influence U.S.-U.K. trade negotiations, call for United Kingdom to shift away from EU's precautionary principle, clearing way for U.S. beef imports

Report: Activists post accidentally released document from U.K. think tank Initiative for Free Trade outlining shadow trade talks with United States and "ideal" Free Trade Agreement, claiming potential savings for U.K. consumers of agricultural produce, new market for U.S. beef producers

News: Deutsche Welle reports on screening of Argentine filmmaker Pino Solanas' new documentary, "Trip to the fumigated villages," at Berlinale film festival, the film depicts negative environmental and

health impacts of GM crops and associated pesticides

Announcement: Italy's Libertarian Movement posts letter from its CEO Giorgio Fidenato sent to government institutions noting study by independent scientists has confirmed no evidence GMO maize is harmful, clarifying he will sow biotech maize on his land in spring

Commentary: Slow Food's Gaetano Pascale reacts to recent Italian study demonstrating GMO safety, argues that GMOs threaten food sovereignty by promoting an agro-industrial model that seeks to control all aspects of a farmer's work

News release: The Greens - European Free Alliance list five reasons Bayer-Monsanto merger should be rejected, claiming it's bad for farmers, food diversity, the planet and human health, urge supporters to sign petition opposing merger

Announcement: U.K. Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs calls for comment on any environmental risks of proposed release of GM camelina variety developed by Rothamsted Research, comments must be received by April 8, 2018

Commentary: Inf'OGM criticizes Polish MPs for passing amendment to GMO law allowing cultivation in certain areas, moving bill to Senate, says MP pledge to create GMO register is a 'doubtful justification'

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Argentina's Pagina 12 reports on recent screening of Pino Solanas' new documentary at Berlinale film festival, in a post-screening discussion, Solanas reiterated his claim that "science is also contaminated," voiced concern about Bayer's acquisition of Monsanto

Commentary: Nicaragua's La Prensa runs op-ed by NGO Alliance Seeds of Identity warning transgenic crops amount to war against ancestral Creole seeds, suggesting transnational companies could privatize seeds of Meso-American peoples

Campaign: Biodiversity Alliance petition lists 12 reasons to oppose Mercosur EU Free Trade Agreement, citing threats to food sovereignty, to be presented at Feb. 26 negotiation meeting in Paraguay

Audio: Friends of the Earth Latin America radio station speaks with Ecos del Saladillo member who promotes upcoming meeting of Fumigated Peoples (March 17-18), denounces heavy chemical use in ag, damage from agribusiness

Commentary: Elizabeth Bravo of Accion Ecologica writes for February issue of GRAIN's Biodiversidad magazine, criticizes WTO's Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, claims it is imposed on peasant growers, who operate on a smaller-scale

Commentary: Luis Miguel Barbosa of Mexico's El Sol De Puebla, calls for defense of food and nutrition sovereignty, believes it is necessary for Puebla to become a GM-free state

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Food Navigator reports on Food Standards Australia New Zealand's consultation paper on regulating products of new breeding techniques, FSANZ CEO Mark Booth noted goal of the review is to consider a broad range of issues before changing the code

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 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - Feb. 19, 2018
 Date: Monday, February 19, 2018 4:15:44 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

This week's Favorable Outcomes newsletter features a *Real Clear Science* article by Ross Pomeroy that examines how just about anyone involved in the debate over food and agriculture policies can play the "shill" card and claim that anyone with an opposing viewpoint must have a conflict of interest. There's also a piece from Alex Berezow for the American Council on Science and Health that explains the unfair notion that anyone who works for industry must be dishonest.

We also highlight Mary Mangan's piece for Biofortified in which she lays out the false claims in "Whitewash," the book written by U.S. Right to Know activist and organic industry ally Carey Gillam.

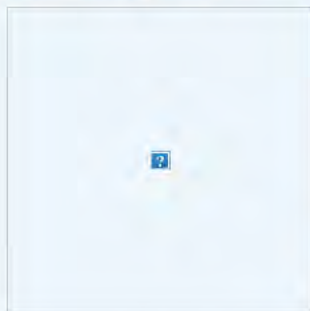
To view items on this newsletter, log in on the [Bonus Eventus Community](#) page. To create an account, fill out the Request Membership form on the front page of the site. To share articles, click on the Twitter icon.

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

In This Issue

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

Stakeholder Spotlight: Zen Honeycutt



Zen Honeycutt runs Moms Across America and lobbies with fellow activists Jeffrey Smith, Elena Sharoykina and Pamm Larry against GMOs, vaccines and pesticides around the globe. She is a co-litigant with the Organic Consumers Association suing General Mills and alleging products with the word "nature"

Stories Worth Sharing

[Mary Mangan: Activist Carey Gillam's book should be titled "Hogwash" due to misinformation on glyphosate, IARC](#)

[Ross Pomeroy: Shill argument can be made against organic supporters and GMO advocates, but science is on the side of Team GMO](#)

[Adenle Ademola: Europeans must "stop playing fear-based politics" on GMO technology that can feed hungry Africans](#)

[David Zilberman: Agriculture key to global economic development; science-based regulations on biotechnology needed](#)

[Man Li: Research shows climate change could impact Chinese grain production; drought-tolerant crops could help](#)

[Paul McDivitt: Golden Rice moving closer to approval in Bangladesh and the Philippines as activists base opposition on old data](#)

[Rebecca Nesbit and Gia Aradottir: European neonic ban could have "unintended consequences," leaving agriculture and insects worse](#)

[Ruth Kava: Research into how genetic engineering could resolve genetic diversity issues should be accelerated](#)

[Michelle Miller: Technology providing agricultural solutions around the world](#)

in them are misleading due to pesticide residues and GMOs.

LEARN MORE about Honeycutt

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PROFILES

Steven E. Cerier: Improved trees and grass among genetic engineering projects on hold due to anti-GMO backlash

Alex Berezow: Unreasonable to claim that honest people don't work for industry

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BONUS EVENTUS MONITORING

What's Trending?

U.S. Agency for International Development partners with Zimbabwe farmers in bid to stop spread of amyworms

Glyphosate opponent Eric Andrieu seen as potential chair of European Parliament committee examining pesticide review process

Environmental NGOs promote re-introduction of U.S. bill proposing to ban neonics

Italian meta-analysis finds GM maize improves yields with no evidence of health risks

Latest USDA report finds 99.5 percent of produce falls well below pesticide safety standards

Calendar highlights

February 20	February 22	February 24
Stockholm Chemicals Groups film screening - "Endocrination"	Tyrone Hayes lecture at University of Michigan	Martinique conference on pollution and EDCs
February 26-28	February 26-27	February 28
Microbiome AgBioTech Summit 2018	AsiaHub Summit USA	European Food Safety Authority releases neonic risk assessments

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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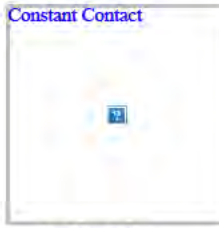
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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Feb. 16-18, 2018
 Date: Sunday, February 18, 2018 10:48:49 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Global biotechnology developments over the weekend included continued commentary in Italy regarding University of Pisa study findings that GM is safe. The Center for Studies for Change in the Mexican Field released its study on GMOs in Mexico. Syngenta reached a settlement with Archer Daniels Midland in a lawsuit regarding release of its GM corn variety before its approval by China.

- Stakeholders in Italy continued expressing opinions regarding the University of Pisa's study that found GM corn is safe to eat. Officials from the Coscioni agricultural association said the findings should spur a revision to Italy's GM cultivation ban, and at a minimum should allow GM corn planting. Opponents such as officials from the Coldiretti ag association argued Italy still should reject GMOs to maintain biodiversity and to protect its "Made in Italy" brand. **See more**
- Mexican news sites reported CECCAM released its study, "Thirty Years of Transgenics in Mexico." *La Jornada* reported that among the study's claims were that corporations seek to seize territory and bypass legislation in protected areas. *La Opinion* noted the study pointed out that while Bayer holds a large number of GMO permits in Mexico, Germany bans honey from the country due to contamination from GMOs. **See more**
- *Reuters* and other news media reported Syngenta reached a settlement with ADM over a lawsuit regarding Syngenta's release of its Agrisure Viptera variety of GM corn before it was approved for import by China. Cargill's lawsuit on the same incident still is active. **See more**

Due to the President's Day holiday, your next Global Biotech Snapshot will be sent on Tuesday, Feb. 20. 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: [The Guardian says right-wing groups plan to scrap EU safety standards on food, drugs in free trade agreement](#)

News: [CBC reports on Arctic apple creator Neal Carter's plans for "aggressive expansion" following positive U.S. test run, expecting to have over 1,200 hectares planted in the U.S. by 2022, although Canadian approval may take longer](#)

News: [Capital Press reports on Oregon State University forest biotech professor Steve Strauss' work with CRISPR, highlights work to use CRISPR to replace gene sequences rather than just to knock-out genes, Strauss points to public acceptance as a challenge](#)

News: [Agri-Pulse reports on challenges in gaining consumer acceptance of gene editing, highlights New Yorker science writer Michael Specter's emphasis on importance of connecting with consumers on things they care about, highlights power of misinformation](#)

Commentary: [CounterPunch runs Colin Todhunter piece updating Steven Druker's 2015 challenge to U.K.'s Royal Society to justify its support of GM crops, arguing group has misrepresented case for GMOs,](#)

engaged in disinformation campaign; piece also amplifies similar criticisms by environmentalist Rosemary Mason

Commentary: Nick Meyer of March Against Monsanto amplifies GMWatch's analysis of claims that European Food Safety Authority approved Monsanto corn while ignoring links to kidney disease and bladder stones in lab rats, argues it adds to evidence of health risks

Commentary: Connor McKoy of Biotechnology Innovation Organization amplifies Agri-Pulse article on consumer acceptance of gene editing, notes consumer perceptions begin to change when they understand benefits of biotech for their own health

More North America items

Africa

Commentary: Taiwo Hassan of Nigeria's New Telegraph examines feud between National Biosafety Management Agency and Health of Mother Earth Foundation over introducing GMOs in Nigeria, notes anti-GMO activists questions concern safety of the environment and food

News: The Guardian (Nigeria) reports on recent Africa Science, Technology and Innovation Forum in Cairo, Egypt, where African Development Bank (AfDB) President Akinwumi Adesina noted Africa cannot afford to be left behind with advancing technologies like biotech

News: Kenyan news site reports farmers fear growing threat of fall armyworm's impact on corn yields; researchers say Bt and water-efficient maize resist the pest

Study: South African extension agents examine farmers' understanding of GM maize varieties, find misunderstandings about insecticide use and stewardship requirements

More Africa items

Asia

News: Bangkok Post reports Netherlands-based East-West Seed using CRISPR technology in effort to customize seed for Thailand, with potential of reducing seed production prices by factor of 10 within next 10 years, closing efficiency gap between Thai producers and Western counterparts

News: Iranian news sources report government drops effort to ban transgenic crops, commission gives approval for GMO imports; notes research on their development has sparked controversies in recent years, with opponents objecting on grounds of environmental concerns, food safety

Commentary: Shrikrishna Umrikar writes for India's Swarajya magazine, argues farmers and gov't are to blame for Bt cotton failures, notes farmers failed to plant sufficient refuge areas, calls on gov't to give farmers access to new technologies and invite Monsanto in

Study: Chinese, US researchers examine Chinese consumer acceptance of GM rice, find willingness to pay decreases significantly for GM varieties

More Asia items

Europe

News: Forbes Italia reports first study carried out in Italy that offers evidence about GM maize shows positive results, with higher yields, greater resistance to insects compared to conventional maize; study in Scientific Reports finds GMO maize not dangerous for environment or human health

News: Netherlands-based environmental news site reports Bangladesh Rice Research Institute researchers working to develop salt-resistant, GM crops as seawater levels rise due to climate change

News: Italian news site reports Slow Food's Carlo Petrini reacts with relief to University of Pisa study

showing GMOs to be safe, but says GM crops still cause biodiversity loss

News: Italian news site reports agriculture association Confagricoltura officials maintain that rejecting GMOs is wrong; says unjustified radicalization against scientific thought and research will mean missed opportunities, economic losses for Italy

News: U.K.-based farming news site notes that upon leaving EU, U.K. will need to set its own biotech policies, says GMOs can be green but they are not perceived that way, and says even if U.K. does not cultivate GM crops, they must be taken into account for trade

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News release: Greenpeace Mexico announces filing of legal complaint along with Mayan communities, calling for investigation and sanctions on those who grow GMOs in the Yucatan Peninsula, pointing to lack of consultation with Mayan communities

News: Argentine news site notes Brazilian trial questions Monsanto's Intacta patent, questions if outcome could impact Argentina

Commentary: Costa Rican NGO Federacion Ecologista praises ecologist Dr. Jaime Garc a's presentation of over 32,000 signatures in favor of GMO food labeling to the authorities, emphasizing consumers' right to know

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Commentary: Elizabeth Farrelly writes for Sydney Morning Herald, voices concerns about Australia's Gene Technology Regulator, Raj Bhula's recommendation for deregulation of products of gene editing, warns about potential negative impacts on human genome

News: Australian livestock news source reports supporters of ban on growing GM crops in South Australia say next step since it has been extended until 2025 is to change labeling laws so consumers can identify products with GM ingredients; agriculture minister cites importance of ban to state's farmers, market

[More Oceania items](#)

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

Events calendar

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 Date: Thursday, February 15, 2018 9:04:42 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 a new meta-analysis from Italian researchers affirming the safety of GM maize currently on the market. Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) announced a new public consultation on products of gene editing.

- Italian researchers with the University of Pisa and Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna published a new meta-analysis finding that there has been no evidence of health risks over the last 20 years of GM maize commercialization. The findings, published in *Scientific Reports*, also noted that the crop offered yield improvements, reduced mycotoxin presence and added convenience for farmers. Italian media coverage of the report was extensive, with several news outlets interviewing pro-biotechnology farmer Giorgio Fidenato. [See more](#)
- FSANZ released a consultation paper on how to regulate food products developed through new plant breeding technologies (NBTs). The agency outlined various methods for modifying plant genes and asked for comment on issues such as whether a process-based regulatory approach makes sense for NBTs or whether using NBTs presents a greater risk than mutagenesis or other methods. Comments will be accepted through April 12. [See more](#)

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

North America

News: Politico U.S. agriculture roundup includes briefs on re-introduction of bill proposing ban of neonics, NPR coverage of dicamba issues, EU review of Bayer-Monsanto deal

Commentary: Alex Berezow of American Council on Science and Health accuses Undark of hypocrisy in its criticism of Leaps Magazine, which is subsidized by Bayer, notes everyone is paid by somebody, including science journalists

Commentary: Molecular geneticist uses her FrankenFoodFacts blog to review health claims made by developers of GM pink pineapple and Innate potato, concludes those crops as safe as non-GMO counterparts, but using weak science to claim health benefits unnecessary

News release: University of Arizona promotes work by its plant scientist to develop ways of fighting blight spreading rapidly in West Africa, killing cacao trees, threatening world chocolate production; researchers working with USDA, candy giant Mars to develop molecular tools to spot infected trees early

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News release: IFPRI issues statement by its director for Africa, Ousmane Badiane, touting launch of African Agricultural Transformation Scorecard that highlight's continent's progress in adopting commitments of 2014 Malabo Declaration, recognizes five African countries as best performers

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Chinese news site reports China's Ministry of Agriculture reports finding 7 companies conducting field trials violated GMO regulations, indicates violators were "severely dealt with"

News: Hindustan Times reports pink bollworm killed crops of 4.1 million farmers in Indian state of Maharashtra, previews 5-part series on the crisis

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Study: Study in Scientific Reports by Italian researchers provides meta-analysis of 21 years of field data on impact of GM maize, authors note findings support its cultivation due to enhanced grain quality, reduction of mycotoxins and lack of impact on non-target organisms

News: Italian media outlets report on Italian study in Scientific Reports which found no evidence of health risks in GM maize in meta-analysis of 21 years of data, GM maize farmer Giorgio Fidenato reacted to the study, indicating plans to sue the Italian State

Commentary: Italian agricultural association notes universities find GM maize does not present health risk, association president says 20 years of GMO bans led to "massive imports and substantial losses for Italian farmers"

Commentary: Italian EU Parliament member argues that although University of Pisa study shows GM corn isn't harmful to humans does not mean it is good for humans; says study is "myopic" because it ignores fact that GMOs used with pesticides, which he claims are bad for the environment, farmers, consumers

Commentary: Norwegian Biotechnology Council members write news site op-ed, note rapidly advancing biotechnology requires "forward-looking laws" that provide flexibility and room for technological advancement

Event: France's Attac Sud-Essonne committee, Paysanne Confederation, GREEN association, and AMAPs Belle et la Blette and Ah ma Papille to host conference on "New GMOs" (March 2, 2018), with ag engineer and organic farmer Daniel Evain in Milly-la-Forêt

News release: City and Metropolis of Rennes, France, promotes upcoming conference with Vandana Shiva on Feb. 23, to promote her new book, "The virtuous circle", co-written with Nicolas Hulot, Nadege Noisette, elected delegate for supplies, welcomes the visit

News release: Germany's Association of Biology, Life Sciences and Biomedicine (VBIO eV) points to inconsistencies and goal contradictions in coalition agreement, especially in provisions regarding GE, notes promoting research is currently difficult in certain areas of biotech

Commentary: Europe's La Via Campesina NGO posts framework of stance opposing GM seeds, farmers' right to seeds, opposing new breeding techniques

Interview: BBC talks to CEO of AquaBounty about its introduction of GE salmon to Canadian market, why company decided against labeling product as GE; he blames "campaigns of intimidation" against retailers by groups opposed to GE salmon

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Nicaraguan news site reports NGO Alianza Seeds of Identity working to prevent GM seeds from being used in the country, say they intend to publicize GM seeds' risk if they are used

Campaign: Argentine environmental NGO calls on cities of Entre Ríos to enact GMO labeling, arguing recognizing which foods are GMOs will give consumers the power to reject them and chemicals used on them

More Latin America items

Oceania

Announcement: Food Standards Australia New Zealand announces public consultation on regulation of products of new breeding techniques, FSANZ will receive public comments through April 12, 2018

News: New Zealand's Science Media Centre posts expert opinion on Food Standards Australia New Zealand's consultation report on products of new breeding techniques, geneticist Peter Dearden noted getting regulation wrong could either stifle innovation or raise concern about risks

News: New Zealand Herald reports on Food Standards Australia New Zealand's (FSANZ) release of consultation paper on regulation of products of new breeding techniques, Otago University geneticist Peter Dearden welcomed the agency's questions

More Oceania items

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Stakeholder database

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

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Feb. 14, 2018
 Date: Wednesday, February 14, 2018 9 01:34 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology developments included news that the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh had announced a partial ban of glyphosate use in an attempt to stop the sale of herbicide-tolerant cotton seeds.

- In an effort to combat the sale of illegal, herbicide-tolerant cotton varieties, Andhra Pradesh announced that it would ban glyphosate use from June through November. A report in *The Times of India* quoted the Alliance for Holistic and Sustainable Agriculture (ASHA), which applauded the move and added that glyphosate had been linked to harmful effects. A separate *Reuters* report noted that the state had warned two local seed companies over their links to the illegal seed sales. **[See more](#)**

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

North America

[News: Big Think social media lead reports California Clean Environment initiative could mandate non-evidence-based science, including ban on GMOs and removing vaccine requirements, if approved by voters; petitioners trying to get enough signatures to put measure on November ballot](#)

[Commentary: Surgeon who blogs as "Orac" discusses California Clean Environment initiative, says it reads as if written by Mike Adams of Natural News, notes its claim that GMOs and "contaminants" cause cancer, autism, other diseases, rebuts claims by pointing to science-based evidence](#)

[Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project posts final installment of four-part series; examines gene-editing promise for variety of future products, even as biotechnology opponents claim dangers to environment, human health; piece notes opposition to developments in synthetic biology, GE trees and flowers](#)

[Commentary: Real Clear Science highlights Team Organic vs. Team GMO debate, suggests ignoring the "shill gambit" and focus on evidence produced by independent scientists, noting consensus among WHO, AMA, AASA and others is that GM foods are safe](#)

[Commentary: Biology Fortified review by genomics scientist calls Carey Gillam's Whitewash "hogwash," highlights inaccuracies, misleading information](#)

[News: California news site reports Nevada County reports on "Monsanto 10" anti-Monsanto/GMO protest, arrest last spring at Monsanto's Yolo County office, charges downgraded last August, hearing rescheduled to Feb. 27](#)

[Commentary: U.S. Right to Know's Stacy Malkan criticizes The Atlantic for providing DowDuPont a platform in upcoming forum, "Harvest: Transforming the Food We Eat," claims GMOs and pesticides promoted by DowDuPont damage health and environment](#)

[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: Times of India reports Andhra Pradesh bans glyphosate use in the state in attempt to curb spread of illegal herbicide-tolerant cotton seeds, Kavita Kurruganti of Alliance for Holistic and Sustainable Agriculture (ASHA) welcomed the move

News: Reuters - India's Andhra Pradesh state issues notices alerting two seed firms that seeds they sold farmers may have contained unapproved Monsanto GM cotton strain, the companies deny charges

News: Hindustan Times reports on struggles of Vidarbha cotton farmer Usha Pandey and others who have suffered devastating losses to pink bollworm attack, farmers activist Kishore Tiwari called on gov't to get seed companies and insurance companies to provide compensation

News: Armenia news agency reports country's food safety agency to conduct large scale diet study that will include measurement of GMOs in food supply; results expected in 2019

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Spanish pro-biotech NGO Fundacion Antama reports remarks by Manuel Pineiro about CRISPR technologies, applications, uses, prospects and legislative challenges in EU; he says CRISPR brings cheaper, more accurate genomic editing tools to offer solutions for improving numerous crops

News: EurActiv reports on DowDuPont's European ag division head, Pierre Flye Sainte Marie's statement that the goal of the merger is to accelerate ag innovation, he highlighted exciting developments in new plant breeding techniques

Commentary: GMWatch claims EFSA dismissed research, Member State concerns that Monsanto Bt maize trait causes kidney disease, bladder stones in rats, prompting Member States to challenge agency endorsement of stacked traits, question EFSA credibility on GMO safety

Commentary: German online news source for organic industry amplifies comment by German Association of Natural Food Natural Products about EU advocate general's opinion that mutagenesis derived organisms not subject to GMO regulation; BNN says release of GMOs into environment "irresponsible"

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Paraguay's La Nacion reports Monsanto Paraguay SA gets government approval for marketing Bt cotton in country; National Commission on Agricultural and Forestry Biosafety says no way to guarantee zero risk and absolute biosecurity, recommends release of cotton carrier of stacked events

Report: Monsanto Global issues Spanish-language 2018 edition of "Seedbed Future," social responsibility program that promotes ideas from non-profit groups seeking to improve nutrition in Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay; deadline for submitting project and documents is March 15

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Australian farming news outlet reports on Grain Producers South Australia (GPSA) chairman Wade Dabinett's concerns that the region's GM ban will disadvantage SA growers, following recent approval of Nuseed's GM omega 3 canola

Announcement: Australia's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator announces it has issued license to Syngenta Australia for commercial release of cotton genetically modified for insect resistance, authorized throughout country for GM cotton and its products in commerce, including human food, animal feed

More Oceania items

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Feb. 13, 2018
 Date: Tuesday, February 13, 2018 9:04:06 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Among today's global biotechnology developments, Australia's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator announced its approval of a new GM canola variety designed with increased omega-3 levels. U.S. news outlets criticized a new ballot initiative in California that would eliminate mandatory vaccinations in schools and ban GMOs.

- Australia's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator approved a GM canola variety developed by Nuseed Pty Ltd, finding that the high omega-3 content crop posed "negligible" risks to people and the environment. The approval allows both cultivation and use of the crop in food products; however, the agency noted that regional cultivation restrictions could apply. Nuseed parent company Nufarm applauded the decision, highlighting its plans to market the crop in aquaculture and human nutrition. **See more**
- U.S. technology and science site *Ars Technica* and environmental magazine *Mother Jones* both criticized a California ballot initiative that recently received approval for signature gathering. *Ars Technica* reporter Beth Mole called the initiative a "conspiracy theorist's dream," citing its rejection of school vaccination requirements and water fluoridation and its proposed ban on GMOs. *Mother Jones* highlighted the scientific consensus on both vaccine and GMO safety. **See more**
- Indian news outlets reported the government of Andhra Pradesh has threatened to revoke seed licenses for Kaveri Seeds and Nuziveedu Seeds Limited, accusing the companies of illegally marketing an herbicide-tolerant cotton variety. A Nuziveedu representative questioned the provenance of the seeds tested and criticized the government over the "baseless" accusation. **See more**

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North America

News: [Ars Technica reports on California Clean Environment initiative, introduced by activist Cheriell Jensen, to ban GMOs and several chemicals, and to eliminate school vaccination requirements, citing links to cancer, autism, Parkinson's and other diseases](#)

News: [Mother Jones reports on California Clean Environment Initiative, introduced by activist Cheriell Jensen, which would ban GMOs and eliminate school vaccination requirements, and prohibit use of 300 substances](#)

News: [Devex publishes third article in four-part series on GMOs, with focus on which entities are funding GMO research, highlights Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research, and various gov't organizations](#)

Commentary: [Joan Conrow of Cornell Alliance for Science examines shift in Hawaii anti-GMO activists' focus to ag pesticides, highlights Center for Food Safety's recent funding cuts, notes introduced legislation only targets agricultural pesticides, tied to GMOs](#)

Commentary: [Genetic Literacy Project updates progress of Golden Rice, notes Food Standards Australia New Zealand recommends it be approved for import sale but points out opposition still coming from](#)

Greenpeace, GE-Free New Zealand, discusses frequently asked questions about controversial crop

Commentary: GMO Inside promotes Green America's "Chocolate Scorecard" to inform consumers about which Valentine's Day sweets contain GMOs, cites GE ingredients and claims GMOs never proven safe for consumption, notes 55 percent of U.S. sugar produced from GM sugar beets

Commentary: AlterNet - USRTK successful in lawsuit seeking University of Florida email exchanges that may point to bias toward chemical industry; says previous emails show Kevin Folta received money from Monsanto, in addition to using industry-drafted content on GMO Answers

Commentary: AltHealth Works' Nick Meyer criticizes Dr. Oz for touting Mazola corn oil on his show, points out company promotes use of GMOs on its website, notes Oz previously has supported labeling of GMOs, disputes Oz's claims about corn oil's health benefits

More North America items

Africa

News: Kenyan business news outlet reports Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organisation's (Kalro) GM cassava variety, resistant to both Cassava Mosaic Virus and Cassava Brown Streak Disease, enters third development phase - safety testing

More Africa items

Asia

News: India's Financial Express reports Andhra Pradesh gov't issues show-cause notices to Kaveri Seeds and Nuziveedu Seeds for selling illegal herbicide-tolerant GM cotton seeds to farmers, without approval from Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee

Commentary: Subhojit Goswami of India's Down to Earth amplifies study by Professor Jayashankar Telangana State Agricultural University which found that low compliance in planting refuge crops contributes to pest resistance to Bt cotton

Commentary: Editorial in India's Financial Express argues gov't needs to find ways to bring Monsanto back in to India rather than driving it out, noting farmers need another big break in productivity, highlights dispute over cotton royalties

News: The Hindu reports International Biodiversity Congress to be held in India (Oct. 4 through 6) will highlight erosion of biodiversity as global issue; IBC 2018 chair Vandana Shiva says congress will focus on "biodiversity for ecological civilization"

More Asia items

Europe

Commentary: U.N. Environment Programme explains its work on promotion of sustainable biotech in India, summarizes importance of biosafety, highlights achievements of India project from 2012-2016, GEF Phase II Capacity Building Project on Biosafety

Commentary: "Doctor Wine" Daniele Cernilli writes for Italian publication, promotes use of new cisgenic breeding technique to make disease resistant wine grapes, hopes consumers will accept these new technologies, points to similar benefits in medicine

News: France's Science & Vie reports French people consuming GMOs directly and indirectly, warns labeling of GMOs not always transparent, points out labeling not mandatory for products imported from Asia or United States derived from animals that have consumed GMOs, claims GMOs found in meat, milk

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](#)

Oceania

Announcement: Australia's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator issues notice of license decision approving commercial release of GM omega-3 rich canola variety by Nuseed, making several documents available

News release: Nufarm welcomes Australian regulators' approval of subsidiary Nuseed's GM omega-3 canola for use in feed and human consumption, notes the product will help relieve pressure on wild fish stocks

News: Australian Financial Review reports on Office of Gene Technology Regulator's approval of Nufarm subsidiary Nuseed's omega-3 GM canola for cultivation and use in animal feed, and Food Standards Australia New Zealand's approval for human consumption

Commentary: Friends of the Earth Australia promotes upcoming forum in Melbourne where scientists Jennifer Doudna and Kevin Esvelt will speak about need for precaution and transparency in CRISPR applications, criticizes govt for proposing deregulation

[More Oceania items](#)

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From: Jay Byrne
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 Date: Monday, February 12, 2018 9:04 57 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 from U.K researchers targeting gene variations that control rapeseed response to climate change.

- Researchers with the John Innes Centre announced that they'd identified a gene that controls when crops such as canola "shatter" under warmer climate conditions. The researchers noted that identifying the target gene will allow traditional and biotech crop breeders to develop varieties that can withstand a changing climate. [See more](#)
- Writing in *The Hill*, Recombinetics CEO Tammy Lee Stanoch argued that current regulations on gene-edited animals stifle innovation. Stanoch highlighted new breeds of cattle that are resistant to heat and don't require de-horning as examples of how the technology can benefit the industry and can improve animal welfare. [See more](#)

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

North America

News: The Atlantic profiles Ginko Bioworks, highlights CEO and cofounder Jason Kelly's goal of getting consumers to love GMOs, highlights several consumer-oriented products, as well as recently announced partnership with Bayer

Commentary: President & CEO of animal gene editing company Recombinetics, Tammy Lee Stanoch, writes for The Hill, voices support for giving USDA sole authority in regulating food animals, notes FDA's current role leads to regulatory uncertainty

Commentary: "Hawaii Farmer's Daughter" Joni Kamiya criticizes organic supporters' tactics, responding to recent accusations that she is a "shell," criticizes Hawaii State Legislature for continuing to politicize the GMO issue and conflate it with pesticides

Commentary: Michael Stebbins of Council for Biotechnology Information writes GMO Answers post for Medium, responds to recent debate following Humans of New York feature on a man who wants to use biotech to help small farmers in India, dispels several myths

Commentary: American Chemical Society's Chemical & Engineering News magazine examines threats to arabica coffee variety, progress has been made in potential GE solutions, but World Coffee Research believes coffee and genetic engineering are not compatible

Commentary: Colin Todhunter writes for CounterPunch, criticizes Nobel Laureate Sir Richard Roberts' recent promotion of GM mustard in India, amplifies claims of Indian anti-GMO activist Aruna Rodrigues, argues Roberts' approach is reductionist

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News release: African Centre for Biodiversity, Third World Network and GeneWatch UK voice opposition to planned release of male sterile GE mosquitoes in Burkina Faso, pointing to Target Malaria's acknowledgement that the release is experimental with no benefits

News: CAJ News Africa reports on U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) announcement of partnership with 350,000 Zimbabwean farmers and local experts to stop spread of fall armyworm, which could lead to losses between \$76 and \$191 million

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: India's Mathrubhumi publishes Vandana Shiva's comments submitted to Competition Commission of India in opposition to Bayer-Monsanto deal, she points to negative impact of illegal Bt cotton in India, highlights risks associated with pesticides

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News release: John Innes Centre announces publication of new research establishing genetic link between increased temperature and pod shatter in oilseed rape, which will inform future crop improvement advancements to mitigate effects of climate change

Commentary: Helene Schulze of U.K. NGO Sustainable Food Trust recounts recent International Green Week demonstration in Germany, argues that U.K. should continue to work with EU post-Brexit on food and farming issues, supports a European agrifood movement

Commentary: Jeanpierre Favi of French independent news outlet Le Media calls on readers to support Volunteer Reaper Bruno S at his upcoming court appearance on Feb. 20, summoned for refusal to provide a DNA sample in case regarding field vandalism

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Agencia EFE reports on National Council of Scientific and Technical Research of Argentina's (Conicet) celebration of 60th anniversary, president Alejandro Ceccatto noted recent achievements included development of water stress-resistant GM soybeans

News: Uruguayan news outlet reports on six month grace period for compliance with new GMO labeling mandate, which requires foods containing over one percent of GMOs to have a label with the letter "T" and the statement, "Contains genetically modified organisms"

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Australian farming news outlet reports on shortage of GM and hybrid canola seeds, due to rain and hail during 2017 harvest, other varieties are available, but many farmers prefer GM seeds in their rotations to help with weed control

[More Oceania items](#)

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 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - Feb. 12, 2018
 Date: Monday, February 12, 2018 4:04:01 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

Months of criticism of the International Agency for Research on Cancer culminated with a U.S. House hearing last week at which lawmakers questioned the outfit's assessment of glyphosate and threatened to pull American funding.

At the top of this week's Stories Worth Sharing, check out Genetic Literacy Project's recap of the hearing. More coverage and stakeholder reaction can be found in the What's Trending section.

Other articles discuss misleading non-GMO labels, question whether a ban of neonics would actually help bees and examine myths about organic food production.

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: Carey Gillam



Former *Reuters* reporter turned anti-GMO and anti-pesticide activist Carey Gillam works for the organic industry-funded U.S. Right to Know campaign.

Gillam was in the news this week alleging U.S. Congressional inquiries into the International

Stories Worth Sharing

[Jon Entine and Cameron English: U.S. House committee highlights "unsubstantiated claims" of IARC](#)

[Kevin Folta: Non-GMO labels misinform consumers about the "hypothetical presence of a non-existent threat"](#)

[Caroline Hauxwell: Australian neonic ban would likely harm farmers more than it would help bees](#)

[Henry Miller: Organic agriculture kept afloat "only by massive subsidies" that cover up its low yields and wasted resources](#)

[Michael J. Ssali: Ugandan president's support for science and innovation make it likely he will sign biosafety bill at some point](#)

[Mary Mangan: Stonyfield "peddling bad information" on biotechnology and trying to silence critics](#)

[Victor Tangermann: Debunking the myths that organic food is healthier, GMOs are dangerous](#)

[Marcel Kuntz: Profound gap between scientific consensus on glyphosate and French media coverage](#)

[Micaela Wright: Trump administration supporting farmers by nixing burdensome regulations on chlorpyrifos, WOTUS](#)

Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) were only an agribusiness corporate conspiracy and "cancer cover-up" by Roundup inventor Monsanto.

[LEARN MORE](#) about Gillam.

[CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES](#)

Alison Van Eenennaam: "Okja" film perpetuates tired characterization of scientists as "disturbed, money-hungry corporate sell outs" [?](#)

Brian McNicoll: Prop 65 labeling requirements for glyphosate mark typical "overregulation" in California for product most deem safe [?](#)

ISAAA: Global biotech crop planting rises to over 185 million hectares [?](#)

[CLICK FOR BONUS EVENTUS MONITORING](#)

What's Trending?

U.S. House committee critical of glyphosate review by International Agency for Research on Cancer

Responding to glyphosate controversy, European Parliament sets up committee to review pesticide approval process

Indian state sets up special investigation of illegal Bt cotton sales

European Food Safety Authority sets Feb. 28 release date for neonic risk assessments

Brazilian regulator approves Bayer-Monsanto deal

Calendar highlights

February 13	February 14	February 15
Swiss Academy of Sciences presentation on NBTs	Pesticide Action Network U.K. presentation: "Don't let Brexit bee a buzz kill"	Uganda Biotechnology and Biosafety Consortium Biotech Awards
February 19-23	February 20	February 24
Central and Eastern Europe regional meeting on SAICM	Stockholm Chemicals Groups film screening - "Endocnation"	Martinique conference on pollution and EDCs

[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

BONUS EVENTUS

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Global biotechnology developments over the weekend included an NGO's efforts to influence Australia's deliberations on deregulating gene editing. Monsanto officials welcomed an investigation into illegal Bt cotton being sold in India. A brokerage firm advisor commented on why China rejected GM corn imports from the U.S.

- U.K.-based GMWatch urged readers to email Australia's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator to protest a proposal that would deregulate gene-edited animals, plants, and microbes. GMWatch claimed terror groups could take advantage of non-regulation to create new diseases and poisons. [See more](#)
- There was continued reporting and commentary on the Indian state of Maharashtra's announcement it formed an investigation team to probe unapproved Bt cotton sales. *Press Trust of India* reported a statement from Mahyco Monsanto Biotech welcomed the investigation, saying such activity "makes farmers vulnerable to exploitation" and undermines their efforts to steward such technology. [See more](#)
- A market analyst with The Heuber Report was skeptical that China rejected four U.S. corn shipments due to "GMO issues." Dan Hueber suggested in a column that it was more than a coincidence this happened after the U.S. imposed heavy tariffs on washing machines and solar panels from China. His commentary was syndicated by *AgWeb*. [See more](#)

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

North America

[Commentary: Market analyst expresses skepticism over Chinese cancelling four corn cargoes over GM issues; points to U.S. tariffs on washing machines, solar panels as more compelling reason](#)

[News: Food Navigator reports on recent webinar held by Food Institute, where OFW Law attorneys examined which food labeling claims put companies most at risk of a class action lawsuit, highlights cases involving glyphosate, GMOs and "natural" labels](#)

[Commentary: Researcher Belinda Martineau blogs that she's impressed with Monsanto's GMO procedures and tests, but says "extra DNA" can be accidentally inserted into GE crop plants](#)

[Commentary: Joan Conrow writes for Genetic Literacy Project, notes ISAAA reports GMOs cultivated on record 347 million acres in 26 countries during 2016](#)

[Interview: Grist's Nathanael Johnson questions Charles C. Mann on his book "The Wizard and the Prophet;" Mann notes both have strong arguments, with "techno-wizard" supporting industrial ag and GMOs, the "prophet-ecologist" warning the Earth has limits, while Mann says Earth's capacity may be so large as to be irrelevant](#)

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Nigeria's New Telegraph reports on USDA's pledge to support implementation of modern biotech in Nigeria, announced during USDA team's visit to Nigeria's National Bio-safety Management Agency, highlights remarks by NBMA's Rufus Ebegba

Commentary: Oluoma Udemezue of Nigeria's Pulse warns readers about health risks of GMOs, claims foods available in grocery stores are a "feast of death," and that GMOs are poisonous to the body, points to rising death rates in Africa

Commentary: Farmer and science journalist Michael J. Ssali writes in Uganda's Daily Monitor that despite efforts by anti-science activists and MPs to kill biosafety bill, President Museveni's "strong support for science and innovation is well known"; highlights biotech solutions to crop diseases and climate challenges

News: News site reports Gates Foundation supports "super GMO farm," including GM cow that would produce as much milk for Africans as cows produce in Europe

News: Nigerian environmental news site reports Food Standards Australia New Zealand tests of Golden Rice 2 show lower nutritional quality, genetic instability; notes application fails to show substantial benefits

News: Tanzanian news site reports farmers appeal to government to produce drought- and pest-resistant seeds at affordable costs; farmers noted WEMA project seeds greatly increased yields

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Reuters reports some Chinese buyers canceled U.S. corn purchases, switching to rival supplier Ukraine, as Chinese grain mills encounter difficulty obtaining permits to process GM grain

News: Times of India reports on formation of special investigation team (SIT) to examine role of domestic seed companies and Monsanto in infiltration of illegal herbicide-tolerant Bt cotton seeds into the market, Monsanto welcomed the SIT, pointing to its prior warning

News: Press Trust of India reports Mahyco Monsanto Biotech (MMB) welcomes Maharashtra gov't formation of special investigation team (SIT) to examine illegal production and sale of herbicide-tolerant Bt cotton, noting such activity makes farmers vulnerable

News: Indian news site reports farmers, activists complain government allowing illegal import of GM soybean, corn; activists fear contamination from GM crops, health risks from glyphosate residue

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Sueddeutsche Zeitung journalist argues glyphosate ban does nothing for sustainable agriculture, only eliminates use of "best herbicide available;" says only commitment to science will impact sustainable agriculture

Commentary: Journalists write for openDemocracyUK, say Syngenta struck deal with London's Evening Standard to pay for positive coverage to improve company's image, pave way for post-Brexit rules on GMOs that favor agribusinesses

Commentary: Sustainable Pulse welcomes new German coalition gov't plans to phase-out glyphosate use as soon as possible, as well as to confirm current ban on GM crop cultivation and expand organic farming

Commentary: Inf'OGM criticizes EU's advocate general opinion that mutagenesis is not governed by GMO regulations; claims he failed to consider international law, such as the Cartagena Protocol

News: French science magazine reports GMOs part of diet of anyone who eats products produced by livestock fed on GM feed, such as milk, eggs, meat; labeling not required in EU

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Colombia's Dinerro reports on recent visit by Spanish scientist JosA@ Miguel Mulet to present his new book, "Transgenics Without Fear," highlights his arguments that GM foods are safe and that organic foods are expensive without offering any health benefits

Commentary: Cida de Oliveira writes for Brazilian news outlet, criticizes so-called "Poison Package," which would repeal current Agrochemicals Law, and allow registration of chemicals banned in other countries, notes it benefits chemical/transgenic industry

News: Brazil's Agrolink reports on Brazil's and Argentina's resolutions on regulating products of new breeding techniques, with both countries striving to balance risks while promoting innovation, highlights definitions of genetic modification

More Latin America items

Oceania

Commentary: Australia-based anti-biotech NGO says if OGTB proposals are approved, gene-edited products will be deregulated "despite off-target impacts and no history of safe use"

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 Brazil's antitrust regulator approved Bayer's purchase of Monsanto. In India, Maharashtra officials formed a special task force to investigate and curb the sale of an herbicide-tolerant cotton variety not approved for cultivation. In Burkina Faso, activists pushed back against cotton farmers' call for a return to Bt cotton cultivation.

- Brazil's antitrust agency, the Administrative Council for Economic Defens (CADE), granted conditional approval of Bayer's planned takeover of Monsanto, marking an important milestone in the deal given Brazil's importance as a commodities producer. The companies are awaiting a decision by EU antitrust regulators, due March 12. The U.S. Committee on Foreign Investment and Trade signed off on the purchase in early December. [See more](#)
- News outlets in India reported that Maharashtra state government had formed a Special Investigative Team to investigate the illegal sale of herbicide-tolerant cotton varieties in the region. Reports in *The Hitavada* and *Press Trust of India* highlighted the task force's remit to investigate trait developer Monsanto's role in the proliferation of the seeds, as well as to explore whether other seed firms were involved in the illegal sales. [See more](#)
- In Burkina Faso, the Citizen Collective for Agroecology (CCAIE) held a news conference to criticize recent calls for the country to return to Bt cotton production. The group specifically targeted cotton farmer Casimir Gnoumou, who spoke for members the National Union of Cotton Producers of Burkina (UNPCB) last month about problems with the replacement cotton varieties. CCAIE claimed that cottonseed oil made from Bt cotton varieties was harmful to public health and criticized multinational companies for trying to monopolize seeds. [See more](#)

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North America

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project posts piece by University of California-Davis animal geneticist Alison Van Eenennaam arguing Netflix film "Okja" perpetuates stereotypes about food, farming, scientists with its depiction of giant GMO pig, pointing out "science" depicted in film makes no sense

News: Times of San Diego reports California Clean Environment Initiative would ban GE food, plants, animals, prohibit treating water with fluoride or chlorine, eliminate vaccine requirements and regulate vaccine ingredients; backer believes GMOs, chemicals, radiation cause cancer

Commentary: Environmental Working Group's legislative director says U.S. farmers "lost out on over \$1.5 billion in sales of organic soybeans and corn between 2012 and 2017" according to trade data released by U.S. Department of Agriculture; highlights Homegrown Organic Act

Commentary: Organic Consumers Association reacts to Newsweek's firing of top editorial staff after report company had artificially inflated website traffic numbers, suggests link to OCA's campaign criticizing Newsweek's publication of opinion piece written by Henry I. Miller without disclosing his ties to Monsanto

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Burkina Faso news outlet reports on Citizen Collective for Agroecology's (CCAIE) press conference in opposition to Bt cotton, warning about poor quality and risks of Bt toxin to humans and the environment, CCAIE announced an anti-GMO march on May 19

News: Lefaso.net reports on Citizen Collective for Agroecology's (CCAIE) warning against return to GM Bt cotton at recent press conference, spokesperson Ali Tapsoba warned about harmfulness of Bt toxin to the body

News: Nigerian news site Daily Trust reports HOMEF director Nnimmo Bassey claims NBMA incapable of assuring biosafety because it approves applications "without due consideration" of impact or public concerns

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science's Joan Conrow profiles Tanzanian farmer who serves in Parliament; he says insufficient access to new technologies one of greatest challenges facing African farmers, notes Tanzania completed confined field trials for Water Efficient Maize

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Press Trust of India reports state sets up special investigation team to probe illegal Bt cotton production in Maharashtra; herbicide-tolerant varieties not approved, but are being sold

News: Indian news site reports state of Maharashtra forms special investigation into Monsanto's role in producing, selling herbicide-tolerant Bt Cotton

Commentary: India's Swarajya magazine runs piece by visiting professor at Iowa State University's Seed Science Center suggesting many current scientific controversies more about ideologies, political debates than about science, citing example of EU using precautionary principle to curtail deployment of GM crops

Announcement: Convention on Biological Diversity posts decision statement issued by Malaysia's National Biosafety Board on application for release of products of Simplot E12 potato for supply or sale in market; board approves permit based on evaluation that product doesn't endanger biological diversity

News: Reuters reports China's imports of soybeans in January grew 11 percent from same month in 2017 amid healthy demand for soymeal from hog sector, but some cargoes may have been delayed after China toughened soybean import specifications on GMOs while trade tensions rose with United States

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Report: Spain's Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Food and Environment publishes "Strategy for Ecological Production 2018-2020" on actions to support organic production; report includes study of organic production's role in "environmental policy and adaptation to climate change"

News: Deutsche Welle analyzes what Germany's new governing coalition means for climate, energy and agriculture, reports glyphosate will be phased out in country as soon as possible, patents on plant and animal genes will be banned, as will cloning of animals for food production

Commentary: Informationdienst Gentechnik claims disease-resistant pigs not an answer for swine fever, notes Testbiotech claim that infected pigs still get the virus and pass it along to other pigs, spreading the disease more quickly

Commentary: European Coordination Via Campesina recaps 11th General Assembly held in Brussels in January, when activists demonstrated outside European Commission offices in favor of regulations for new GMOs, claiming industry wants to introduce new GMOs to market without prior assessment

News: Dairy Reporter notes seminar in Ireland will help Irish dairies reach non-GMO market in Germany as Germans prefer non-GMO products

News: U.K.'s Farmers Weekly reports latest figures from ISAAA show four countries in EU grew commercial GM maize in 2016, with Spain's area increasing by 20 percent from year before; Monsanto's Bt maize grown in all four countries but unsuitable for growing in U.K., where pests it resists not present

News: USDA Foreign Agricultural Service reports U.K. government aligning to nurture, support gene editing techniques in agriculture with goal to be biotech innovation leader as it departs EU

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Reuters reports on Brazilian antitrust agency Cade's approval of Bayer-Monsanto deal, without requiring asset sales beyond those proposed in October to BASF, highlights opposition in Brazil from soy and cotton growers and seed producers

News: Brazil's Globo reports Administrative Council for Economic Defense (Cade) approves Bayer-Monsanto merger with restrictions, Cade process rapporteur Paulo Burnier da Silveira found proposal to sell seed and herbicide assets to BASF "sufficient and timely"

News: Brazilian agricultural news site reports global area planted with biotech crops grew three percent in 2016 according to ISAAA; Brazil one of 16 countries that increased biotech crop area in 2016

Interview: Colombia's Publimetro talks to Spanish biochemist Jose Miguel Mulet about his new book, "Transgenics Without Fear," he defends biotechnology and its potential to help feed world, explains origins of "fear of transgenics"

Commentary: Guatemalan food sovereignty network details its legal appeal before Constitutional Court against decree establishing the Nagoya protocol, noted its opposition to country's seed law

News: Mexican news site reports former National Peasant Confederation leader says Mexico needs to use technology in food production, including researching and using biotech crops, to reduce reliance on imported food

News: Uruguay's Radio Nacional reports on changes in regulations for labeling GM foods, developed by Department of Social Development's Food Regulation Service and stakeholders from civil society and industry, the new label will have the letter "T" in addition to text

More Latin America items

Oceania

Campaign: Organic Industries of Australia promote Love Organic Symposium to be held Feb. 14-15 in Canberra to deliberate on formation of "new peak body," future of Australian government's organic program

Commentary: Australia-based anti-biotech NGO says if OGTR proposals are approved, gene-edited products will be deregulated "despite off-target impacts and no history of safe use"

Campaign: Friends of the Earth Melbourne urges supporters to send emails to Australian assistant minister for health asking her to ensure new GM techniques such as CRISPR assessed for safety before being used, warns proposed changes would make Australia first country to deregulate GM animals

Event: Australia's Convergence Science Network promotes panel discussion Feb. 13 in Melbourne on "The Science and Ethics of Genome Editing," to feature biologist Jennifer Doudna, co-inventor of CRISPR-Cas9 gene editing tool, and Kevin Esvelt of MIT Media Lab

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Diane Wray-Cohen@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Feb. 7, 2018
 Date: Wednesday, February 7, 2018 9:01:27 PM

FAST ACCESS: MONITORING \ STAKEHOLDERS \ COMMUNITY

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 Germany successfully formed a coalition government, with negotiated policies on GMO cultivation bans and glyphosate. Foodwatch International issued a report claiming that European trade deals threatened the region's precautionary approach in several industries, including agriculture.

- News outlets in Europe reported that German Chancellor Angela Merkel successfully formed a coalition government, with Merkel's Christian Democrats again teaming up with the Social Democrats. Agricultural policies were featured among the negotiated positions, with promises to end the use of glyphosate and establish nationwide guidelines for GMO cultivation bans. Activists applauded the announcements but called for a concrete timetable on the glyphosate ban. [See more](#)
- Activist group Foodwatch International issued a new report today claiming that European trade deals being negotiated with Mercosur and other regions would undermine Europe's "precautionary principle" approach to regulation. Among other concerns, Foodwatch noted that non-EU countries did not have guidelines for labeling products of animals fed GMOs. [See more](#)

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

North America

Commentary: Pro-GMO teacher and blogger Stephan Neidenbach writes for Medium, criticizing anti-GMO journalist Paul Thacker, highlights Stat News' retraction of his statement claiming that Genetic Literacy Project receives funding from Monsanto

News: Food & Environment Reporting Network writers list the key issues they believe will drive food and agriculture news coverage in 2018, including potential battles over seed technologies and gene editing, with proponents of GE technology using careful, targeted messaging to avoid public rejection

News: Politico Pro reports Kraft Heinz Company and DowDuPont are latest companies to announce departure from Grocery Manufacturers Association, DowDuPont noted it will make direct engagement with food companies a top priority

Event: Conventional on Biological Diversity invites Parties to the Convention to organize and host local celebrations of International Day for Biological Diversity (May 22, 2018) with the theme, "Celebrating 25 Years of Action for Biodiversity"

News release: DowDuPont announces its Agriculture Division's grand opening of Bay Area Innovation Center in California, newly expanded state-of-the-art research and development facility focused on agricultural biotechnology discovery, enabling technology development and leading-edge informatics

Commentary: Beyond Pesticides amplifies California monarch butterfly count's most recent findings that western butterfly population is continuing to decline at an alarming rate, links monarch declines to use of herbicides 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: [The Hindu BusinessLine reports on study in journal Crop Protection which found that Telangana and Andhra Pradesh farmers' refusal to grow proper refuge crops around Bt cotton fields enables pests to develop resistance more quickly](#)

Study: [GM Crops and Food publishes research paper by two scientists from ISAAA's Southeast Asia Center in the Philippines showing biotech crop planting worldwide resumed high adoption in 2016, with global area planted increasing to 185.1 million hectares, 3 percent increase over 2015](#)

Report: [ISAAA promotes release of "ISAAA in 2017: Accomplishment Report," which showcases programs implemented by NGO through Global Knowledge Center on Crop Biotechnology, plus regional centers for Africa and Southeast Asia; global coordinator notes biotech crop adoption worldwide in 2016 highest ever](#)

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: [Reuters reports on Germany's draft coalition deal, it includes a goal for ending glyphosate-use, but without providing a time frame, as well as formalization of current GM crop cultivation ban, and an expansion of organic farming](#)

Commentary: [Informationsdienst Gentechnik discusses possible formation of coalition that will call for ban on GE cultivation throughout Germany, suggest that new molecular biology breeding technologies such as CRISPR-Cas be regulated to ensure precautionary principle and consumer choice](#)

News release: [Germany's Organic Federation of Organic Food Industry \(BOLW\) chairman, Felix Prinz zu Lowenstein, issues statement on Union and SPD's coalition agreement, praising policies on glyphosate and GE, highlights more work that needs to be done](#)

Announcement: [Foodwatch announces publication of new report with PowerShift, "Trade at Any Cost?", which examines negative impact of various EU trade deals, currently under negotiation, on consumer rights, environmental standards and democratic principles](#)

Commentary: [Foodwatch International executive director Thilo Bode writes opinion piece for Politico Pro EU, criticizes EU's trade negotiations with various countries, argues that the precautionary principle should play a decisive role in the process](#)

Commentary: [Julia Fraser and Richard Welfare of U.K. law firm Hogan Lovells summarize EU Commission's Feb. 1 notice on impact of Brexit on U.K. food products, GM food products must have an EU established food business operator, authorisation holder or representative](#)

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News release: [Brazil's Embrapa promotes symposium March 15 on "Integration of Public Research with Sugarcane in Brazil," with researchers discussing actions of main genetic improvement programs for crop, including how biotechnology could be important ally in sugarcane breeding programs](#)

News: Argentina's Clarin reports DowDuPont launches new global seed brand Brevant, which will be available in Argentina in corn, soy, sunflower and sorghum; Brevant soybean technology only available in 2019 if Argentina approves Seed Law or adequate legal framework for capture of corresponding value

Commentary: Eugenia Bustamante, a lawyer and professor at Universidad Austral and Universidad Catolica Argentina, writes for Clarin, summarizes Argentina's biotech regulations, emphasizes importance of communication with the public to boost acceptance

News: Brazil's Intobae reports National Institute of Industrial Property (INPI) declares nullity of Monsanto's patent on Intacta soybean, agronomist Roberto Campi described the move as "very good news," noted it should be a wake-up call for Argentina

Campaign: Sierra Libre de Transgenicos issues support call to raise 6,000 Euros to subtitle Marie-Monique Robin's new documentary, "The Monsanto International Tribunal," in Spanish

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: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 9 04:48 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 on negotiations over the language of a revised national biosafety bill in Uganda. In Europe, *EurActiv* reported that government coalition talks in Germany included negotiations over glyphosate use and GM crop cultivation.

- In Uganda, reports in a prominent newspaper and on an NGO website highlighted proposed changes to the newly renamed Genetic Engineering and Biosafety Act. *New Vision* reporter Henry Sekanjako reported that the country's science minister had convened a subcommittee to address President Yoweri Museveni's concerns. Proposed changes included a new requirement that biotechnology researchers enter a benefits sharing agreement with local communities, that all plant materials and products associated with the research be clearly labeled as GMOs and a recommendation establishing a nationwide gene bank to preserve indigenous species. Activist group Hivos reported on the negotiations, naming several local civil society organizations who were involved in the discussions. [See more](#)
- Confirming a weekend report by *Reuters*, *EurActiv* reported today that talks to form a coalition government in Germany included promises to phase out the use of glyphosate "as soon as possible" and to establish uniform national rules for the cultivation of GM crops. However, the negotiations continue with no clear date for the establishment of a new government. [See more](#)
- In Nigeria, the National Inter-Religious Council issued a news release criticizing the "unguarded" release of GM crops in the country. Council member Nnimmo Bassey, who heads the Health of Mother Earth Foundation, told news outlets that the National Biotechnology Management Agency was ignoring public outcry over GM crop field trials. [See more](#)

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North America

Commentary: Futurism criticizes misleading efforts of advocacy groups, anti-pesticide celebrities to push health, environmental benefits of organic food, refutes claims of organic food as healthier, pesticide free, GMOs as unhealthy, bad for environment

Commentary: Food and Farm Discussion Lab Editor Marc Brazeau writes follow-up thoughts to his recent article, "The Death Throes of the Anti-GMO Movement," highlights ouster of ideologues from mainstream platforms, notes anti-GMO movement's impact is waning

News: Agri-Pulse reports on concerns that new gene editing regulations will stifle innovation, highlights challenges posed by FDA's regulation of GE animals as animal drugs, and trade implications, as different countries figure out their regulatory frameworks

Commentary: CRC Press publishes textbook by Food Law Policy Institute founder on advancing food integrity by banning or increasing GMO regulations and promoting agroecology

Audio: Wellness Mama podcast features "What's Making Our Children Sick?" authors Michelle Perro and

Vincanne Adams, in discussion about rising rates of childhood illnesses and health implications of presence of glyphosate and GMOs in food

Commentary: Tina Hauptert of Carrots 'N' Cake amplifies recent Wellness Mama podcast episode featuring authors of "What's making our children sick?", Michelle Perro and Vincanne Adams, notes she and her family will be more aware about GMOs in food

Commentary: American Antitrust Institute posts selection of its economic, legal, institutional, and policy analysis on mergers and other antitrust issues in ag biotech, especially the Bayer-Monsanto deal

More North America items

Africa

News: Uganda's New Vision reports on new proposals for Biosafety Act to address President Museveni's concerns, includes name change to Genetic Engineering and Biosafety Act, and provisions for benefit sharing, labeling, and a "Noah's ark" facility to protect native crops and animals

News release: Development NGO Hivos East Africa's Sustainable Diets for All Programme announces partnership with seven Civil Society Organisations at recent media briefing in Kampala, supports Ugandan President Museveni's reservations about Biosafety Bill

Announcement: Uganda Biotechnology and Biosafety Consortium announces upcoming Third Annual Biosafety Forum 2018 (Feb. 8, 2018), organized by Uganda National Council for Science and Technology, with theme of "Building Trust and Confidence in the Biosafety Regulation System"

News: The Guardian (Nigeria) reports National Inter-Religious Council (NIREC) raises concern over increased circulation of GM crops without proper monitoring by National Biotechnology Management Agency (NBMA), and it accuses NBMA of promoting GMOs

News: Nigeria's Leadership reports local companies are preparing for commercialization of GM seeds, National Biotechnology Development Agency (NABDA) assistant director Rose Gidado noted local companies will have a key role to play, more than foreign companies

More Africa items

Asia

Commentary: AgriCensus analyst warns China's investigation into U.S. sorghum subsidies could be warning shot to U.S. regulators about what's in store for marketing U.S. soybeans into China should President Trump target Chinese metals as part of his America First protectionist drive

Commentary: Ag Daily columnist Michelle "Farm Babe" Miller recounts 2017 visit to India, where she talked to farmers who grow Bt cotton and touted its benefits; Miller says Indian farmers choose to grow biotech crops for those benefits, but she also notes many people there reluctant to embrace ag tech

News: Press Trust of India reports on Union Minister Mahesh Sharma's recent statement that Bt cotton introduction has led to near doubling of cotton production since its introduction in 2002, he noted evaluation of new GM products is done on case-by-case basis

More Asia items

Europe

News: EurActiv Germany reports on continued coalition negotiations, highlights agreement to phase-out glyphosate use as soon as possible, and for a uniform, nationwide regulation for GM crop cultivation

News release: Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) announces development of new GM potato with resistant starch, providing added health benefits of dietary fiber, the researchers are working to develop a similar potato using CRISPR/Cas9

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Director of Mexican NGO Semillas de Vida writes for La Jornada, claims draft Biodiversity Law contradicts principles of Convention on Biological Diversity, including those on intellectual property rights, urges readers to contact their legislators

[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: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - Feb. 5, 2018
 Date: Monday, February 5, 2018 9:03:34 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

An ill-conceived attack ad on GMOs continues to blow up in Stonyfield Farm's face. After initial criticism for relying on young girls to spread myths about biotechnology, the organic giant only made matters worse by dismissing its critics as "trolls" with fake online profiles. The backlash got bad enough that its former creative agency **distanced itself from the video** and went as far as saying it disagreed with Stonyfield's response.

Four pieces on this week's newsletter - by Michelle Miller, Hank Campbell, Steven Novella and Andrew Porterfield - further examine the issue.

We also feature a commentary from former USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack on the ramifications of misleading non-GMO labels, an American Council on Science and Health article detailing incorrect information spread by NGOs about honeybee conservation and two pieces examining the ongoing dispute over glyphosate despite its proven safety record.

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.

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

Stakeholder Spotlight: Pesticide Action Network



Pesticide Action Network International (PAN) is the global "hub" for its network of **regional centers** in North America.

Stories Worth Sharing

[Michelle Miller: Stonyfield apparently thinks "right to know" about GMOs doesn't require responsibility to learn the truth](#)

[Matt Ridley: Brexit policies should not stifle innovation in areas such as gene editing](#)

[Hank Campbell: New anti-GMO ad shows Stonyfield must think girls don't understand science](#)

[Steven Novella: Stonyfield triples down on its "dubious" behavior with fear-mongering video, dismissive response to critics](#)

[Tom Vilsack: Misleading non-GMO labels hurt consumer confidence in food system](#)

[Chuck Dinerstein: Cambridge paper calls out NGOs, science journalists for trumped up claims that honeybees need to be conserved](#)

[Andrew Porterfield: Stonyfield turns to kids to extend its "history of spreading misinformation" about biotechnology, organic food](#)

[Colin Stevens: Hard to believe vitriol produced by "dubious"](#)

Europe, Africa, Asia and Latin America.

PAN was founded in 1982 out of organized opposition to globalization, capitalism and alleged control by multinational corporations and rich national governments.

[LEARN MORE](#) about Pesticide Action Network.

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[glyphosate review by International Agency for Research on Cancer](#)

[EU Policies think tank: "Baffling" that glyphosate saga rages on despite its extensive safety record](#)

[Julie Gunlock: Radical green activists "lies" push African nations to ban GM crops that could reduce hunger](#)

[Uganda National Agricultural Research Organization official: Scientists willing to clarify president's concerns about biosafety bill](#)

[Bernard Goldstein: Europe's precautionary principle unfairly used to harm American agriculture, including GM grain](#)

[Cameron English and Kavin Senapathy: Tips for talking to people who reject "empirical scientific truths" on food and agriculture](#)

[Robert Amason: Cargill undermines claim that it supports science by teaming up with Non-GMO Project](#)

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What's Trending?

[U.S. House committee plans Tuesday hearing to review scientific integrity of International Agency for Research on Cancer](#)

[Nigeria biosafety agency reiterates commitment to ensuring safety of GM crops, criticizes activist groups](#)

[French government agencies demand proactive strategy on endocrine disruptors](#)

[Harvard researcher behind disputed bee studies claims in new paper that neonics on produce could pose risk to people](#)

Calendar highlights

February 6	February 6-8	February 7
U.S. House committee hearing on IARC glyphosate monograph	Africa regional meeting on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management	Norway Biotechnology Council public forum on GMOs
February 7	February 13	February 15
Chemical Watch webinar on European Union EDC criteria	Swiss Academy of Sciences presentation on NBTs	Uganda Biotechnology and Biosafety Consortium Biotech Awards

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 To: Caitrin.Martin@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - Feb. 5, 2018
 Date: Monday, February 5, 2018 9:03:14 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Caitrin,

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Feb. 5, 2018
 Date: Monday, February 5, 2018 9 01:44 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 Bayer had proposed additional concessions to meet demands from European regulators reviewing its purchase of Monsanto. In India, controversy over Bt cotton's efficacy continued.

- Bayer submitted a formal package of concessions to European regulators, according to the website of the regulatory agency overseeing its proposed acquisition of Monsanto. Additional details were not released, though the European Commission announced that it had extended the deadline for its review of the takeover from March 12 to April 5. **See more**
- In response to a question from India's upper parliamentary house, Union Minister Mahesh Sharma told legislators that Bt cotton had more than doubled cotton production since it was introduced in 2002, largely due to its effectiveness against bollworm. In contrast, a delegation of seed producers urged the Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare to revoke license fees for Bollgard-II technology, citing its failure to control pink bollworm this cotton season. **See more**
- The Coalition for a GM-Free India filed complaints claiming that the country had been illegally importing GM soybean seeds. In letters filed with the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee and the Director General for Foreign Trade, the group called for "swift" action to stop the sale of the seeds. **See more**

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North America

Commentary: Medium posts GMO Answers piece by University of Oklahoma law professor arguing U.S. regulatory approach to agricultural biotechnology outdated, needs appropriate and scientifically sound updating, especially regarding level of regulatory scrutiny appropriate for new, more precise GE methods

Commentary: George Mason University-affiliated think tank runs piece by Henry I. Miller arguing organic industry is case study in "rent-seeking" because it's funded by U.S. taxpayers, asserting activists supported by special interest groups spend billions on disinformation campaigns about genetic engineering in agriculture

News: Reuters reports Mars Inc. publishes policies on conducting and funding scientific studies for first time, plans to leave International Life Sciences Institute in order to boost transparency; report notes Mars separately left Grocery Manufacturers Association over NGO's stance on labeling of GE food ingredients

News: Vancouver business news source reports British Columbian company gets OK for third variety of GM non-browning apple, Arctic Fuji Apple, to be sold in Canadian groceries; Okanagan Specialty Fruits so far only selling sliced non-browning apples in United States, plans to expand production to orchards in Washington state

News: Ohio's Country Journal reports on upcoming Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association's (OEFFA) 39th annual conference, "A Taste for Change," from Feb.15-17, keynote speakers include Rodale Institute's Jeff Moyer, and U.S. Right to Know's Stacy Malkan

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: News Agency of Nigeria reports on animal breeder Olufunmilayo Adebambo's argument that Nigeria does not have the necessary infrastructure to adopt GMOs, she also does not support Nigeria's importation of GMOs

News: Kenyan business news outlet reports on farmers' struggles with effects of climate change, Murenga Mwimali of Kenya Agriculture Livestock Research Organisation calls on gov't to quickly approve biotech seeds proven to be drought and pest-resistant

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: The Hindu BusinessLine reports reps. from National Seed Association of India (NSAI) Kaveri Seeds and Ajeet Seeds send memo to Union Ag Minister Radha Mohan Singh, calling for removal of trait fees on Bt cotton, due to development of pest resistance

News: India's Outlook reports on Coalition for a GM-free India's call on gov't to take strict action on alleged imports of illegal GM soybean seeds, arguing such imports are in violation of Environmental Protection Act and 2006 DGFT notification

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Germany's Handelsblatt reports on EU's further extension of its examination of Bayer-Monsanto deal until April 5, highlights concerns about digital agriculture, and public pressure on the EU Commission

News: German anti-GMO news outlet Informationsdienst Gentechnik reports on Bayer's submission of "extensive commitments" to EU Commission to gain approval for Monsanto takeover, highlights concerns about digital ag tech monopoly

News: AgriHolland reports future detection of GMOs is uncertain due to rise of new breeding techniques such as CRISPR, while regulations currently remain based on the technology used

Commentary: Spanish NGO Fundacion Antama promotes biochemist Jose Miguel Mulet's new book, "Transgenics Without Fear," in which he uses science to dispel several myths about biotech, includes a video interview

Audio: Spain's RTVE interviews Vandana Shiva, visiting Madrid to promote her new book, "Who Really Feeds the World?", highlighting her promotion of an agroecological revolution

News: Farmers Guardian reports on challenges in developing post-Brexit devolved structure, NFU Scotland policy director Jonnie Hall pointed to possible opportunities for regulatory divergence within the U.K. on issues such as pesticides, biotech and gene editing

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Interview: Mexico's Milenio talks to filmmaker Alberto Cortes about his new film, "Maize in Times of War," which documents four indigenous, rural communities in danger from transgenics; Cortes says

country has peasants to thank for stopping entry of transgenics

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News release: Testbiotech issues comments on Food Standards Australia New Zealand's golden rice risk assessment, claims International Rice Research Institute's application does not show substantial benefits, claims FSANZ's risk assessment is insufficient

[More Oceania items](#)

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Feb. 2-4, 2018
 Date: Sunday, February 4, 2018 9 00:38 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Global biotechnology developments over the weekend included German Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservative party agreeing to work toward a ban on GMO cultivation and French President Emmanuel Macron said France must fight three "great battles" for food sovereignty. The Croatian Parliament voted down a proposed GMO ban.

- *Reuters* reported that the Christian Democrat Party headed by Merkel reached an agreement with Social Democrats to ban glyphosate use "as soon as possible" and to ban GMO cultivation. German researcher Peter Langelüddeke released an open letter saying he got no response when he asked SPD members why they believed GMOs are so dangerous that they must be banned. **[See more](#)**
- During a speech on issues facing French agriculture, Macron outlined his plan for France to achieve food independence. Macron said, "France is 40 percent dependent on imported GMO soybeans and 60 percent on nitrogen fertilizers: we therefore have no real sovereignty." **[See more](#)**
- *Total Croatia News* reported the Croatian Parliament rejected an amendment that would have banned GMO cultivation, importation and marketing. **[See more](#)**
- Western Australia Parliament member Jim Chown urged GM canola farmers to give input on to the Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs, which is investigating mechanisms to compensate farmers for damage from contamination by GM crop material. Chown said some are "looking to exploit the emotional misinformation and fear about the use of GMs as opposed to the scientifically proven facts." **[See more](#)**

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North America

[Review: The New York Times publishes review by environmentalist Bill McKibben of Charles C. Mann book, "The Wizard and the Prophet," that contrasts dueling visions of scientists Norman Borlaug and William Vogt; McKibben points out alleged shortcomings in Mann's analysis of how scientific approaches treat GMO food](#)

[Audio: Kevin Folta's Talking Biotech podcast features animal geneticist Alison Van Eenennaam, who explains why products from animals given GM feed are no different from those from animals given non-GM feed, she notes dangers of "free-from" labeling trend](#)

[Commentary: AltHealth Works' Nick Meyers profiles Cornell student Robert Schooler's crusade against "blatant display of unscientific propaganda" on campus funded by Monsanto, Bill Gates Foundation; notes he's launched video titled "GMO WTF"](#)

[News release: Monsanto posts summaries by four of its scientists of their most recent studies, showing testing confirms GMOs don't cause food allergies, don't persist in aquatic environments, are unlikely to transfer transgenes to wild soybeans and are as safe to eat as conventional corn](#)

[Commentary: ACSH's Alex Berezow revisits 2017 article about Panera Bread using fear of food](#)

preservative BHA to sell its food, notes similarity to Chipotle's anti-GMO campaign, points out recent news Panera had to recall "clean" cream cheese due to threat of listeria contamination

Commentary: George Kimbrell of Center for Food Safety writes for AlterNet, criticizes President Trump's GMO and pesticide policies, urges supporters to take action to support GMO labeling, protect endangered species from pesticides, and ban chlorpyrifos

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Kenya's The Star reports ongoing hunger in Kenya is likely to worsen due to armyworm infestation, highlights World Economic Forum lead researcher Mark Jones' call on Africa to adopt GM crops, noting they will improve food security and reduce farmers' costs

News: AgroNigeria reports National Biosafety Management Agency (NBMA) accuses Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEF) of sabotaging gov't efforts to boost food security through application of technology, NBMA noted its purpose is to ensure GMO safety

News: Nigeria's Vanguard reports on Health of Mother Health Foundation (HOMEF) Director Nnimmo Bassey's call for radical review of National Biosafety Act, raising concerns about some companies allegedly importing GM foods into the country

News: Nigeria's New Telegraph reports on continued threat posed by fall armyworm, Wafaa El Khoury of International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) noted farmers can get pesticides from the gov't this year, but a more long-term solution is needed

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Press Trust of India reports remarks by U.K.-based scientist Richard J. Roberts, winner of 1993 Nobel Prize for physiology, criticizing "anti-GMO people," urging politicians to listen to scientists and not those who oppose science with "nonsense," "lies," calling GMOs "future of agriculture"

Commentary: India's Financial Express runs op-ed arguing government may not approve GM mustard for use by farmers, even though nation's highest authority for assessing safety of GM crops declared in 2017 that GM mustard had passed prescribed tests and recommended that environment minister should approve it

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: EU Policies think tank notes that due to advocate general's opinion, EU might not regulate gene editing techniques; King's College London's genetics department head warns techniques cause off-target effects that could lead to "unintended outcomes"

Commentary: European regional member of La Via Campesina announces group's "Food Sovereignty NOW" guide touting agroecology, which it claims does not use "agrottoxins, artificial hormones, GMOs or other dangerous new technologies

News: Deutsche Welle reports on East African countries' reluctance to adopt GM crops, highlighting Ugandan President Museveni's refusal to sign biosafety bill, also highlights scientists' promotion of several benefits of biotech crops for the region

News: Monthly Le Monde news magazine article "The Chinese double game with GMOs" discusses "Beijing paradox" which promotes GM research but "limits cultivation to a reluctant population"; article examines GM rice developed by Chinese researchers and validated by U.S. FDA but production not allowed in Chinese territory

News: Croatian news outlet reports Parliament rejects proposed amendment to Genetically Modified Organisms Act, introduced by Miro Bulj of the opposition MOST party, to establish a total ban on cultivation, import and marketing of GMO products

News: Ouest-France reports on Gilles-Seralini's recent presentation at Interages University, joined by natural and organic chef Jerome Douzelet, speaking to students about health risks of glyphosate and GMOs in food

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Colombia's Caracol Radio reports remarks by Spanish science writer Jose Miguel Mulet about his book, "Transgenics Without Fear," denying myths about consumption of transgenic foods, rebutting arguments of GMO opponents, arguing ignorance behind social rejection of GMOs

News: Mexican news site reports Greenpeace denounces Monsanto, claims it plants GM soy in area where judge forbid its cultivation, says there are few surveillance mechanisms to enforce the decree

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Anti-biotech NGO urges FSANZ to stop Golden Rice sales in Australia and New Zealand, claims agency's safety assessment is inadequate, Golden Rice not effective in addressing VAD, will undermine food sovereignty, democracy in Philippines

Commentary: Friends of the Earth reports civil society representatives "firmly rejected" GMOs as means of addressing food security at recent U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization meeting in Malaysia; delegates claim GM crops diminish local community diets, promote monoculture and increase biosafety risks to health and environment

[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 media coverage of a statement from Nigeria's National Biosafety Management Agency that criticized anti-biotechnology activists. In Brazil, a Supreme Court minister responded to accusations that family-owned farms had irresponsibly used transgenic crops and pesticides.

- Nigerian news outlets reported on a statement released by the National Biosafety Management Agency, which took issue with advocacy groups' criticism of the organization. In the written statement, agency officials accused groups such as Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEF) of being unpatriotic. The agency highlighted its efforts to ensure the safety of GM crops and products, adding that it had the interests of the Nigerian people at heart. [See more](#)
- Brazilian news outlet *Olhar Direto* reported that Supreme Court Minister Gilmar Mendes was denying that farms operated by his family were engaged in any "irregular" use of GM crops or pesticides. The State Prosecutor's Office of Mato Grosso (MPMT) filed a lawsuit earlier this week claiming that Mendes and his brothers were violating regulations on agricultural chemical use given the farms' proximity to protected lands. [See more](#)
- *Press Trust of India* reported on statements from Nobel laureate Richard Roberts, who was participating in the Nobel Prize Series of events in Goa designed to highlight prize-winning science and research. Roberts criticized anti-biotechnology activists for using "lies" and fear to block the technology. He specifically referenced the positive story of Bt cotton production in India. [See more](#)
- U.S. agricultural news outlets and stakeholders continued to respond to the Stonyfield Farms' marketing campaign that made unsupported fear claims about GMOs. *AgProfessional* reported that several researchers and farmers were criticizing the organic dairy company after it deleted negative comments about the video and banned scientists and farmers from its Facebook page. Farming outreach group Dirt to Dinner pointed out that Stonyfield's reflexive objections to GMOs undermined its claimed focus on sustainability. [See more](#)

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North America

Commentary: Cargill-affiliated food info site Dirt to Dinner highlights backlash against Stonyfield Organic for its YouTube video using children to spread misleading claims about GMOs, points out some consumers concerned that messages implied believing in science behind GMOs makes them bad parents

News: AgProfessional reports farmers, researchers, and other biotech supporters take to Twitter, Facebook after Stonyfield continues deleting and censoring comments; notes Kevin Folta says science literacy affects Stonyfield's bottom line because they can't scare people into buying their products

Commentary: U.S. Right to Know's Stacy Malkan criticizes Newsweek and USA Today for running opinion pieces by Henry I. Miller and Alex Berezow, respectively, cites their alleged conflicts of interest, calls for clear standards on disclosing conflicts of interest involving opinion writers

Commentary: Organic Consumers Association criticizes Newsweek for publishing piece about organic

industry by Henry I. Miller, calling him "well-known Monsanto mouthpiece" and rehashing controversy over piece that appeared under his byline in Forbes, citing USRTK article

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News release: NBMA restates commitment to safe GMO use in Nigeria, refutes HOMEF statements suggesting complicity in importing illegal GMOs, calls the statements "incisive" and "unpatriotic"

News: Nigeria's This Day reports National Biosafety Management Agency calls recent statement by anti-GMO group "unpatriotic," says it negates government's effort to ensure safety of modern biotechnology; Health for Mother Earth Foundation accused NBMA of complicity in importation of illegal GM maize in 2017

News: Nigeria's Premium Times reports growing disagreement between National Biosafety Management Agency and anti-GMO campaigners over safety of GM foods; agency accuses activists from Health of Mother Earth Foundation of being "unpatriotic," warns NGO hurting efforts to achieve food security

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science notes Nigeria launched Science Cafe Nigeria to advance science literacy to promote sustainable growth; cafe will be hangout where stakeholders can talk with citizens

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project discusses situation in Uganda, where needs of farmers and fate of at least four improved crops hang in balance as future of nation's biosafety bill unresolved, notes Ugandan scientists working on GE crops, including banana resistant to bacterial wilt, drought-tolerant maize

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Press Trust of India reports remarks by U.K.-based scientist Richard J. Roberts, winner of 1993 Nobel Prize for physiology, criticizing "anti-GMO people," urging politicians to listen to scientists and not those who oppose science with "nonsense," "lies," calling GMOs "future of agriculture"

Commentary: India's Financial Express runs op-ed arguing government may not approve GM mustard for use by farmers, even though nation's highest authority for assessing safety of GM crops declared in 2017 that GM mustard had passed prescribed tests and recommended approval

Commentary: Sputnik runs op-ed piece reacting to U.S. FDA's approval of GM Huahui No. 1 rice, quotes director of China's Yunnan Institute for Ecological Agriculture expressing concerns about GM food, notes large-scale cultivation of GMO cereals still officially prohibited in China

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Event: Norwegian Parliament announces Health and Care Committee to host Feb. 8 open hearing regarding evaluation of Biotechnology Act, releases agenda

Event: Norwegian Biotechnology Council announces meetings March 14 and March 15 for public input into the future regulation of GMOs, NBTs

Event: Norwegian Biotechnology Council summarizes Jan. 29 open hearing in Parliament on Biotechnology Act, committee will submit report April 24 on how to regulate new breeding techniques, while Parliament hearing on paper follows May 15; notes current law is outdated and deals only with medical biotechnology

Interview: Spain's El Mundo talks to Vandana Shiva, who claims "Poison Cartel" dominates world,

asserts Bayer-Monsanto merger will generate more diseases, says Golden Rice doesn't work, characterizes letter from 110 Nobel laureates supporting GMOs as campaign orchestrated by Monsanto

News: Russia Today reports transnational corporations that develop agri-food technologies using Mexico for "experiments," points out 29 of country's 32 states have planted GM corn seeds in experimental phase, notes 2013 class action lawsuit has curbed number of permits granted for sowing of transgenic corn

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Brazil's MidiaNews reports Federal Supreme Court Defense Minister Gilmar Mendes dismisses charges against himself and two of his brothers, says their farms "regularly licensed," after prosecutors charged brothers with planting transgenic foods, using pesticides excessively

News: Brazilian news site reports Minister Gilmar Mendes admits owning farms in environmentally protected area but denies using agrochemicals

Commentary: Brazilian environmental NGO notes state prosecutor filed 2 lawsuits against Federal Supreme Court minister for planting GMOs, using pesticides and fertilizers, says they are concerned about impact on Area of Environmental Preservation where the farms are located

News release: Greenpeace Mexico presents report, "Biosecurity in Mexico," analyzing granting of transgenic soy permit for Monsanto and illegal planting of GM soy in state of Campeche, concluding country's biosecurity measures regarding GMOs have failed or are ineffective in guaranteeing protection

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Australian news source reports member of Parliament says justification by Western Australia's agriculture and food minister for backing inquiry into GM crops "factually incorrect," calls inquiry politically motivated, warns it may ultimately restrict profitability of WA's grain growers

News: Australian science publication reports use of GM plants for food has long way to go in country, despite estimates that GM crops have increased farmers' incomes worldwide; notes GM produce controversial in some countries, where health and environmental advocates argue against their use

[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 reporting on a recently announced agreement of interagency cooperation between the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Okanagan Specialty Fruits announced that its latest non-browning apple had received Canadian approval. Colombian news outlets reported on a regional book tour by science communicator José Miguel Mulet.

- The FDA and USDA announced a new agreement yesterday to boost interagency collaboration, highlighting specifically some of the regulatory concerns around food safety oversight. A joint news release noted that some food products must currently meet food safety guidelines set forth by both agencies, while others are only regulated by one agency. The announcement also noted that the agencies see opportunities to modernize biotechnology regulations; however, no specific policy proposals were discussed. **See more**
- The Intrexon subsidiary Okanagan Specialty Fruits announced that it had received Canadian approval for its Arctic Fuji apple, the latest in its line of gene-edited, non-browning apple varieties. The news release noted that the fruit received U.S. approval in September 2016 and would be available in some U.S. cities this fall. **See more**
- Colombian news outlets reported on the latest book tour of Spanish researcher and science communicator José Miguel Mulet. In interviews with *Agencia EFE* and *El Tiempo*, Mulet criticized anti-biotechnology activists such as Greenpeace for manipulating the public and using fear to undermine the potential health and environmental benefits of agricultural biotechnology. **See more**
- Ugandan science reporter and agriculturalist Isaac Ongu, writing for *New Vision*, criticized President Yoweri Museveni's decision not to sign the country's biotechnology bill. He added that the key concerns highlighted in Museveni's rejection of the measure were already addressed in the country's National Biotechnology and Biosafety Policy of 2008. **See more**

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North America

News release: U.S. FDA and USDA announce formal agreement to boost inter-agency coordination and collaboration, including partnership in key areas such as implementation of produce safety measures and biotech efforts

News: Politico Pro reports on signed agreement between Ag Secretary Perdue and FDA Commissioner Gottlieb to improve inter-agency coordination, including a more collaborative approach to modernizing biotech regulatory framework

News release: Okanagan Specialty Fruits promotes government approval of its third non-browning GE Arctic Apple variety, as Canadian Food Inspection Agency and Health Canada find Arctic Fuji variety poses no greater risk to human health than other apples available on market

News: British Columbia news source reports local company that pioneered non-browning apples with GE Arctic Apple gets approval from Canadian Food Inspection Agency for modified Fuji variety of Arctic

Apple; CFIA rules new variety doesn't pose greater risk to human health than apples currently on Canadian market

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project publishes second of four-part series examining impact of genetic engineering, explaining why animal breeders worldwide being blocked from using genetic engineering, blaming situation on over-regulation by governments, opposition from anti-GMO groups

Commentary: Julie Gunlock of Independent Women's Forum blogs about potential for GMOs to help alleviate world hunger, criticizes "radical green activists" for telling Africans that GMO crops associated with numerous health problems, which has led to some African nations banning GMOs

Campaign: Moms Across America creates list of Monsanto human rights violations to share at Monsanto board meeting with call to cease and desist actions, asserts company products resulted in crimes against pollinators

Commentary: Moms Across America shares comments presented by Zen Honeycutt and Anne Temple at Monsanto's annual shareholder meeting in St. Louis, they re-emphasized glyphosate health claims, claimed GMOs are not helping to feed the world

More North America items

Africa

Commentary: Agriculturist Isaac Ongu writes for Uganda's New Vision, criticizes President Museveni's "insensitive" flip-flop on GMO policy, notes all concerns raised by civil society organizations are addressed in the biosafety bill's 10 strategic areas

News: Ghanaian news outlet reports on statement by Science and Technology Research Institute's Richard Ampadu Ameya urging people not to conflate biotechnology with the Plant Breeders Bill, explaining that the two are not entirely related

News release: Ghanaian news source publishes release from Food Sovereignty Ghana touting role of its director in debate on GMOs sponsored by Ministry of Food and Agriculture, claiming only two of 47 people in room raised their hands in favor of GMOs after four other people on panel spoke in support of them

News: Nigeria's Independent reports on National Biosafety Management Agency Director-General Rufus Ebegba's assurance that NBMA is committed to ensuring safe use of GMOs, following recent negative statements by Health of Mother Earth Foundation

More Africa items

Asia

News: ISAAA Crop Biotech Update reports on Jan. 23 gene editing and genomics seminars at the Institute of Plant Breeding, University of the Philippines Los Banos; Dr. Zachary Lippman of Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory (CSHL) in New York, and Dr. Byoung-Cheorl Kang of Seoul National University in Seoul, South Korea presented the seminars

More Asia items

Europe

Commentary: Javier Jimenez of Spain's Xataka criticizes Vandana Shiva's "lies," says her support of peasant struggles became an anti-science crusade; argues that there is a moral imperative to use golden rice, points to number of lives it would save

Video: PlayGround posts Facebook video in which Vandana Shiva talks about the "deceitful" modern system of agriculture, charges it produces "fake food," that it is costly for planet and producers but made to look cheap for consumers, cites production with GMOs and patents and royalties as "high-cost"

News: U.K.'s Horticulture Week reports senior plant geneticist at Rothamsted Research says European Court of Justice's "landmark opinion" on definition of GMOs could pave way for revival of crop biotechnology in Europe

News release: Supermarket chain LIDL Switzerland promoting its participation in transnational Lidl Soy Initiative, which aims to gradually increase global share of certified, sustainable and non-GMO soybeans; Lidl Germany and Lidle Austria also working with ProTerra

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Interview: Bolivian newspaper El Tiempo interviews Spanish molecular biologist Jose Miguel Mulet about his book, "Transgenics Without Fear," he says campaign against GMOs has little information to support it, asserts world no longer can live without GMOs, opposition to them "really stupid"

News: Spain's Agencia EFE reports on interview with University of Valencia molecular biologist Jose Miguel Mulet, on tour in Colombia to promote his book, "Transgenics Without Fear," notes Mulet points out transgenics not proven to cause any health or environmental problems after 20 years in use

News release: GRAIN, as part of Latin American Seeds Collective, announces release of documentary, "Seeds: commons or corporate property?", depicting efforts to protect indigenous and native seeds in several Latin American countries

[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

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Today's global biotechnology developments included news and commentary on the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) decision to open a consultation on its risk assessment process. Regional media outlets reported on the opening of a new biosafety laboratory in Namibia, while a Rwandan news outlet noted concerns about that country's draft biosafety law.

- A Washington law firm analyzing the European Commission's public consultation on the EFSA risk assessment process highlighted the role of the glyphosate debate as a "stalking horse" for regulations on GM crops. The commission's Jan. 23 release indicated its decision to take public comments was made in response to comments received during the European Citizens' Initiative on glyphosate. **See more**
- News outlets in Namibia reported on the grand opening of the country's National Biotechnology, Testing, Training and Research Laboratory. At a press event, researchers emphasized the facility's importance to fulfilling obligations under the recent biosafety act and noted that the testing process would prevent illegal GMO products. **See more**
- Following up on a Jan. 26 report, Rwanda's *The New Times* reported that local researchers and politicians were concerned that multinational companies may have had a role in drafting the country's proposed biosafety law. The draft law will be reviewed by the Rwanda Law Reform Commission before potentially being introduced to parliament. The report quoted a veterinary researcher who claimed that civil society groups around the world were concerned about diseases and deformities linked to GM crops. **See more**

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North America

Commentary: Bernard D. Goldstein of University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health writes for The Hill, argues President Trump is correct in his recent assessment that the EU misuses the precautionary principle to ban American ag produce

Commentary: Futurism lists five ways gene editing will transform world, touts promise of CRISPR to create new, healthier foods, notes distinction between GMOs and GE crops, speculates CRISPR could eradicate malaria-carrying mosquitoes

Commentary: U.S. News and World Report runs op-ed by former USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack warning that food labels playing on consumer fears, such as "non-GMO," could hurt consumer confidence in food system; highlights dairy companies that put "non-GMO" labels on their milk

News: Roast Magazine's Daily Coffee News runs lengthy piece about how genetic engineering may be used to save coffee from effects of climate change, diseases, notes genomic editing and CRISPR could allow scientists to edit coffee genome

News: MediaPost reports Stonyfield's former creative agency, GYK Antler, issues statement clarifying that Stonyfield is no longer a client, and that it did not create or take part in the recent video campaign,

nor does it support Stonyfield leadership's response

Commentary: Medium posts blog by self-described microbiologist criticizing Stonyfield for anti-GMO video that used children, reporting he was among those banned from posting comments on organic dairy company's website, sampling similar comments from other banned science communicators

Commentary: Yale Neurologist Steven Novella criticizes recent Stonyfield video, notes it makes connection between anti-GMO fearmongering and organic explicit, believes the ad is a microcosm of all problems with using false narratives to market pseudoscience

Commentary: "Farm Babe" Michelle Miller writes for Ag Daily, examines backlash surrounding Stonyfield's recent ad featuring young children spreading misinformation about GMOs, criticizes them for banning comments pointing to flaws in their claims

More North America items

Africa

Commentary: Writing at Alliance for Science, former activist Mark Lynas says new Ugandan biosafety draft would threaten jail times for plant researchers over "commingling" concerns, could fine regulators for GMO "inconvenience"

News: Rwanda's New Times reports on debate surrounding Rwanda Environment Management Authority's (REMA) draft GMO regulation, University of Rwanda genetics lecturer Martin Ntawubizi voiced concerns about involvement of multinationals

News: News Agency of Nigeria reports on Namibia's opening of GMO testing laboratory, Namibia's Higher Education Minister, Itah Kandjii-Murangi noted building local food safety assessment capacity will enable informed decision making

News: Namibia's New Era reports the National Biotechnology, Testing, Training and Research Laboratory will help Namibia make evidence-based decisions on GMOs, and ensure that only approved products are traded, according to Dr. Lisho Mundia

News: The Namibian reports on launch of National Commission for Research, Science and Technology's (NCRST) biotech testing, training and research laboratory, biotech manager Paulus Mungeyi noted lack of capacity and resources has led to misinformation

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

Commentary: Esther Samper of Spain's El Diario examines latest biotech developments with potential to benefit humanity, such as golden rice recently approved by Australia and New Zealand, notes opposition is more ideological and irrational than science-based

Commentary: French pro-ag blogger Seppi explains EU Court of Justice Advocate General's opinion on products of mutagenesis, criticizes original complaint brought forward by NGO Confederation Paysanne, laments lack of rationality in the debate

News release: EU Commission announces public consultation period through March 20 regarding transparency and sustainability of EU risk assessment, acknowledging citizens' concerns about EFSA's assessments based on industry studies on pesticides and GMOs

Commentary: Lisa Campbell, James Aidala and Lisa Burchi of Bergeson & Campbell believe EU Commission's public consultation on EFSA risk assessment is of significant interest to stakeholders regarding transparency

News release: French farmers NGO Rural Coordination expresses skepticism about speech by President Emmanuel Macron, questions his intentions to save French agriculture in EU, asserts food sovereignty can only be solved by Common Agricultural Policy reformed in depth and protecting imports of soya

Event: French anti-GMO NGO inf'OGM promotes "Do No GMO" trade show and conference to be held Feb. 3, 10, 13 and 18 in cities around France, with general theme of "Wheat farmers, local solutions, peasant seeds, alternatives to GMO wheat"

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science posts blog by Legal Affairs Fellow from Guatemala discussing how Argentina and Brazil are merging law, science to regulate new breeding techniques, with both countries using case-by-case assessments

News: Mexican news site reports Monsanto legal director Rodrigo Ojeda de Konin says new GM technologies will improve livelihoods for "thousands," adding there is no scientific or medical evidence to support claims of health risks; Monsanto waiting for legal ruling in Yucatan

News: Bolivian news site reports Santa Cruz agricultural sector will propose eight GM crops, two varieties each of soybean, corn, cotton and sugar cane; Interagro official calls on comprehensive government regulations for the new technologies, adding Bolivia has a significant technological gap compared to peers

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News release: Royal Society Te Aparangi promotes expert papers on gene editing, encourages New Zealanders to share views on potential uses of gene editing in country; future papers will outline scenarios for use of gene editing in agriculture, will examine current legislation and regulation

[More Oceania items](#)

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Global biotechnology developments included continued criticism about Stonyfield Farm's ad using children to criticize GMOs and its removal of reactions from its Facebook page. Mexican news sources reported indigenous Mayan communities will get legal support from the Campeche state government to oppose GM soy and other GM crops.

- Biotechnology advocates continued to criticize Stonyfield's ad featuring young girls spreading misinformation about GMOs. Hank Campbell of American Council on Science and Health called the ad sexist, arguing it sends a message that girls can't understand science. Genetic Literacy Project's Andrew Porterfield criticized the company for censoring thoughtful, science-based comments on its Facebook page. Karen Batra wrote on BIOtech Now that "social media activity has been swift" in response to the ad and reported a "Banned by Stonyfield" Facebook group has been created. [See more](#)
- *La Jornada Maya* reported 38 indigenous Mayan communities will receive legal support from the Campeche state government in their fight to oppose the planting of transgenic soy and GM crops. Mexico's *Tribuna de Campeche* reported Campeche signed an agreement with the states of the Yucatan Peninsula to prevent planting of GM crops, adding Roberto Iván Alcalá Ferrández of the state Environment Ministry noted protocol for this protection is given in the COP13 framework. [See more](#)

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

North America

[Commentary: Forbes contributors Cameron English and Kavin Senapathy provide "Insider tips for conversations with those who reject empirical scientific truths" for "fraught subjects like food, health and environmental policy"](#)

[Commentary: Writing for The Liberty Beacon, Christina Sarich highlights newly-opened San Francisco lab that detects microscopic levels of glyphosate in food, soil samples, says scientific discourse suggests glyphosate is much more toxic than biotech industry has revealed](#)

[Commentary: Hank Campbell of American Council on Science and Health criticizes Stonyfield's recent ad featuring young girls spreading misinformation about GMOs as sexist, argues it sends a message that girls can't understand science](#)

[Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project's Andrew Porterfield examines backlash following Stonyfield's ad featuring young girls spreading misinformation about GMOs, criticizes the company for censoring thoughtful comments posted on its website](#)

[Commentary: Caroline Seydel of Genetic Literacy Project examines developments in gene drives to control mosquitos and spread of diseases like Zika, highlights UC Riverside entomologist Omar Akbari's development of mosquitoes with their own molecular scissors](#)

[News: Agri-Pulse reports pig farmer says CRISPR could bring better disease resistance against porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome; genome amendments could also be significant to human health;](#)

biotech expert Alison Van Eenennaam says FDA defining all intentional DNA alterations in animals as drugs is nonsensical

News release: Center for Food Safety issues comment on federal appeals court's denial of FDA's attempt to withhold government documents showing how agency arrived at decision to approve GE salmon for human consumption; CFS and Earthjustice co-counsels in case, representing coalition of groups, including Friends of the Earth

More North America items

Africa

News release: African Centre for Biodiversity promotes report summarizing national seed dialogue and celebration held in December 2017 in Johannesburg, focusing on issues for smallholder farmers and seed diversity in South Africa, including seed banks and seed saving, farmer participation in plant breeding, crop improvement

News: Nigeria's The Tide reports on Nigeria Agribusiness Group Coordinator Emmanuel Ijewere's argument that embracing GMOs will help boost food production and extend shelf-life while using less labor and fewer natural resources, pointing to safe use in the U.S.

News: Kenyan news site reports CRISPR is the most simple, efficient tool for gene manipulation, could be effective for HIV, cancer and cardiomyopathy treatment

More Africa items

Asia

News: Xinhua reports Namibia opens country's first lab for testing food for GMOs, government official says testing crucial to ensure only GMOs and GMO products approved for use in Namibia on market, asserts country suffered misinformation on GMOs because of lack of detection capacity, training in biotechnology

More Asia items

Europe

Interview: Belgian-based NGO talks to Vandana Shiva about her advocacy for food sovereignty and agroecology; she claims Monsanto's transgenic seeds have resulted in exponential price increases, are responsible for "genocide" of Indian farmers

Report: EFSA releases technical report on GMOs with explanatory note on selection of forage material suitable for risk assessment of GM feed of plant origin, notes definition of forage varies on crop-by-crop basis, provides crop-specific definition of forage for maize, soybean, sugar beet, rapeseed, cotton

Report: USDA Foreign Agricultural Service issues GAIN Report on new mandatory labeling requirements for GE feed in Ukraine entering into force in January 2020

News: Reuters reports on EU antitrust investigators' extension of their investigation of Bayer-Monsanto deal by five working days, until March 12, Bayer now has until Feb. 5 to propose concessions such as asset sales

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Mexico's La Jornada Maya reports 38 indigenous Mayan communities to get legal support from state government in fight to oppose planting of transgenic soy, other transgenic crops in their soils

News: Brazilian news source reports public prosecutor's office files two lawsuits against Supreme Court

Justice Gilmar Mendes for uncontrolled use of pesticides and irregular planting of transgenic crops in a preservation area, lawsuit asks Mendes' family to stop planting transgenic crops within two years

News: Mexico's Tribunal de Campeche reports Campeche signs agreement with states of Yucatan

Peninsula to prevent planting of GM crops, Roberto Ivan Alcala Ferraez of state Environment Ministry noted protocol for this protection is given in COP13 framework

News release: Spanish NGO GRAIN promotes new documentary produced by Latin American Seeds Collective, "Seeds: commons or corporate property?", which depicts rural and indigenous peoples of eight Latin American nations struggling against seed laws, imposition of transgenic seeds

News: Bolivian news source reports agricultural producers of Santa Cruz hope government approves release of transgenic seed varieties of soybeans, corn, cotton, sugar cane, say it would shorten time to have improved seeds, events with recognized successes

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: Food Navigator reports on GE Free New Zealand's call for Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) to review its draft approval for Golden Rice, GE Free NZ President Claire Bleakley called for 90-day feeding trials, questioned its efficacy

More Oceania items

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 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - Jan. 29, 2018
 Date: Monday, January 29, 2018 4:05:11 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

Stonyfield Farm stirred up considerable controversy with its latest bid to demonize GMOs. Using a video featuring children to spread questionable claims about biotechnology, the organic giant co-founded by Gary Hirshberg has become the recipient of **significant backlash** from food and agriculture communicators upset by this fear-mongering tactic.

We've included examples of these articles from Kavin Senapathy, Amanda Zaluckyj and the "Science Moms" below, and more can be found by clicking [here](#). Stonyfield raised eyebrows again when it decided to delete comments from its Facebook page that criticized the video.

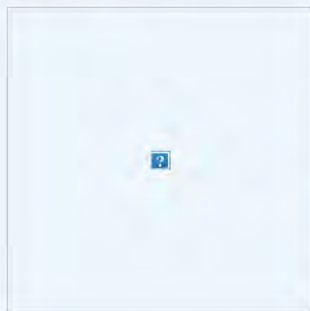
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In This Issue

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

Stakeholder Spotlight: ActionAid



ActionAid is a global advocacy NGO with annual budgets exceeding U.S.\$200 million whose country missions have aggressively opposed the introduction of agricultural biotechnology in developing markets.

ActionAid Uganda was recently

Stories Worth Sharing

[Kavin Senapathy: Stonyfield goes too far by using children to perpetuate myths about biotechnology](#)

[Amanda Zaluckyj: Stonyfield taken to task for anti-GMO video, responds with "glaring lies"](#)

[Dr. Guy-André Pelouze: Flawed decisions made when glyphosate policymakers carelessly substitute risk for hazard](#)

[Bernhard Uri: Some campaigners unwilling to accept evidence certain substances are safe, retort with weak scientific studies](#)

[Science Moms: "Beyond the pale" for Stonyfield to use children for fear-based anti-GMO video](#)

[Alex Berezow: Science has "definitively shown" organic food is not healthier - and it isn't pesticide-free either](#)

[Frank Giles: Why would orange juice brand embrace Non-GMO Project and its false claims when biotech may save the citrus industry?](#)

[Wandile Sihlobo: Last year's harvest proof that other African nations should follow South Africa's lead and permit GM crops](#)

[Corry Elyda: Biotechnology a "logical solution" for poverty, food insecurity in Indonesia and beyond](#)

investigated by government authorities for money laundering and using foreign donor cash to illegally lobby the Ugandan Parliament to influence local political issues. ActionAid Uganda led local efforts to block GMO biosafety enabling legislation.

LEARN MORE about ActionAid's global NGO network and local activities promoting organic, agroecology and anti-GMO philosophies throughout the globe.

CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES

Renee Pinel: Science overwhelmingly proves glyphosate is safe, but activists cite IARC as "gospel proof" experts are wrong [?](#)

Steve Cerier: CRISPR puts humankind "on the verge of a genetic revolution" in how food is grown [?](#)

Science Codex: Court bases ruling on Dannon labeling on science, dismisses plaintiffs' arguments about "feelings" [?](#)

George Omondi: Kenyan president turns to genetically modified cotton to create 50,000 jobs [?](#)

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What's Trending?

Stonyfield Farm draws backlash from involving children in fear-mongering, anti-science video on GMOs

Cambridge scientists: Despite misleading NGO campaigns, managed bees are livestock instead of conservation issue

French president promises not to ban glyphosate unless credible alternative is available

Industry groups launch coalition demanding reform to International Agency for Research on Cancer monograph program

Calendar highlights

January 29-31	January 30-31	January 31
Latin American and Caribbean regional meeting on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management	Sustainable Foods Summit North America	Sustainable Use Directive symposium on integrated pest management
February 1-2	February 3	February 6-8
European Commission workshop on EDC guidance applicability	French Festival Without GMOs (Faites Sans OGM)	Africa regional meeting on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management

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 continued commentary on Stonyfield Farm's ad using children to criticize GMOs and its removal of science-based reactions from its Facebook page. The Armenian Parliament conducted a hearing on GMOs as legislation on GMO imports is being drafted.

- Biotechnology advocates criticized Stonyfield Farm for removing polite, scientifically accurate comments from its Facebook page. Organic Authority reported Stonyfield's official reply called some of its critics "trolls." The comments reacted to a Stonyfield video that used children to criticize GMOs. *AGDAILY* posted an open letter from a group whose comments were deleted. Kevin Folta argued comments were removed because when "social media erupts with scientific comments in a kind vein, it makes their loyal customer base wonder if they are doing the right thing by paying more for equivalent products and/or supporting a company that lies to consumers." **See more**
- During an Armenian Parliament hearing on GM food, president Karine Danielyan of the NGO For Human Sustainable Development said GMO products cause "allergenic diseases," counteract antibiotics, are "transmitted from generation to generation" and cause diseases not recognized by modern medicine. A musician from a heavy metal rock band urged Armenians to avoid GMOs. A deputy minister said the country is developing legislation to regulate GMO imports. **See more**

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North America

Commentary: The Greeley Tribune editorial says it's time to trust GM crops, blames social media for scientific ignorance it's easier to scare people; notes we will need GM crops to increase yields as available farm land shrinks

News: Modern Farmer reports on increased competition in U.S. soybean market following Monsanto's recent trouble with dicamba, BASF and DowDuPont are likely to release new GM soybean varieties soon

Commentary: Layla Katirae writes for Genetic Literacy Project, dispels myth that geneticists who work for corporations are less ethical than those who work for universities

Commentary: Florida Grower editor writes for Growing Produce site, says non-GMO Project makes false claims regarding GMO safety, says it is bothersome to see major orange juice brand with non-GMO label when GM orange tree may save industry from citrus greening

Commentary: The Cato Institute's "Regulation" magazine runs article co-written by Henry I. Miller arguing FDA regulations have nearly destroyed promising sector of genetic engineering of animals, in which United States had been poised to play leading role, calling for switching FDA's jurisdiction over GM animals to USDA, EPA

Commentary: Hillary Bonhomme of The New Food Economy examines Bananacoin, a new blockchain option for investing in organic banana production, notes there is no blockchain option for investing in

GM bananas[More North America items](#)**Africa**

News: Nigerian news site reports anti-biotech NGO HOMEF accuses biotech regulator of being complicit in illegal GM maize importation, says it "dashes any hope of safe biosafety regime"

Commentary: Editorial for Rwanda's The New Times calls for more debate on GMOs, believes Rwanda Environmental Management Authority's draft GMO regulation should not be hurried, but informed by science to protect humans and the environment

News: Reuters highlights issue of fall armyworm devastating African crops, threatening food production, notes use of GM crops, pesticides similar to American farmers potentially too expensive, harmful to environment, amplifies FAO official stressing need to mix crops, use natural predators

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

News: Times of India reports Monsanto sent letter to Ag Minister Radha Mohan Singh noting it had warned about bollworm resistance to Bt cotton seed in 2015, National Seed Association of India argues the letter is admission of the technology's failure

News: U.K. price reporting agency AgriCensus reports China imposing new penalties on soybean importers that break laws on buying GMOs; Agricultural GMO Regulation Scheme designed to better regulate whole supply chain of GMO products into China, importers who break law could be suspended, their goods seized

News: Armenian news site reports deputy minister calls upon researchers to decide if GMOs are safe or not and notes Armenia's labeling requirement; says no one is "absent in the head" enough to use GMOs if they are unsafe

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

News: Italian news agency reports on letter signed by researchers in 13 EU countries, including Roberto Defez of National Research Council in Naples, calling for freedom of choice in GMO research, and for authorizations to be granted following EFSA approval

News: Spanish news outlet reports on debate surrounding regulation of new breeding techniques, highlights EU Court of Justice Advocate General's opinion on mutagenesis, examines various new gene-edited products approved in the U.S.

News: Reuters reports on Gates Foundation's \$174 million funding for ag innovation projects in Scotland, with goal of improving livestock productivity to benefit poor farmers, potentially benefiting 100 million African farmers

Interview: Spanish news outlet interviews Vandana Shiva, she describes her activism, reiterates claims about negative impacts of industrial ag, specifically GMOs and pesticides, on human health, the environment, and developing economies, promotes agroecology

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

News: Mexican news outlet reports on recent 48th Congress of Research and Development at Monterrey Institute of Technology, where biochemical engineer Dr. Luis Herrera Estrella lamented that opposition to GMOs prevents scientific advancement in Mexico

News: El Salvador news site reports parliament member claims GMOs "shown to produce long-term mutations," wants to regulate advertising of harmful foods

More Latin America items

Oceania

Campaign: Friends of the Earth Melbourne urges supporters to submit comments to Western Australia gov't on Farmer Protection Legislation, demanding protection for GM-free farmers that are economically disadvantaged by GM crops

Announcement: Australia's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator posts documents related to risk assessment and risk management plan for RMIT University's application for limited and controlled release of buffalo grass genetically modified for herbicide tolerance and dwarf phenotype, invites public to comment,

Commentary: Radio New Zealand's Simon Morton examines advances in CRISPR gene editing, highlights several applications under development, pointing to several benefits, discusses debate surrounding regulation

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology developments included continued outreach on Nigeria's recently passed biosafety law. In the U.S., organic dairy producer Stonyfield Farm responded to recent criticism of a marketing campaign.

- Nigerian stakeholders continued outreach efforts to explain the potential benefits of GM crops in the country. Speaking with reporter Nkechi Isaac, the assistant director of the National Biotechnology Development Agency (NABDA) emphasized the key role that local researchers and companies will play in introducing the crops. Nigeria Agribusiness Group Coordinator Emmanuel Ijewere told *News Agency of Nigeria* that the crops could help ensure the country's food security. [See more](#)
- U.S. organic dairy producer Stonyfield Farm released a Facebook video on Tuesday featuring young children expressing concern over the use of GMOs, prompting backlash from parents and ag advocates. Stonyfield issued a response, reinforcing its claims that GM crops increase the use of "toxic herbicides." The backlash was highlighted in a *Forbes* article by science communicator Kavin Senapathy. [See more](#)

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North America

[Commentary: Kavin Senapathy writes for Forbes, criticizes Stonyfield Organic's response to criticism of its anti-GMO advertisement featuring young children, points out several flaws in their arguments](#)

[Commentary: Stonyfield Farm issues response to GMO Discussion, clarifying its position that while GMOs have not been proven harmful, the majority of GM crops are grown with "toxic" herbicides like glyphosate, pointing to IARC's review, supports labeling](#)

[News: Reuters reports on soybean seed and herbicide technology market competition, noting threats facing Monsanto that include dicamba drift concerns, related lawsuits; adds DowDupont faces greatest obstacle as it waits for Chinese regulators to approve imports of soybeans harvested from Enlist E3 seeds](#)

[Commentary: Rafi Loiederman of Dr. Bronner's blog promotes Regenerative Agriculture Certification over USDA organic certification, pointing to need for improvement in soil health management, animal welfare, and farm worker safety](#)

[Commentary: Kelsey McKinney writes for Thrillist, examining developments in CRISPR and confusion surrounding regulation of products of gene editing, argues that consumers deserve to know how their food is made](#)

[More North America items](#)

Africa

[Commentary: Agricultural economist Wandile Sihlobo writes for HuffPost South Africa, argues that other](#)

African nations should follow in South Africa's example and adopt GM crops, highlighting bumper maize harvest in 2016-17 season in spite of fall armyworm

News: Rose Gidado of Nigeria's biosafety agency tells Cornell's Alliance for Science that Bt cowpea and cotton varieties should reach farmers in 2018, highlights role of local crop developers and researchers

News: News Agency of Nigeria reports on Nigeria Agribusiness Group Coordinator Emmanuel Ijewere's opinion that embracing GMOs will help tackle problems of pest infestations and food shortages, he noted organic ag does not produce enough food

News release: Mauritius Government Information Service announces workshop on "New Plant Breeding Methods for Sustainable Use of Genetic Resources and Security of Food Production," will be held at University of Mauritius from Jan. 29-31, 2018

News: Kenyan business news outlet reports on President Uhuru Kenyatta's economic revival plan, which bets on mass production of GM cotton to create 50,000 jobs and generate Sh20 billion in apparel export earnings

News: The Economist reports fall armyworm invading Africa, most all of the 35m hectares of maize grown by smallholders is affected, FAO hopes to teach farmers new techniques used in America

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: Third World Network amplifies study in Environmental Health claiming to demonstrate multiple health benefits of organic agriculture, highlights findings regarding pesticide exposure, omega-3 fatty acids, and animal antibiotics

News: Indian news site reports scientists at National Agri-Food Biotechnology Institute, Mohali have used CRISPR-Cas9 to modify the banana genome for the first time; technique can be used to improve nutritional quality, agronomical traits and pathogen resistance; India largest global banana producer

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News release: Italian NGO Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Firenze to host Vandana Shiva for sixth round of the cycle of meetings, "On the heels of the days" on Jan. 27, she will give a talk on "Responsibility and Environment"

Commentary: French magazine Sans Transition! promotes upcoming conferences with Vandana Shiva (Feb. 21-23, 2018) who will be visiting France for the release of her new book, "Le Cercle Vertueux," co-written with Nicolas Hulot

News release: Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade announces success in agricultural diplomacy as four more countries join European Soy Declaration, to promote cultivation of sustainable and GM-free feed crops

News: EurActiv reports on recent Parliamentary event hosted by British MEP Julie Girling, where multiple stakeholders discussed how science can be used to build trust in the EU, highlights issues surrounding precautionary principle in GMO and glyphosate debates

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Bolivian news outlet editorial argues that continued importation of food products and prohibition of GM seed use leaves Bolivian agriculture at a competitive disadvantage

News: Bolivian news outlet reports on Association of Oilseed and Wheat Producers (Anapo) President Marcelo Pantoja's assessment that release of a biotech event can take three-four years, he emphasized need for biotech crops in the sector to boost productivity

Commentary: Colombian collaborator for WATT AgNet, Alexander Barajas Maldonado, hopes CRISPR will improve public acceptance of biotech to help boost food security, notes GMOs have been used safely for years

News: Mexico's El Universal reports on controversy surrounding GM soy cultivation in Yucatan Peninsula, highlighting legal challenge brought by Mayan communities voicing concern about impact of GMOs on their honey production, and lack of consultation

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News release: Australian anti-GMO NGO MADGE calls on Ministers on the Forum to request a review of Food Standards Australia New Zealand's (FSANZ) approval of GM golden rice, argues one carrot has same amount of vitamin A as nearly 4kg of cooked golden rice

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Jan. 24, 2018
 Date: Wednesday, January 24, 2018 9 04:05 PM

FAST ACCESS: MONITORING \ STAKEHOLDERS \ COMMUNITY

Global Biotech Snapshot

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 news that Brazil's patent office was challenging Monsanto's patent on its Intacta soybean variety. Canadian activist group Vigilance OGM announced that a third-party certification group had found an herbicide-tolerance gene in crop weeds.

- *Reuters* reported that Brazil's patent office planned to side with Aprosoja over a patent dispute, finding that Monsanto's Intacta RR2 Pro did not offer technological innovation. In a follow-up report, the news agency quoted a Monsanto spokesperson who said that the company planned to argue against the decision by the court's March 22 deadline. [See more](#)
- Anti-biotechnology group Vigilance OGM amplified an October announcement from Quebec's grains research group that found an herbicide-tolerance gene in wild bird mustard. The activist group claimed that the findings demonstrated how GMO co-existence measures were inadequate and argued that the introduction of glyphosate-resistant canola in Canada threatened organic canola producers. [See more](#)

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

North America

Commentary: Canadian NGO Vigilance OGM amplifies Grain Research Center's detection of first glyphosate-resistant weed in Quebec, notes the discovery is not surprising given widespread use of glyphosate on GM crops, highlights threat to organic production

Announcement: Bill in Hawaii State Legislature would require disclosure of pesticide use and production of GE crops, establish pesticide buffer zones, prohibit open air testing of experimental pesticides and GE crops, require environmental impact statements

Commentary: Jennifer Berry of Comstock's magazine examines latest developments in genetic engineering, highlights work of Dr. Allen Van Deynze at the UC Davis Seed Biotechnology Center, and potential global applications of new technologies

Commentary: Steve Cerier begins first in Genetic Literacy Project's four-part series on impact of GE on our lives, with focus on GE applications in food, highlights applications to boost nutrition and to protect crops from pests and disease, examines potential of CRISPR

Commentary: Natural Blaze editor Heather Callaghan warns readers about a potential "flood of GM rice," following U.S. FDA's approval of a Chinese pest-resistant GM rice variety, notes FDA did not conduct its own experiments

Commentary: The Daily Caller runs op-ed by executive director of Climate Science Coalition defending modern agriculture against attacks by environmentalists, listing genetic engineering of plants and animals among reasons for rising farm output worldwide with better food quality and variety

News: Fast Company reports on release of book by former Humane Society official, "Clean Meat," that

argues world ready for cellular agriculture and plant-based meat revolution, claims development of Impossible Burger and lab-grown chicken points to future trend

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Ugandan news source reports nation's science minister claims some media incorrectly reported that President Yoweri Museveni rejected signing National Biosafety Bill, asserts president merely seeks clarification on some issues

News release: African Centre for Biodiversity promotes release of study, "The Green Innovation Centre in Zambia: Fighting Hunger through Corporate Supply Chains?", which discusses approach and impact of German government's Green Innovation Centre project

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: Jakarta Post's Corry Elyda examines benefits of biotech, after attending CroPLife's ASEAN Plant Science Primer event in Manila, argues biotech is necessary to solve problems of declining arable land, poverty and food insecurity

News: Armenian news source reports Agriculture Ministry discusses draft version of law on GMO biosafety, with government officials saying legislation would regulate, restrict import of GM products, also would label GMO products to be sold on separate shelves

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News release: University of Zurich promotes work by its researchers who developed transgenic wheat lines with improved resistance to fungal disease powdery mildew in field trials; scientists say combination of two variations of resistance gene offers better protection with no negative effects on wheat yield

News release: German NGO Testbiotech criticizes EU Court of Justice Advocate General's opinion on new breeding techniques, believes final court decision will not likely end the debate, noting potential for regulatory gaps

Commentary: Lawrence Woodward of Beyond GM analyzes recent opinion by EU Court of Justice Advocate General regarding regulation of products of mutagenesis, argues that EU politicians and policy makers cannot ignore wishes of citizens

Announcement: EU Commission Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety issues notice to stakeholders regarding implications for Brexit and GM food and feed applications from the U.K., businesses should carefully consider timeline before resubmitting applications

Event: De Roma in Antwerp, Belgium to host screening of "Well Fed" documentary (Jan. 23, 2018), featuring discussion with creators Hidde Boersma and Karsten de Vreugd, highlights goal of answering question of whether it is moral to oppose GMOs

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Reuters reports Monsanto has two months to present defense of its patent on GM Intacta soybean seeds in Brazil after authorities there suggested seed company's intellectual property rights should be revoked; Monsanto attorney says company will present arguments ahead of March 22 deadline

News: Argentina's BAE Business reports Brazilian patent office supports position of farmers' group that wants patent for Monsanto's Intacta GM soybean seed canceled in Brazil, which would prevent company from collecting royalties on profitable soy, beginning with 2019 growing season

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Commentary: Australian agribusiness consultant Jan Davis writes for The Mercury, welcomes gene technology regulator's review of how new biotechnologies should be regulated, highlights opportunities for Tasmania, which currently has a GMO moratorium

[More Oceania items](#)

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

Events calendar

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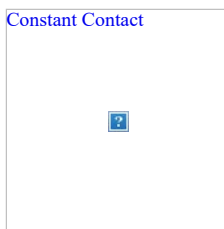
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 Date: Tuesday, January 23, 2018 9:02:13 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology developments included reporting on an agriculture forum in Italy, where Italian stakeholders discussed sustainable growth in the industry. In Spain, Vandana Shiva began a weeklong European lecture tour. In Uganda, civil society groups held a news conference to criticize the country's proposed biosafety bill.

- Italian media outlets reported on a recent forum held by Confagricoltura at which representatives of the agriculture industry highlighted the future challenges for Italian agricultural competitiveness. Among other issues raised, Italian Sen. Roberto Formigoni criticized the pernicious effects of GMO disinformation campaigns spread by advocacy groups. Senator-for-life Elena Cattaneo, meanwhile, highlighted the potential benefits of new plant breeding techniques in the region. **See more**
- Spanish news outlets highlighted Shiva's presentation at the Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona, where she criticized industrial approaches to environmental issues. Shiva specifically criticized India's Green Revolution and accused Monsanto and other companies of undermining biodiversity and peasant agricultural systems. Shiva will be presenting in Madrid on Wednesday (Jan. 24), and in Florence, Italy starting Saturday (Jan. 27). **See more**
- News outlets in Uganda reported that civil society groups continued to advocate against the country's biosafety bill. *Chimp Reports* and *Daily Monitor* quoted a Food Rights Alliance spokesperson, who told news conference attendees that the law needed to create clear guidelines for liability and redress when GM crops "contaminate" indigenous or organic varieties. **See more**

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North America

News: American Seed Trade Association president tells Successful Farming plant breeding is becoming more precise with exciting gene editing technologies such as CRISPR, though it will take time to bring products to market

Commentary: Investing consultant says new gene-editing techniques will eliminate the need for harmful GMO, end Monsanto's reign; urges investors to monitor gene tech industry for investment opportunities

Commentary: U.S. Right to Know's Stacy Malkan lists several media and research articles based on USRTK's investigative work, includes Le Monde's "Monsanto Papers" series, several New York Times articles, and Carey Gillam's "Whitewash"

Commentary: Sierra Club review says Charles Mann's 'The Wizard and the Prophet' highlights research innovations that advance theories championed by Norman Borlaug, including the C4 Rice Consortium

More North America items

Africa

News: Ugandan news outlet reports Civil Society Organizations welcome President Museveni's decision not to sign the biosafety bill, Agnes Kirabo of Food Alliance echoed Museveni's concern about the name of the bill, noting it is really about GMOs

Commentary: National Biosafety Management Agency director general speech at launch of Science Cafe Nigeria says GMO controversy illustrates how gap between science, public opinion threatens innovation, adding good science journalism is a solution

News: Kenyan news outlet reports on GMO expert Joel Ochieng's statement that Kenya may conduct GM trials in June 2019, subject to Parliament's approval, he noted approval will enable Kenya to address hunger problems, pointing to challenge of high food prices

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project contributor says AATF Bt cowpea project challenges beliefs that only agribusiness delivers transgenic crops, promotes public sector GM crop as way to reduce pesticide use, fight poverty in West Africa

Commentary: African Agricultural Technology Foundation posts article by Joseph Opoku Gakpo, examining Burkina Faso's progress in GMO research in spite to transition away from Bt cotton, highlights work on AATF's Bt cowpea project

News: Times of Swaziland reports Ag Minister Moses Vilakati issued statement that import of GM crops remains banned, reacting to applications presented to Swaziland Environmental Authority for growing GM cotton and importing GM maize

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Reuters reports on U.S. FDA approval of Chinese pest-resistant GM rice variety developed by Huazhong University research team, U.S. gov't validation of China's GMO safety testing and products could help improve Chinese gov't and public acceptance

News: China Daily reports on U.S. FDA and EPA approval of GM pest-resistant rice variety developed by Huazhong Agricultural University, the researchers are looking for U.S. commercial approval, as Chinese approval is not likely in the next few years

News: Xinhua reports on U.S. FDA approval of pest-resistant GM rice variety, Huahui No. 1, developed by Huazhong Agricultural University, the university noted it has also passed U.S. EPA safety inspections, meaning it can be sold to American consumers

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News release: Italian ag organization Confagricoltura recently held a forum in Milan, where its president, Massimiliano Giansanti spoke about future challenges for a competitive Italian ag sector, crop protection product authorizations were also discussed

News: Italian news outlet reports on recent event by Confagricoltura, where Agriculture and Agri-food production committee president Roberto Formigoni spoke out against misinformation on GMOs, noting it prevents Italy from conducting experiments

Commentary: Angel Ferrero of Spain's Publico recounts Vandana Shiva's recent talk at Center of Contemporary Culture of Barcelona (CCCCB), in which she criticized Green Revolution ag techniques, linked GMOs and pesticides to bee population decline

News release: Navdanya announces Vandana Shiva's upcoming visit to Florence, Italy, for a meeting entitled "The multinational profit poisons the food, the earth, the planet. What is the alternative?" (Jan. 27-30)

Commentary: Common Dreams writer promotes Green Week protest against policies that prioritize industrial farming ahead of the environment, human health; Friends of the Earth activist says EU must reform common agriculture policy

News: Norwegian news outlet reports EU proposal aimed at ending deadlock on GMO approvals remains in deadlock in EU council final decision not expected until end of 2019, after EU Parliament elections

[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](#)

Oceania

News release: GE Free New Zealand calls on Minister for Food Safety Damien O'Connor to request that Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) review its draft GM rice approval, raises concerns about possible allergenicity

[More Oceania items](#)

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From: Jay Byrne
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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Jan. 22, 2018
 Date: Monday, January 22, 2018 9:04:32 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology developments included news that Chinese researchers have gained U.S. Food and Drug Administration approval for imports of a transgenic rice variety. In Mexico, local news outlets amplified a Greenpeace report calling on governments to hold companies accountable for environmental damage.

- English-language Chinese news services reported that a transgenic, pest-resistant rice variety developed by Huazhong Agricultural University has been approved for import by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. *Global Times* noted that the crop has not yet been approved for cultivation in China. [See more](#)
- Greenpeace International issued a report late last week calling on governments to hold major companies responsible for environmental damage caused by their activities. The report, "Justice for people and planet," accuses regulatory agencies enabling corporate abuses of power. Mexican news outlets amplified the report, highlighting the case study of Monsanto's efforts to commercialize soy in the Yucatan Peninsula. [See more](#)

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North America

Commentary: Agri-Pulse gene-editing series says promise of gene editing rests on how int'l governments choose to regulate it; scientists, growers who support gene editing fear long approval processes, stigma that come with GMO classification

Commentary: Center for Science in the Public Interest's Gregory Jaffe questions if Trump administration will prioritize biotech laws as noted in rural prosperity report, says government should establish proportionate, risk-based oversight able to respond to new developments

Commentary: Writing for Canada Free Press, conservative policy analyst suggests hypocrisy behind Democrats' Trump racism accusations, noting party regularly uses environmental issues to prevent development in poorest nations, cites GMO opposition as example

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Mary Serumaga of Uganda's The Observer voices concern about passage of Biosafety Bill, raises questions about GMOs' impact on biodiversity, human health and food security, criticizes Gates Foundation's financial ties to Monsanto

Commentary: Claire Rousell of African Centre for Biodiversity emphasizes importance of art in promoting seed sovereignty and activism, highlights engagement with artists during preparations for National Seed Dialogue and Celebration

News: Chinese ag news outlet reports on Egyptian National Research Center's development of a new compound for boosting wheat yields in arid and semi-arid regions, in addition to GM wheat seeds, which

cannot be produced due to current laws

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: China policy news site reports U.S. approves China GM rice variety while China has yet to greenlight it; researchers hope U.S. position will inspire local policy change

News: China's Global Times reports on U.S. FDA approval of pest-resistant GE rice variety developed by Huazhong Agricultural University, scientist Lin Yongjun noted it cannot be grown in China as there are no guidelines to examine GE rice in the country

News: China News Service reports on U.S. FDA approval of Huazhong Agricultural University's GM pest-resistant rice variety, Chinese Academy of Sciences' Jiang Tao noted the approval recognizes China's safety assessment mechanism for GMOs

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Ouest-France explains EU Court of Justice opinion on new breeding techniques, notes French Union of Seeders says decision to let states self-regulate on issue is concerning

Commentary: French pro-ag blogger Seppi criticizes platform outlined in Le Monde by group of LRM and MoDem deputies, provides history of mutagenesis, explains flaws in deputies' platform calling for France to adhere to precautionary principle regarding NBTs

News release: Dutch company Plantum welcomes EU Court of Justice Advocate General's opinion on new breeding methods, as well as Dutch gov't position that new breeding techniques should not be subject to GMO regulations, awaits EU Court's final ruling

News: EurActiv reports on ag policy debates for 2018, highlights anticipation of EU Court of Justice decision on products of new breeding techniques, likely paving the way for a legal framework, and discussion of long-term Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

Commentary: German anti-GMO news site amplifies Testbiotech's accusations that Bayer and Dow manipulated data for risk assessments of recently approved triple herbicide-resistant soybean lines, highlights risks to humans and the environment

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Mexico's Sin Embargo reports on Greenpeace's new report, "Justice for People and the Planet," examining 20 environmentally damaging companies, in Mexico, focus is on Monsanto's impact on Mayan communities and beekeepers, and on Bimbo

News release: Greenpeace Mexico announces publication of its "Justice for people and the planet," outlining 10 principles to stop environmental crimes and human rights violations by corporations, highlights Mayan communities' struggles against Monsanto

News: Mexico's El Sol De Tlaxcala reports local beekeeping associations request that their needs are taken into account with the General Law of Conservation, Protection and Apicultural Promotion, highlighting risks posed to hives by GM crops

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Food Navigator reports on debate surrounding Australia's proposed relaxation of gene-editing regulations, senior Monash University fellow Clovis Palmer believes the proposal will face "fierce opposition," noting the technology is still in its infancy

News: Australia's Devex publishes second article in four-part series on GMOs, examines continued opposition to the technology with focus on Greenpeace and Fairtrade International, highlights concerns about health and environmental impacts, corporate influence

More Oceania items

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 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - Jan. 22, 2018
 Date: Monday, January 22, 2018 4:04:53 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

As a Ugandan Parliament science committee warned of the ramifications of delaying passage of a biosafety bill and pledged to meet with the president to address his concerns, this week's Favorable Outcomes newsletter features two pieces that address the situation: Cameron English's article on anti-science activism and Lominda Afredaru's assessment of the confusion around GMOs in Uganda.

As questions continue to be raised about the International Agency for Research on Cancer's glyphosate monograph, Andrew Porterfield takes a closer look at the agency's recent public relations activities while David Zaruk examines its official response to an investigation by U.S. lawmakers. We also highlight an American Enterprise Institute report finding GM crops have increased yields.

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In This Issue

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

Stakeholder Spotlight: Environmental Health News



A project of a Virginia-based political organizing NGO, Environmental Health News (EHN) is a frequent wire service source for stories published by mainstream news and content syndicated by groups including the Organic Consumers

Stories Worth Sharing

[Cameron English: Delays in approving Uganda's biosafety bill evidence of how anti-science activists can be destructive](#)

[Alex Berezow: Threatened pollinators do little to help crops, making it "gross exaggeration" to claim world will starve due to bee deaths](#)

[Andrew Porterfield: International Agency for Research on Cancer mounts PR campaign amid mounting criticism of glyphosate review](#)

[American Enterprise Institute: New York Times analysis flawed, GM crops have increased yields](#)

[David Zaruk: IARC director's defense of glyphosate review to U.S. lawmakers features diversion, misinformation and deception](#)

[Amanda Zaluckyj: Bravo to Farm Bureau for opposing non-GMO labels on products with no GM variety](#)

[Henry Miller: Public manipulated by multimillion-dollar "organic food hoax" that disparages pesticides and GMOs](#)

[Science 2.0: Scholars debunked any links between glyphosate and cancer](#)

[Lominda Afedaru: Considerable confusion among Ugandans about GMOs](#)

Association.

Led by former endocrine-disrupting chemical activist Pete Meyers, EHN reports daily on potential public health risks due to environmental exposures and pollution. EHN reporting and editorial content endorses organic and agroecology food production while warning of "toxic time bombs" associated with synthetic chemicals, pesticides and GMOs.

Learn more about Environmental Health News [HERE](#).

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Alex Berezow: New York Times deserves Fake News Award for consistently getting facts wrong on glyphosate, GMOs [?](#)

Matt Ridley: U.K.'s 25-year environmental agenda regrettably tinged with "anti-scientific" puritanism [?](#)

Okanagan president: "Significant undertaking" to educate public and overcome stigma on GM crops, including Arctic Apple [?](#)

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What's Trending?

U.S. House committee to investigate whether NIEHS director violated law by questioning chemical regulations

European lawmakers create committee to investigate reauthorization of glyphosate

European advocate general issues opinion on regulation of new plant breeding techniques

Ugandan members of Parliament seek meeting with president regarding his veto of biosafety bill

Calendar highlights

January 22	January 23	January 23-25
Vandana Shiva lecture in Barcelona on release of "Who really feeds the world?" essay (lecture in Madrid Jan. 24)	Canada Pest Management Regulatory Agency neonic webinar	Asia-Pacific regional meeting on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management
January 24-27	January 25-26	January 25-26
EcoFarm Conference in California	European Commission Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed meets to discuss glyphosate, EDCs, neonics	Genome Engineering and Synthetic Biology conference in Belgium

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 biotechnology developments over the weekend included a report from the American Enterprise Institute showing that GM crops do lead to higher yields. There was continued reporting and commentary on the European advocate general's opinion on how new plant breeding techniques should be classified under GMO regulations. An Australian official proposed rule changes that would ease restrictions on research and development that uses some types of gene editing.

- The American Enterprise Institute released a report stating there is little doubt that GM crops generate higher yields and that biotechnology bans lead to lower worldwide food output. The report notes U.S. corn and soy yields have increased more than yields in the European Union since GM crops were introduced. The report rebuts claims made by reporter Danny Hakim of *The New York Times*. **See more**
- Science, food, farm, activist and worldwide news sites continued commentary and reporting on the European advocate general's opinion that mutagenesis and certain types of gene editing should be exempt from regulations governing GMOs. Michael Antoniou of King's College London called the decision "wrong and potentially dangerous," arguing that some gene editing methods produce "off-target effects" that can lead to unintended consequences. *Nature* reported that German researcher Ralf Wilhelm of the Julius Kühn Institute said scientists need to use gene editing to adapt crops for globalization and climate change. **See more**
- Australia's *Cosmos* magazine and *Xinhua* reported Raj Bhula, Australia's gene technology regulator, recommended that products produced using gene-editing techniques should not be subject to GMO regulations. "With gene editing you don't always have to use genetic material from another organism, it is just editing the (existing) material within the organism," Bhula said. **See more**

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North America

Commentary: Canadian Produce Marketing Association releases statement saying country's agriculture and agri-food industry supports modernization of NAFTA, provided it upholds fair and free principles, cites modern biotech policies as example of forward-thinking trade

News release: University of Florida promotes USDA grants totaling \$10.5 million for three researchers at its Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences to work on citrus greening resistance or tolerance, including research on gene editing that may produce trees and fruit potentially resistant to HLB

Commentary: Rosemary Mason and Colin Todhunter write for Global Research, warning against Bayer-Monsanto merger, summarizing Mason's recent letter to chief medical adviser to U.K. government that calls on highly placed officials to act on UN report criticizing global corporations that manufacture pesticides

News: Modern Farmer reports on geneticist Alison Van Eenennaam's work using CRISPR to develop sterile, male-only cattle, highlights controversy over regulating products of gene editing, especially GE animals, in the U.S.

Interview: Food Processing Technology talks to president of Canadian company that created GM Arctic Apple about GMOs in the U.S. food marketplace, including how to develop opinions about GM products; Neal Carter says the non-browning Arctic Apple "sells itself," despite controversy over GMOs, when people experience it

Commentary: Malibu Times reviews Pierce and Keely Shaye Brosnan film 'Poisoning Paradise' screened at 2018 Malibu film festival, praises film for exposing pesticide poisoning in Kauai by agri-chemical industry, politicians' refusal to act

More North America items

Africa

News: Nigerian news site reports Nigerian agriculture minister asks scientists to advise government on making decisions on GMOs

News: Ugandan news source reports parliamentary committee warns delay by President Museveni in approving National Biosafety Act 2017 will have serious repercussions on lives of Ugandans, claims GMOs entering country because law enforcement has no legal framework to stop them

News: Nigeria's New Telegraph reports on Health of Mother Earth Foundation's statement that gov't approval of GM cassava field trials is "condemnable and inhuman," Nigeria Biotechnology and Biosafety Consortium's Paul Onyenekwe noted trials are highly regulated

More Africa items

Asia

News: India's Financial Express reports Mayhco Monsanto India argues it is not to blame for pink bollworm attack on Bt cotton, and that National Seeds Association of India is deflecting blame for failing to ensure that farmers comply with proper protocol

News: Indian news outlet reports on RSS-affiliated farmers' unions Swadeshi Jagran Manch (SJM) and Bharatiya Kisan Sangh's (BKS) allegations that Mayhco Monsanto Biotech is blackmailing and pressuring the gov't regarding Bt cotton seeds in its recent letter

Commentary: Senior fellow at neoliberal think tank says Bangladesh doesn't need organic farming, which is all the rage in richer countries where people don't understand farming, but produces less and more expensive food using more labor, that is opposite of what poor countries need

News: India Today reports elected officials, others take part in conclave focusing on rural distress in southern India, participant calls for bringing up Seed Bill as national priority, banning import of pesticides, points out Japan, Israel and EU have prospered without GMOs

News: The Hindu reports officials with Telangana state government ask Centre to check spread of BG-III cotton seed, asserting the herbicide-tolerant variety not cleared by Genetic Engineering Approval Committee, is harming country's biodiversity

More Asia items

Europe

Commentary: Commentator says France abandons rule-of-law in France as it caves in to small pressure groups rather than do what's best for everyone; notes abandoning airport project, Volunteer Reapers destroying GM crops in research field without being "seriously condemned"

News: Food Processing Technology reports on EU Court of Justice Advocate General Michal Bobek's opinion that products of certain mutagenesis techniques should be exempt from GMO regulation, highlights King's College London's Michael Antoniou's counterargument

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Bolivian rural news site reports agricultural producers to ask Bolivian government to approve GM traits for 4 crops

Commentary: Researchers from Brazil's Embrapa agency call transgenic technology "one of the greatest technological advances" of last few decades, helping advance agricultural production and economies

Commentary: Nicaragua's Seeds of Identity Alliance writes 12th article in 12-part series against GMO introduction for La Prensa, argues transgenic crops unnecessary in country, would cause problems,

points to agroecology as best alternative for food security, sovereignty

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: Xinhua reports on Australia's Gene Technology Regulator (GTR) Raj Bhunia's call for changes to GMO regulations, to exempt new genetic technologies from being classified as "genetic modification"

News: Australia's Cosmos magazine reports country's gene technology regulator proposes shake-up of rules surrounding GE processes that could exclude CRISPR from constraints on research and

development, notes opposition to proposal expected, with even some experts in field advising caution

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 an opinion released by the European advocate general on whether certain new plant breeding techniques should be classified under GMO regulations. In Ghana, an official with the Ministry for Food and Agriculture said the country was assessing the use of GM crops under a jobs program.

- The European advocate general, Michal Bobek, issued an opinion on whether certain new plant breeding techniques fall under Europe's Directive 2001/18/EC regulating GMOs. The opinion clarifies that, while the GMO directive can apply to processes where no new genetic material is introduced, the new mutagenesis techniques should be excluded given precedent in how previous mutagenesis-derived crops were regulated. **See more** European advocacy groups were quick to respond to the decision. Friends of the Earth said the opinion would open the door to "new GMOs" and urged the court to disregard the opinion when it makes its final judgement later this year. InfOGM argued that the opinion ignored the spirit behind the current mutagenesis exemption, which had been based on a long-term record of safety. **See more**
- In an interview with *Ghanaian Times*, the deputy director for crop services at the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Dr. Solomon Gyan-Ansah, said that Ghana was considering whether to introduce GM crops under its "Planting for Food and Jobs" program. The minister noted that the country would only consider locally developed GM crops, highlighting a current field trial of Bt cowpea. **See more**

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

North America

News: Farm Journal reports group of ag industry stakeholders form new coalition, Americans for Farmers and Families, to help advocate for U.S. involvement in free trade agreements, especially NAFTA

Commentary: Stanford University Hoover Institution's Miller claims public manipulated by multi-billion-dollar "organic food hoax" which profits from misleading advocacy disparagement of GMOs and pesticides

Commentary: Alberta Farmer Express columnist says her experience visiting farms around the world proves there is place for organic, GM and conventional ag, adding farmers should enjoy the benefit of choosing what works best for them

Commentary: Medium posts GMO Answers piece by North Dakota farmer Laura Rutherford, where Rutherford says farmers and millennials want same things, "healthy real food" and share love for environment, adding "science in farming should be embraced, not feared"

Commentary: Op-ed by member of Occupy the World Food Prize Board in The Des Moines Register calls on World Food Prize to become "voice of regenerative agriculture for the world and to award only those who promote safe, healthy and organic food"

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: [Ghanaian Times reports Ghana ag ministry official comments at stakeholder forum suggest government may introduce GMOs under Planting for Food and Jobs program, arguing country cannot be self-sufficient in food supply without them](#)

Report: [USDA Senegal Agricultural Biotechnology Annual notes country in process of approving biosafety process that includes expedited approval process, says public GMO education vital for consumer acceptance](#)

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: [Press Trust of India reports Monsanto letter to ag minister counters National Seed Association of India allegations company is responsible for cotton crops lost to pink bollworm, asserts Bt cotton seeds are effective](#)

Commentary: [Cornell Alliance for Science author profiles Indian farmer who credits his success to Bt cotton, wants access to Bt brinjal, maize; accuses government of ignoring farmer needs by failing to release new GM crops](#)

Commentary: [Jim Carey of MintPress says "U.S. nervous, as more African nations begin to see China as the better choice as an economic partner, due to Beijing's fewer-strings-attached approach"; Bill Gates called "personal cheerleader" for Monsanto](#)

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: [News wires report European advocate general says some new plant breeding techniques should not be regulated as GMOs; Reuters notes opinion allows countries to draft own rules](#)

News: [Food and ag news outlets report on EU court opinion recommending that certain plant breeding techniques be exempted from GMO regulations; FeedNavigator quotes John Innes Centre, IFOAM-EU reps](#)

News release: [Friends of the Earth Europe criticizes opinion by European Court of Justice Advocate General for keeping door open to not requiring some new breeding techniques to undergo same risk assessment, labeling and monitoring as existing GMOs](#)

News: [EU-based media report EU Court of Justice rules majority of new breeding techniques should not fall under GMO regulations; ruling leaves states free to legislate mutagenesis organisms](#)

News: [Agence France-Presse reports seed producer Limagrain fears it may relocate its research outside of France unless state ensures better security for its activities, Limagrain's Jean-Yves Foucault noted 37 hectares of wheat were destroyed by anti-GMO activists](#)

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: [Luis A. Ventura-Martinez of Cornell Alliance for Science amplifies publication by Biotechnology Institute of the National Autonomous University of Mexico, endorsing use of GMOs in agriculture, highlights assessment that coexistence is possible](#)

News: [Brazilian agricultural news site reports Rwanda Environmental Authority drafted law regulating GMOs, aim of legislation is to ensure adequate "adequate level of field protection in the transfer, handling and use of GMOs"; country seventh in Africa to release GMOs](#)

News: Argentina's Pagina 12 reports on investigation by ETC Group which found that peasant agriculture produces 70 percent of world's food using 25 percent of land, it highlights negative impacts of industrial ag and industry consolidation, promotes agroecology

Commentary: Nicaragua's Seeds of Identity Alliance writes 11th article in 12-part series against GMO introduction for La Prensa, raises argument that over 170 countries have applied the precautionary principle, and have restrictions on GM crops

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Australia's ABC Rural reports country consider reforms to GM laws to cover new breeding techniques; plant biologists say technology can feed growing world; organic advocates say laws threaten trade, farmer choice

News release: Soil & Health Association of New Zealand encourages Waikato District Council to adopt precautionary provisions for any GMOs that may be trialed or commercially produced, warning about potential escape or contamination

News: Australia's Food Magazine reports global forestry company FuturaGene is latest to license CSIRO's RNAi technology, with goal of developing more resilient eucalyptus and poplar varieties to meet growing wood demand in face of climate change

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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 media and activist preparation for a European Court decision on new plant breeding techniques (NBTs). U.S. and Nigerian news outlets reported on controversies surrounding efforts to trial GM cowpea and cassava.

- European news outlets reported on a Belgium protest held by European Coordination Via Campesina, where peasant farming advocates warned that the agricultural industry could undermine farm incomes if allowed to easily commercialize products developed through NBTs. The activists said they had gathered to support peasant rights in advance of the European Court of Justice opinion due out Thursday (Jan. 18) on the issue. In other reports on the pending court opinion, *Le Monde* published a letter signed by French politicians who urged the country to have a "consistent" regulatory approach to GMOs and to items produced through NBTs. The politicians claimed that gene-edited crops could spread through wild populations and undermine biodiversity. [See more](#)
- Nigerian news outlet *Premium Times* reported on controversies surrounding Nigeria's field trials of a GM cassava, noting opposition from the Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEF) and others. Cornell University's Alliance for Science interviewed the head of the African Agricultural Technology Foundation, highlighting the group's efforts to improve staple crops such as cowpea and maize. [See more](#)

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North America

Report: [USDA previews European Court of Justice opinion on new plant breeding techniques, notes opinion could affect techniques such as site-directed mutagenesis that have been in commercial use for decades](#)

News: [Agri-Pulse reports GE salmon yet to hit U.S. supermarkets despite 2015 approval; AquaBounty waiting for new FDA labeling regulations, expects to produce first salmon for U.S. markets in late 2019 or early 2020](#)

Commentary: [The Farmer's Daughter lauds measure approved at annual American Farm Bureau Federation meeting to limit non-GMO labels, saying "food products should not be labeled 'non-GMO' if there is no GMO counterpart for that product"](#)

Commentary: [Freelance science writer warns in Real Clear Science "anti-science activists can be very destructive when they get their way", cites Uganda GMO debate as evidence; adds economic freedom and free markets are important precursors to science literacy, the "obvious antidote to policies that disregard evidence"](#)

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: [Nigeria's Premium Times reports International Institute of Tropical Agriculture gets government](#)

permit to carry out confined field trials on GM cassava, despite opposition from some civic groups; IITA says objective of field trials to obtain storage roots of cassava with lower post-harvest degradation

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science highlights interview with regional head of African Agricultural Technology Foundation, who cites concerns that lack of food security in Nigeria could have devastating impact on other African nations, calls for use of biotech to boost production of Nigeria's staple crops

News: Uganda Soft Power News editor and former Museveni communications aide Kagingo reports on parliamentary opposition to biosafety bill led by Ethics Minister Buturo; MP coalition pledges to oppose passage of any bill which enables GMOs citing harm to organic interests and risks of human cancer rates

News: Germany's Spektrum reports researchers breeding bananas engineered to resist fungus that threatens world banana cultivation, points to differences between GE bananas and other GMOs, notes question of consumer acceptance remains

Commentary: Centre for Agriculture and Biosciences International discusses Uganda's passage of 2017 law allowing large-scale field testing and commercial use of GM crops, predicts GM bananas resistant to bacterial wilt could be first product to come to market, acknowledges debate about GM crops

Study: Study in Plant Biotechnology Journal looks at provitamin A cassava biofortification; study shows biofortification enhances shelf life, a major constraint limiting use of cassava products, but unintended metabolic consequences "point to strategies for redirecting metabolic flux to restore starch production"

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: The Hindu reports on Mahyco Monsanto letter criticizing seed association's call to stop selling Bt cotton seeds; seed association says sales on hold while pink bollworm failures investigated

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: France's Reporterre previews EU court opinion on whether organisms created with NBTs should be regulated the same as GMOs, explains process of gene editing through CRISPR, other technologies, cites experts who warn about dangers of off-target effects, question detectability of modifications made

News: Belgian agricultural site reports on Via Campesina march anticipating EU Court of Justice opinion on NBTs, notes peasant group concerned about seed rights and fair prices

Commentary: Le Monde posts statement signed by deputies from two French political parties calling on France and Europe to regulate and prohibit use of NBTs the same as they do GMOs, citing report that use of new techniques risks damage to adaptive capacity of biodiversity, spread of genetic modifications

News: Belgian news site La Libre previews EU Court of Justice opinion on new plant breeding techniques, notes statement will be non-binding with final decision expected mid-year

News: Politico Pro EU's morning ag news roundup reports Parliament will vote on whether to proceed with special committee to examine allegations that Monsanto abused its power when seeking glyphosate renewal, also highlights debate on new breeding techniques

Commentary: Editor for Austria's Salzburger Nachrichten posts piece arguing efforts by Western countries to ban Africa and Asia from using genetic engineering and to impose organic farming on developing nations amounts to "eco-colonialism," calling it "arrogant"

News release: German NGO No Patents on Seeds promotes its report showing European Patent Office still granting patents on plants derived from conventional breeding despite office's claims to the contrary, asserts opposition growing to patents on seeds even as companies try to expand monopolies

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Accion Ecologica summarizes concerns over Ecuador's seed law, says current draft excludes seed breeders without technical degrees and opens the door for GM crops

News: Brazilian news magazine reports on dilemma of transgenic eucalyptus trees, saying despite increased productivity and growing global demand for wood and pulp, the trees have not been sold due to environmental concerns; country's honey producers also concerned they could lose organic certification

Commentary: Nicaragua's Seeds of Identity Alliance writes tenth article in 12-part anti-GMO series for La Prensa, claims transgenic crops and associated herbicides violate human rights of "millions of people"

[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 prominent European organic advocacy group issuing a statement calling for new plant breeding techniques (NBTs) to be regulated as GMOs. In Burkina Faso, growers groups called for the reintroduction of Bt cotton.

- In a news release, the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) called for European regulations on GM crops to include products of new plant breeding techniques and mutagenesis, anticipating Thursday's European Court of Justice opinion. The group was joined in its call by the European branch of IFOAM and the Spanish Society of Agriculture/Agroecology. [See more](#)
- In Burkina Faso, the Movement for Development and Social Awakening (MODES) held a news conference in which growers called for the reintroduction of Bt cotton. The group pointed to Burkina Faso's recent drop from the top cotton-producing spot in Africa. Members of the National Union of Cotton Producers of Burkina (UNPCB) also called for the country to reassess its decision to stop using the trait. [See more](#)
- French seed producer Limagrain told news outlets that it may need to reassess the location of its headquarters following local vandalism of its crop trials. The company criticized the advocacy group Faucheurs Volontaires (Volunteer Reapers) for uprooting over a year of work on non-GMO wheat that the group mistook for a genetically modified crop. [See more](#)
- Officials in Maharashtra announced that they would no longer allow seed sellers to "co-market" GM crop traits, arguing that the re-branding confused farmers and created difficulties in tracking seed sources. The Federation of Seed Industry of India, meanwhile, responded to the state's efforts to seek damages for failed Bt crop traits. The group claimed that the state had not properly assessed the damages. [See more](#)

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North America

Commentary: Ugandan journalist Lominda Afedraru writes for Genetic Literacy Project, examines problems with public confusion over GMOs, notes many people are opposed to hybrid crops as well, emphasizes importance of science communication

News: Agri-Pulse runs second installment of seven-part series on gene editing, quotes experts about new tools being developed, including CRISPR and TALEN, describes how they work and what benefits could result from their use

News: Seafood Source reports AquaBounty issues underwritten public offering expected to raise \$12 million to help it build and operate more U.S. production facilities; company has developed GE salmon that grow faster, with Health Canada approving sale of product for human consumption in 2016

News: Nebraska newspaper reports on remarks by retired CEO of Tyson Foods at University of Nebraska lecture series; Donnie Smith says "urban myths" about agriculture can hurt industry, such as reports about "pink slime" in ground beef and false claims about GMOs

News: Kentucky NPR affiliate reports on University of Kentucky Plant Pathology Specialist Paul Vincelli's statements at recent Kentucky Fruit and Vegetable Conference in Lexington, he highlighted ability of GM technology to reduce aflatoxins in crops like corn

News: Agweek reports federal Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity presents Trump with report about improving life in rural areas, including "call to action" on harnessing innovation, listing recommendations related to biotechnology, such as using science-based regulations for GM products

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Agence de Presse Africaine reports on Burkina Faso's National Union of Cotton Producers of Burkina (UNPCB) campaign for return of Bt cotton, highlights the country's previous partnership with Monsanto, and concerns about fiber quality

News: Burkina Faso's Le Pays reports on press conference on Bt cotton by Movement for Development and Social Awakening, growers delegation led by Casimir Gnoumo lamented that Burkina Faso lost rank as top cotton producer in Africa following switch to conventional

News: Burkina Faso news outlet reports farmers call for return of Bt cotton, cotton producer Casimir Gnoumou noted conventional cotton requires significantly more pesticide inputs than Bt

News: Cote d'Ivoire news outlet reports on controversy surrounding Parliament's Commission for Research, Science, Technology and Environment's validation of biosafety bill, Korhogo Agricultural Cooperative warned about Burkina Faso's experience with Bt cotton

Report: African Centre for Biodiversity publishes new report, "Status report on the SADC, COMESA and EAC harmonised seed trade regulations: Where does this leave the regions' smallholder farmers?", provides background and update on seed trade and marketing policy

News: News of Africa reports on Nigeria Biotechnology and Biosafety Consortium President Paul Onyenekwe's reaction to Health of Mother Health Foundation's opposition to GM cassava trials, calling their criticism "misguided, unjustified and unpatriotic"

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: India's Financial Express reports on Maharashtra gov't decision to ban practice of co-marketing Bt seed brands by seed companies, arguing that selling the same seed under different brand names misleads farmers, and makes legal action difficult

News: Press Trust of India reports on Federation of Seed Industry of India's (FSII) statement in response to Maharashtra gov't decision to hold seed firms responsible for Bt cotton crop losses, arguing the gov't failed conduct a proper assessment of the damage

News: Press Trust of India reports Bayer expects Competition Commission of India to approve its acquisition of Monsanto by April or May, Bayer's Richard van der Merwe hopes all litigation issues over royalties for Monsanto's Bt cotton is resolved by mid-year

News: China's Produce Report reports the Philippines exported 340 tons of papaya to China in 2016, DOLE noted all of its papayas exported to China are non-GMO products from its self-owned orchards in the Philippines, which it believes makes them stand out

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News release: International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements - EU (IFOAM - EU) and

Spanish Society of Organic Agriculture/Agroecology (SEAE) welcome organic ag sector's adoption of global position that new breeding techniques be regulated as GMOs

Commentary: Eric Meunier of Inf'OGM amplifies Ifoam - Organics International's position that products of new breeding techniques must be submitted to same risk assessments and labeling as GMOs, awaits European Court of Justice decision on the issue

News: Agronews Castilla y Leon reports on IFOAM - Organics International's reiteration of position that GMOs, including new breeding techniques, have no place in organic agri-food system, voicing concern about lack of regulation of new techniques

News release: IFOAM - Organics International announces organic movement reaffirms its opposition to GMOs, argues there is no legal or scientific reason not to consider products of new breeding techniques as GMOs

Commentary: Italian environment magazine Terra Nuova warns readers about potential entry of "new" GMOs into the EU, argues that products of new breeding techniques carry same health and environmental risks as products of traditional transgenesis

Commentary: Blogger for France's Factual promotes newsletter by Collective for a Franche Comte without GMO, sent to all farmers in the area, and funded by Regional Council of Burgundy Franche Comte, regional Biocoop stores and Confederation Paysanne du Doubs

News: Italian news outlet reports on Environment Ministry's adoption of four-year supervisory plan on introduction of GMOs into the environment, to verify and monitor trade and cultivation activities, ensure and monitor compliance

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Reuters reports Monsanto's Brazilian unit to run field tests with GM soy seed INTACTA2 XTEND in Brazil in 2019-2020 crop, hopes to launch variety commercially the following year; GM seeds engineered to resist dicamba, which caused controversy in USA in 2018 over claims product sprays drifted

Commentary: Peruvian news outlet editorial criticizes gov't response to excess potato supply, including increased imports of potatoes with transgenic content without supervision from the state

News: Mexican news outlet reports on FAO general director JosÃ© Graziano Da Silva's assessment that while GMOs are safe and can help address climate change, they should not be used in genetic centers of origin, as is the case of Mexico with corn

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Commentary: Australia's Devex begins four-part series on GMO debate, examines argument in favor of GMOs to help boost global food security, highlights controversy surrounding multinationals, as well as Food Evolution documentary

News release: Australian Greens Agriculture Spokesperson Diane Evers calls on farmers to make submissions to cross-party Parliamentary inquiry regarding compensation for Western Australian farmers who suffer losses due to GM contamination

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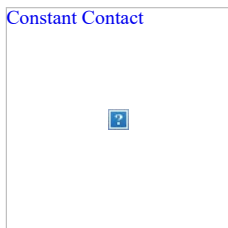
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 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - Jan. 15, 2018
 Date: Monday, January 15, 2018 4:39:57 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

Each spring, the U.S. Department of Agriculture-backed Bee Informed Partnership sets off a wave of media coverage by releasing its annual survey estimating the percentage of honeybee colonies that failed over the past year. But is this voluntary survey of beekeepers really a valuable, important measure of bee health?

This week's newsletter features a piece by Genetic Literacy Project executive director Jon Entine explaining why the annual data can be misleading and questioning why it overshadows long-term statistics showing that the bee population has been increasing on every continent.

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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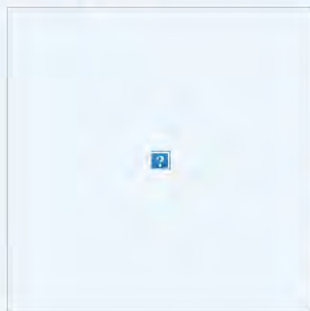
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Stakeholder Spotlight: Slow Food



Slow Food International took credit this week for lobbying efforts in Africa that caused Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni to reject proposed biosafety legislation that would have enabled the regulated development and use of GM crops.

Stories Worth Sharing

[Jon Entine: Media's focus on annual U.S. bee colony loss data overlooks stats showing bee population growing worldwide](#)

[Henry Miller: Putin using state-sponsored Russia Today to undermine genetic engineering, fracking](#)

[Brian Garst: Organic food army trying to make the most of "absurdly small" presence of glyphosate in Bigelow tea](#)

[Credible Hulk: Not plausible to claim that glyphosate alters people's gut microbiome in harmful ways](#)

[John Brennan: Biotechnology helps Europe meet U.N. sustainable development goals for food security, mitigating climate change](#)

["Food Evolution" director: Organic supporters should stop fear-mongering and just tell the truth, even if it is complicated](#)


[Profile: Alison Van Eenennaam an advocate of GMOs who is "tough to argue with on issues like food safety"](#)


[Tim Philp: Opposition to GMOs, attraction to all-natural products ignores that "nature has been trying to kill us"](#)

[Stephan Neidenbach: Presidential candidacy would renew concerns Oprah is a "junk science enabler" who embraces anti-GMO activism](#)

Learn more about Slow Food
HERE.

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Andrew Kniss: Review reveals GM crops did not cause increase in herbicide-resistant weeds 

Michelle Miller: Ashton Kutcher, Penn & Teller, Bono among celebrities supportive of GMOs 

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What's Trending?

European Council of Presidents to consider setting up special committee on glyphosate renewal

Uruguayan senator seeks to block release of four GM crop varieties with injunction

La Via Campesina plans rally before European court decision on new breeding techniques

Opponents of biotechnology in Uganda seek greater restrictions and language to limit research and block commercial release of GMOs

European Commission seeks input for possible creation of EU Pollinators Initiative

University of Illinois promotes study claiming honeybees are attracted to the fungicide chlorothalonil, posing potential risk

Calendar highlights

January 16-18	January 16-18	January 18
French agriculture, health ministers to attend International Specialized Vegetable Productions Exhibition	German agriculture ministry hosts Global Forum for Food and Agriculture	European Court of Justice to issue opinion on plant breeding innovation
January 18	January 22	January 23-25
IFPRI seminar: "Nutrition and food systems - A report by The High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition"	Vandana Shiva lecture in Barcelona on release of "Who really feeds the world?" essay	Asia-Pacific regional meeting on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management

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 Date: Sunday, January 14, 2018 9:03:23 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 continued commentary on the Uganda President Yoweri Museveni rejecting the biosafety bill. Farmers in Burkina Faso requested a return to cultivating Bt cotton.

- Biotech advocates and opponents commented on Museveni's decision not to sign Uganda's biotech bill. Minister of Science, Technology, Innovation Elioda Tumwesigye said the bill would benefit the country and that GMOs are needed to help feed its rapidly growing population. [See more](#)
- During a Saturday press conference in Ouagadougou, farmers criticized the decision to use conventional cotton, which they blamed for Burkina Faso losing its ranking among top cotton producers. The farmers from the National Union of Cotton Producers of Burkina Faso requested a return to Bt cotton, which they said requires less pesticide use and produced higher yields. [See more](#)

Due to the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday, your next Global Biotech Snapshot will be sent on Tuesday, Jan. 16. Please check the monitoring portal for updates in the meantime.

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North America

Commentary: Natural Blaze editor Heather Callaghan amplifies National Health Federation's accusation that Monsanto seeks to hide GMOs under Codex Alimentarius definition of "biofortified" foods

News: Infectious disease epidemiologist writes for Self news site, says "raw water" has no health benefits, is "terrible idea" that could contain contaminants, water-borne infections, harmful bacteria

Commentary: Biotechnology Innovation Organization endorses Trump administration's agricultural task force report supporting "streamlining regulations that have blocked cutting edge biotechnology," helping to unlock benefits

Commentary: Steemit blogger claims countries ban GMOs due to harmful effects on health; claims food-borne diseases increased ten-fold since GMOs introduced

News: Seeking Alpha reports on Monsanto's plans to run field trials of its Intacta2 Xtend GM soybeans in Brazil during 2019-20 season, the variety is resistant to herbicides, including dicamba

Audio: Up Close with Chris Tinney interviews Non-GMO Project's Caroline Kinsman, she voices concern about prevalence of GMOs in the food supply, opposes industry-funded safety assessments, explains services offered by Non-GMO Project

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Uganda news site reports Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation urges country to adopt GM crops, says Uganda is better off with the biosafety law because it is able to protect the country

News: Burkina Faso news site reports farmers criticize return to conventional cotton, blame move for Burkina Faso's drop in production; note Bt cotton had higher yields, required less pesticide

Video: Uganda TV news reports on YouTube that some Parliament members changed their position to support Ugandan President Museveni in opposition to the biosafety bill, claim it's unclear and threatens local plant varieties; one Parliament member claims bribes were given to pass the bill

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: United News of India reports on ABLE-AG's endorsement of CRISPR gene editing technology in its latest newsletter, in which it noted gene-edited crops would not need regulatory approval due to lack of foreign genes

Commentary: India liberal-centre right magazine editor says Indian ag needs paradigm shift in which farmers find solutions to counter crop price drops, cites workshop urging farmers capitalize on Western demand for non-GMO

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Politico reports Angela Merkel's center-right CDU and the center-left SPD parties come to preliminary agreement to oppose patents on plants, animals if they agree to form a government

Commentary: EuropaBio's John Brennan writes for European Biotechnology magazine, argues biotech innovations must play key role in Europe's approach to achieving U.N. Sustainable Development Goals, highlights environmental and health benefits

Commentary: European Coordination Via Campesina says EU Court of Justice conclusion on mutagenesis and NBTs is crucial to uphold farmers' right to seed and consumers' ability to choose their food, announces Jan. 17 rally before the decision is announced

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Nicaraguan NGO Alliance Seeds of Identity gives fifth in series giving reasons Nicaragua should reject GMOs, claims consuming GMOs causes cancer, allergies, liver and kidney problems, claims WHO determined glyphosate to be a probable carcinogen

News: Mexico's Milenio reports on recommendation by U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization Director General Jose Graziano Da Silva against use of transgenic seeds in genetic centers of origin, he noted Mexico is the genetic center of origin for corn

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Commentary: New Zealand news site columnist says fear of GMOs just latest in long line of fearing new things, from reading to telephones to pasteurization

Commentary: Usha B. Nair of Canada's Medical News Bulletin amplifies study in Nature Communications detailing Queensland University of Technology research team's development of fungus-resistant banana varieties, notes large-scale adoption is uncertain due to misgivings about GMOs

[More Oceania items](#)

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 Date: Tuesday, January 9, 2018 9:00:33 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology developments included news that a parliamentary committee in Ghana had recommended the country adopt the stalled Plant Breeders Bill. In the U.S., industry media outlets responded to the newly released report from the Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity.

- In Ghana, the Parliamentary Select Committee on Environment, Science and Technology recommended that the long-stalled Plant Breeders Bill be reintroduced and adopted. The committee noted that Ghana's Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research had developed improved plant varieties but that the organization had not received the benefits due to the country's lack of patent enforcement. [See more](#)
- U.S. agricultural news outlets reported on a newly released set of recommendations from President Donald Trump's Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity. Among other items, the group highlighted the importance of reducing the regulatory burdens on farmers; these included modernizing the country's biotechnology assessments. [See more.](#)

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North America

Commentary: Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue writes opinion piece for CNN, promotes Rural Prosperity Task Force's recent report, calls for unified approach toward convincing U.S. trading partners of the value of safe biotech products

News release: The White House announces publication of Rural Prosperity Task Force's report identifying 100 actions in five key areas to help rebuild rural America, includes recommendation to modernize and streamline a science-based biotech regulatory policy

Report: USDA's Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity publishes report outlining five calls of action, section entitled Harnessing Technological Innovation promotes biotech, recommends programs to boost public acceptance, calls for science-based regulation

News: MIT Technology Review reports President Trump said the word "biotechnology" for the first time in his presidency, speaking at recent American Farm Bureau Federation meeting, he promised to streamline regulations that have blocked cutting-edge biotech

News release: American Farm Bureau Federation's 2018 Annual Convention featured talks on gene editing by University of Florida's Kevin Folta and UC Davis' Alison Van Eenanaam, they discussed importance of communication and reducing regulatory burdens, respectively

Commentary: Minnesota Agri-Women president Karolyn Zurn writes for Agri-Pulse, argues U.S. policy-makers need to embrace "innovative spirit" of private sector, highlights benefits of mergers between Bayer-Monsanto and Dow-DuPont for ag R&D

Commentary: Farm Babe lists top 8 pro-science, pro-farmer celebrities for 2018, highlighting GMO

support from Ashton Kutcher, Bono, Penn & Teller and Jimmy Kimmel

News: Alberta Farmer Express says American Farm Bureau conference featured U.S. President Trump announcing plans to streamline biotech regs, Canada ag minister MacAulay promoting U.S.-Canada relations in NAFTA deal

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Ghana news source reports sci-tech and environment committee urges Parliament to re-introduce Plant Breeders Bill to realize benefits of seeds developed by research center to support government's Planting for Food and Jobs program

News: The Ugandan reports Parliament resumes after Christmas break, and is expected to handle 22 bills and 28 petitions, legislators hope the GMO bill will be debated appropriately, following President Yoweri Museveni's refusal to sign it last year

News: Nigeria's New Telegraph reports on establishment of National Biotechnology Development Agency (NABDA) Centres across the country, Minister of Science and Technology, Ogbonnaya Onu noted goal of using technology to promote economic development

Commentary: Nigerian Tribune's Collins Chidera analyzes National Biosafety Management Agency and Varietal Release Committee's approval for release of Bt cotton, pod borer resistant cowpea and GM cassava, calls on Nigerian gov't to adopt biotech to promote food self-sufficiency

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: Philippine Star responds to reader emails, posts list of food items reported to contain GMOs that are banned in Saudi Arabia but not in The Philippines, notes they are not confirming presence of GMOs or health hazards, nor advocating a boycott

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Event: French ecology news site Reporterre will hold meeting with theme "Ecology: Now you have to fight!" (Jan. 15), featuring reading of texts by Vandana Shiva, organized in partnership with La Maison des Metallos, Generations Futures, Oxfam and Colibris

Commentary: French ecology news site Reporterre amplifies its 2015 interview with Vandana Shiva on multinationals and climate change, ahead of its meeting on Jan. 15, where some of Shiva's texts will be read

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: ETC Group's Silvia Ribeiro, writing in La Jornada, calls golden rice "one of the most expensive myths" of biotech industry in attempt to change "widespread rejection of transgenics"; cites field experiments in India that showed golden rice atrophied other crop

Report: NGO coalition publishes report on agribusiness in Paraguay in 2017, warns "extractivist model continued to deepen," with approval of new GM corn and cotton seeds and expansion of rice monoculture

[More Latin America items](#)

Commentary: Staff writers for Australian over-60 online community examine debate on GMOs, highlighting GM-Free Australia Alliance's concerns about possible health risks, as well as several beneficial applications of the technology

More Oceania items

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Caitrin.Martin@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - Jan. 8, 2018
 Date: Monday, January 8, 2018 4 02:26 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Caitrin,

Despite the Ugandan president's rejection of a biosafety bill that had been approved by Parliament, there's still hope the measure could be passed. In this week's newsletter, separate pieces by Isaac Ongu and Arthur M. Makara examine the situation.

Two other pieces - by Wayne Parrott and Kathryn Zinke - explore the misleading claims of the Non-GMO Project and other similar labeling schemes, and Steve Savage writes for *Forbes* on the potential for a biotechnology solution to a looming banana shortage.

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: Friends of the Earth



Friends of the Earth (FOE) is a multinational NGO with operations in more than 80 countries. Every week, one arm or another of FOE is engaged in lobbying and public opposition to corporations, capitalism and free trade via campaigns that target GMOs and pesticides while promoting alternative agroecology and organic

■ Stories Worth Sharing

[Wayne Parrott: Do not fall for "marketing ploy" of non-GMO labels](#)

[Isaac Ongu: Delay in approval of Ugandan biosafety bill means more suffering against pests and diseases for farmers](#)

[Arthur M. Makara: Ugandan president's concerns with biosafety bill can be addressed to ensure passage](#)

[Steve Savage: Threat to bananas could be solved with "safe, viable, scientifically sound" technology](#)

[Kathryn Pinke: "Non-GMO Project is a sham" built on consumers' lack of understanding](#)

[Don Sanders: IARC claim that glyphosate can cause cancer is "clear-cut example of subterfuge" by activist scientists](#)

[Graham Brookes: Research shows carbon emissions would significantly increase if farmers stop using glyphosate-tolerant crops](#)

[Len Rosen: Spreading of false arguments against GMOs is immoral, led by proponents of organic farming](#)


[Gwyn Morga: "Baseless fear-mongering" stalls ag biotechnology despite unblemished safety record, use in human medicine](#)


[Alex Berezow: Preferring to push its ideology, The New York Times](#)

production philosophies. A frequent partner with other global environmental advocacy groups such as Greenpeace and Action Aid, FOE is one of the largest green political advocacy groups in the world.

Learn more about Friends of the Earth [HERE](#).

CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES

has "no interest in getting the science right" on biotechnology 

Alison Van Eenennaam: Encouraging to hear viewers say "Food Evolution" documentary made them rethink GMOs 

- Vancouver screening planned Jan. 16 

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What's Trending?

Members of Parliament work on changes to Uganda biosafety bill after rejection by president

Claim that chocolate could vanish by 2050 unless saved by CRISPR draws attention

Indian state accepting public comments on pesticide use changes in response to farmer deaths

U.S. NIEHS director claims low doses of pesticides linked to human health risks

Calendar highlights

January 8	January 9-13	January 13
President Donald Trump speaks at American Farm Bureau Federation annual convention	American Beekeeping Federation and American Honey Producers Association annual conferences	International Rosa Luxemburg Conference

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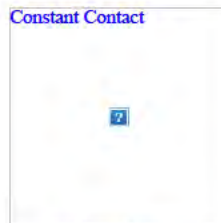
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Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Global biotechnology developments over the weekend included continued reporting and commentary on attempts to genetically engineer the cacao plant to save it from the possibility of extinction and Uganda President Yoweri Museveni's biosafety bill rejection.

- International media amplified a *Business Insider* article reporting researchers are developing genetically engineered cacao plants to help prevent the plant's extinction due to climate change. Articles in several publications questioned whether extinction is likely and commented on efforts to adapt the plant to warmer temperatures using the CRISPR technique. **See more**
- Ugandan news sites reported NGOs, environmentalists and a small farmers group praised Museveni for sending the biosafety bill back to Parliament. An official from the Ugandan Eastern and Southern Africa Small Scale Farmers Forum said while the farmers do not oppose GM seed, they have concerns regarding patented seed. **See more**

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North America

Commentary: The Washington Post food columnist Tamar Haspel writes on toxicity of debate about farming and GMOs; says while anti-organic rhetoric is "unpleasant and contemptuous, I have not seen the same level of personal, threatening vitriol that emanates from the anti-GMO sector"; adds the "single most important thing about cherry-picking science is that we all do it"

Commentary: The Organic Center responds to Mitch Daniels' article stating avoiding GMOs is anti-science, immoral; says downside includes pesticide-resistant weeds, poor farmers can struggle to afford GM seed. claims GM crops do not have higher yields

Commentary: Peter Collins Show promotes interview with authors of "What's Making Our Children Sick," Dr. Michelle Perro and Dr. Vincanne Adams, they claim GM foods and glyphosate contribute to autism and childhood illness, and disruptions in gut microbiome

Commentary: Kavin Senapathy writes for Slate, questions Monsanto's decision to invite alt-right figure Jordan Peterson to fireside chat during American Farm Bureau Federation conference, argues his expertise is not on GMOs, notes his political views are offensive to many

Commentary: Alex Berezow of American Council on Science and Health criticizes trend of powerful institutions, such as Cleveland Clinic and The New York Times, continuing to be exempt from public accountability, criticizes NYT's coverage of GMOs

News: The Wall Street Journal posts remembrance for Calestous Juma, says Kenya-born Harvard professor fought to promote GM crops in Africa and pointed to "risks of doing nothing"

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Ugandan news site reports President Museveni rejects biosafety bill, says Uganda should protect its native seeds, doesn't want local seed to mix with GMOs for safety reasons

News: Xinhua reports environmental activists, civil society organizations praise Uganda President Museveni's decision to decline to sign bill into law that would allow GMOs into country; opponents warned National Biotechnology and Biosafety Bill would eliminate local indigenous plants, animals and birds

News: Kenya news site reports country potentially facing food shortage following declined maize and wheat production caused in part by fall armyworm, notes farmer in hard-hit region says he's not sure which pesticides are effective or not, wants govt to assure which are proper ones before next planting season

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Indian news source reports Maharashtra state government to compensate farmers who lost cotton crops to pink bollworm attacks, with some compensation provided through Maharashtra Cotton Seeds Act

News: India's Scroll reports government admits GM edible oils being imported illegally without mandatory assessment of safety for human consumption; health minister says various companies have imported GM soybean and canola oil for consumption since 2007, despite failing to get permission from Food Safety and Standards Authority

News: Times of India reports seed companies want to go back to using Monsanto's original Bt cotton seeds to fight pink bollworm; notes BG-1 seeds not patented, so companies would not have to pay Monsanto

News: Press Trust of India reports government refers GM mustard issue back to GEAC, environment minister notes no reports GM crops in field trials have not contaminated local varieties; step leaves it up to environmental minister to make call on GM mustard

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Deutsche Welle reports scientists believe gene-editing of crops needed to address climate changes that threaten global food security, but environmentalists remain wary; German researchers using CRISPR-Cas9 to edit wheat genome, create new variety resistant to mildew

News: U.K.'s Daily Mail reports environment minister says GM livestock, gene-edited food could give UK farmers a boost following Brexit; notes consumers still fear "unintended consequences"

News: Italian news outlet reports on publication of Environment Minister's decree on supervision of environmental release of GMOs in Official Gazette, establishing the register of inspectors

News: Science Magazine's list of stories that could make science news in 2018 mentions EU Court of Justice expected to decide how to regulate crops modified with CRISPR, similar GE tools, notes strong public opposition to GMOs, case could determine if existing EU regulation permits similar exception for CRISPR-edited crops

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Mexico's El Universal reports on letter signed by 19 environmental organizations demanding

consultation on General Law of Biodiversity, voicing concern about indigenous rights over protected natural areas and biodiversity

Commentary: Bolivian newspaper's editorial praises agreement between government and agroindustrial companies that opens up possibility of authorizing transgenic products of corn, sugarcane, cotton and soybeans, even though country's constitution prohibits these products, except growing of soybeans resistant to glyphosate

News: Mexican radio outlet reports on Querétaro environmentalists' demonstration against the General Biodiversity Law, activist Pamela Díezon called for an adequate consultation regarding the law, claimed it is a regression of previous laws

News: Mexico's La Jornada reports Seeds of Life Foundation warns tortilla makers are adding yellow corn to tortillas to lower production costs, adding most yellow corn is imported, transgenic, calls on authorities to execute greater control

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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Stakeholder database

Events calendar

Bonus Eventus community

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Today's global biotechnology developments included news that Mexican maize producers were questioning a reported rise in tortilla prices, linking the issue to illegal use of imported GM maize. In Europe, British Environment Secretary Michael Gove said that the country could begin selling gene-edited animals following its withdrawal from the European Union.

- Mexican media outlets reported on a controversial claim that tortilla prices were due to rise. In an interview with *Crónica*, the president of the National Confederation of Agricultural Producers of Maize of Mexico (CNPAMM) said that local maize prices had decreased and claimed that the only reason rising energy prices would cause a tortilla price increase would be because tortilla manufacturers were illegally using imported, transgenic corn. A representative of the National Alliance of Industrialists of the Masa y la Tortilla said that the rumors of a price increase were unfounded. [See more](#)
- Gove told attendees at the Oxford Farming Conference that the U.K.'s withdrawal from the European Union could open the country's use of farming technologies such as gene-edited animals. While noting that the move could raise political questions, Gove highlighted the opportunity for Britain to take its own stance on gene-editing technologies. [See more](#)

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North America

Commentary: Gwyn Morga, retired founding CEO of EnCana Corp writes for Canada's Financial Post, criticizes anti-GMO activists' fear-mongering tactics in 2017, notes there has been little opposition to developments in medical genetic engineering

Video: Texas television outlet features Texas Ag Industries Association President Donnie Dippel, who speaks in defense of GMOs, he doesn't understand opposition to conventional ag, points to environmental benefits of GMOs such as reduced pesticide use

News: Grist runs brief item warning reports that chocolate could go extinct because of climate change misleading, noting NOAA believes cacao trees may adapt to new climate conditions, also pointing out researchers using CRISPR gene-editing technology to modify cacao plants to survive in changing climate

News release: University of California's Innovative Genomics Institute announces its scientists, supported in part by candy giant Mars Inc., working to engineer cacao trees resistant to disease; researchers using CRISPR-Cas9 genome editing system to alter DNA of cacao plants to become more resistant to viral and fungal diseases

News: Successful Farming reports on Recombinetics' use of gene editing technology to develop male piglets born naturally castrated, ensuring swine health and maintaining meat quality by eliminating need for surgical or medicinal castration

More North America items

Africa

Announcement: Ugandan Parliament proposes changes to National Environmental Bill to include regulation of GMOs and hazardous chemicals

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science reports political, farm leaders in western Uganda's Kasese District seek priority release of GMO seeds when GE cassava and maize crops deregulated, approved for commercial use; area facing shortages of staple cassava because of damage inflicted by viruses

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science blogger reports ag biotech stakeholders offering assurances problems with GE cotton in Burkina Faso won't be repeated with GMO crops elsewhere in Africa; Monsanto scientists blame lack of breeding program in Burkina Faso to improve upon cultivar

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: The Hindu Business Line reports National Seed Association of India blames Monsanto for pink bollworm resistance to Bollgard-II GM cotton, threatens to stop selling BG-II seeds if Monsanto won't vouch for efficacy of second gene, wants Monsanto to take responsibility, compensate farmers

Commentary: Writing for Asia-Pacific current affairs magazine, U.S. university professor says Japanese consumer groups fear TPP will weaken country's GMO laws, give agribusiness too much control of food supply

News: Brazilian ag news site amplifies USDA GAIN report on China's plans for biotech crop adoption, China's State Council is reviewing regulations for Ag Ministry to conduct safety tests on biotech products

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: The Telegraph reports U.K. Environment Secretary Michael Gove says in speech to Oxford Farming Conference that GM animals could be sold in Britain after Brexit, suggests gene editing could be used to create "more valuable livestock," admits use of technology would raise "political and moral questions"

Commentary: Agra Europe runs op-ed analyzing speech by U.K. Environment Secretary Michael Gove at Oxford Farming Conference, where he mentioned gene editing; writer cites opportunities to forge ahead on CRISPR technology for crops and livestock, warns U.K. must decide on gene editing post-Brexit

News release: Testbiotech says EU Ombudswoman charge of EU Commission with maladministration should not distract from need for better prevention of GMO contamination; NGO to invite EU Commission, EFSA to research presentation on GE risk assessment in 2018

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Mexico's La Jornada reports Seeds of Life Foundation warns tortilla makers are adding yellow corn to tortillas to lower production costs, adding most yellow corn is imported, transgenic; calls on authorities to execute greater control

News: Mexico's La Prensa reports tortilla, corn groups assure tortilla price will not rise; university research urges economy secretary to punish industrialists importing, selling yellow transgenic corn that make tortillas unfit for human consumption

News: Mexican news outlet reports Mexico maize producers group says tortilla price increase is

unjustified given drop in Mexican white corn cost, noting more expensive, imported GM yellow corn is not allowed in tortilla

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: India's Food & Beverage News reports on Food Standards Australia New Zealand's (FSANZ) recent approval of golden rice as safe for human consumption, in response to application by International Rice Research Institute (IRRI)

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 ongoing commentary on the Ugandan president's decision not to sign the country's biosafety law. In India, a seed trade group threatened to stop producing stacked trait Bt cotton seeds.

- Uganda's *Daily Monitor* reported that a coalition of activists under the umbrella group Environment and Food Sovereignty announced support for President Yoweri Museveni's decision not to sign the national biotechnology and biosafety bill. In a news conference, the activists claimed that scientists were overstating the climate benefits of new GM crops. Meanwhile, Robert Sekitoleko, chairperson of the committee on science and technology, said that MPs were focused on educating the president on clauses that address his concerns about the bill. **See more**
- In a letter to the agriculture ministry, representatives of the National Seed Association of India threatened to stop producing Bt cotton seeds unless the government met their demands to break the companies' license agreement with trait manufacturers. The groups criticized state efforts to hold them liable for paying compensation to farmers who suffered losses to pink bollworm. **See more**

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North America

News: Politico reports that the federal GMO labeling guidance has been sent to the Office of Management and Budget for review

News: Missouri-based ag news radio service interviews geneticist Alison VanEenennaam of University of California about her involvement in "Food Evolution" documentary; she says many Americans don't understand what genetic modification is, let alone its benefits, criticizes fear about eating GM food

Commentary: PG Economics agricultural economist Graham Brookes writes for Genetic Literacy Project, amplifies his recent paper in GM Crops and Food demonstrating increased carbon emissions if farmers stopped planting glyphosate-tolerant crops

Letter to the editor: Minneapolis Star Tribune roundup of letters includes one from member of Land Stewardship Project responding to op-ed that called for science-based decisions about food production systems; writer argues use of GM crops in United States has led to higher use of herbicides

Commentary: Drovers Cattle Network op-ed discusses "raw water" movement gaining popularity on West Coast, compares it to other movements that deny science, including anti-GMO activism

News: The Washington Post reports consumers are becoming savvier and seeing through food labels like "organic" or "natural", adding expansion of "GMO-free" into big brands making processed food "has diluted the appeal and reduced trust in organic claims"

Commentary: Wealth Daily's Monica Savaglia examines potential for gene editing to improve nutrition in our food, highlights differences between products of gene editing and GMOs, believes consumers are

right to be wary of GMOs due to unknown health risks

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: [Uganda's Daily Monitor reports on activist consortium Environment and Food Sovereignty's support of President Museveni's rejection of biosafety bill, National Association of Professional Environmentalists' Frank Muramuzi claimed it would cause indigenous species to disappear](#)

News: [The Ugandan reports MPs plan to educate President Museveni on clauses of GMO bill that he opposes, according to science and technology committee chairperson Robert Sekitoleko, who noted all questions raised have solutions within the law](#)

Commentary: [Writer for Kenya's Daily Nation reviews life and career of the late Calestous Juma, reflects on 2009 lecture he gave in his native Kenya, notes his advocacy for GMO foods as way to increase nation's food security, points out GMOs remain banned and controversial in Kenya, although crop trials underway](#)

Commentary: [Kenya's The East African runs op-ed by two members of One Acre Fund calling on African governments to fund smart agriculture to prevent famine, improve crop yields in face of climate change, such as by using drought-resistant seeds](#)

Report: [USDA Foreign Agricultural Service's GAIN Report on Burkina Faso's 2012 Biosafety Law includes information on biotechnology approval process in African nation for GE products developed domestically or by third country](#)

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: [Times of India reports on letter from National Seeds Association of India \(NSAI\) stating that its members may stop making Bt cotton seeds if their demands are not met, arguing gov't should do away with certain fees payable to Mahyco Monsanto Biotech Limited](#)

News: [China Global Television Network reports Burkina Faso's experiment with GM cotton disappointing, country tried strain of Bt cotton produced by Monsanto to resist bollworms, but resulting crop had short fibers so value of country's cotton exports fell; Burkina Faso phased out all GM cotton in 2016](#)

News: [Outlook India's roundup of nation's environmental issues in 2017 includes discussion of large-scale protests by anti-GM crop activists after India's GM crop regulator recommended commercial use of GM mustard in submission to environment ministry](#)

News: [Deccan Chronicle reports on Andhra Pradesh State Sericulture Research and Development Institute \(APSSRDI\) of Hindupur's development of four hybrid transgenic silkworm varieties resistant to Bombixmori Nueclio Polyno Virus \(BmNPV\)](#)

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Announcement: [Netherlands Commission on Genetic Modification \(COGEM\) posts notice it concluded import of three GM oilseed rape lines poses negligible risk to Dutch environment, but finds submitted Post Market Environmental Monitoring plan insufficient, needs improvement before market authorization](#)

Event: [Confederation Paysanne, La Via Campesina promote Conference on Food Sovereignty to be held Jan. 26-27 in Barcelona, Spain, to discuss issues of GM agriculture, how to keep ban on GMOs in organic farming, state of scientific and legislative debate on GM food](#)

Report: USDA GAIN Report states European Union and its member states, under pressure from anti-biotech activists, "have developed a complex policy framework that has slowed down and limited research, development, and commercial production of biotech products"

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Mexican news source reports presidential candidate asserts he doesn't fear assassination, says planting of transgenic maize would not be allowed under his administration, denies that his potential secretary of agriculture has relationship with Monsanto

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Food Navigator reports Food Standards Australia New Zealand rules products containing traces of GM golden rice should be able to be sold in those two countries, but doesn't permit golden rice to be grown in Australia and New Zealand

Campaign: Australian woman launches Change.org petition to Organic Industry Standards and Certification Council opposing submission by Australian Organics to change National Standards to remove reasonable wait period for farms converting to Certified Organic after growing GM produce

[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

Recent global biotechnology monitoring focused heavily on two new research developments. Response also continues to the Ugandan president's refusal to sign a biosafety bill.

- University of California-Berkeley researchers, working with candy maker Mars, are using CRISPR technology to adapt cacao plants to resist climate warming, arguing that if no action is taken, the plant could be extinct in 40 years otherwise. The development received international attention from media outlets hailing the technique as the savior of chocolate. [See more](#)
- Working in collaboration with University of Queensland and University of Sydney, the U.K.'s John Innes Centre announced the development of a speed-breeding platform that could allow scientists to improve plant genetics faster. While the researchers behind the project promoted it as a supplement to other modern technologies, anti-GMO stakeholders may position the platform as an alternative to agricultural biotechnology. [See more](#)
- Uganda President Yoweri Museveni's decision to not sign a biosafety bill received noticeable response from scientists and activists. Among responses from the science community, Science Foundation for Livelihoods and Development Executive Director Arthur Makara published an op-ed in *New Vision* calling the decision the biggest disappointment of the year and highlighting the flaws in the president's letter defending his refusal to sign. Health of Mother Earth Foundation activist Nnimmo Bassey praised the decision in an op-ed in *Business Day*. [See more](#)

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North America

Commentary: The World Food Prize posts blog by 2016 Laureate Jan Low arguing for importance of biofortification of staple food crops to fight micronutrient malnutrition in hunger-stricken countries, suggesting that taxing poor-quality foods and drinks could help finance such efforts

Event: Ohio radio station previews keynote speech to be given by Stacy Malkan, co-founder of U.S. Right to Know, on Feb. 18 at Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association's annual conference; Malkan claims "fake news" being generated about benefits of organic food, charges big ag companies engineering own facts about GM foods

News: Newsweek reports Australian and U.K. researchers who published findings in Nature Plants claim "speed breeding" method could grow crops, allow scientists to improve plant genetics faster, speeding up process of breeding crops more resilient to disease, pests by using grow lights optimized for photosynthesis

News: U.S. mainstream media outlets report climate change could trigger extinction of cacao plant, needed to make chocolate, but candy giant Mars and genetic engineers teaming to address problem by using CRISPR-Cas9 technology to engineer cacao plants that can survive different climates

Commentary: University of Georgia crop and soil science professor writes guest post on colleague Robert Shewfelt's blog, explaining how non-GMO labels are a marketing ploy, pointing to established

safety and environmental benefits of GM crops

News: New York Times publishes memorial for Kenyan-born Harvard professor Calestous Juma, highlights his work to improve African acceptance of new technologies, and his 1989 book "The Gene Hunters," which helped pave the way for Convention on Biological Diversity

Commentary: Mother Jones' Amy Thomson examines commercial release of Arctic apples, which she has sampled, highlights claims by Friends of the Earth's Dana Perls about potential health effects, and Perls' argument that non-GM, non-browning apples exist

More North America items

Africa

Commentary: Agriculturist Isaac Ongu writes for Uganda's Daily Monitor, promotes development of late blight-resistant potato by National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO) and International Potato Centre, criticizes delay in biosafety bill's passage

Commentary: Science Foundation for Livelihoods and Development executive director Arthur M. Makara writes in Uganda's New Vision, responding to President Yoweri Museveni's letter on the biosafety law, points out flaws in his argument, calls for trust in scientists

Commentary: New Telegraph journalist says medical experts claim more Nigerians will die from kidney disease unless government stops GMO consumption; neurosurgeon claims GMOs contain glyphosate and dychlorophus, which disrupt kidney function

News: Ghana News Agency reports on Peasant Farmers Association of Ghana's recommendation that Ghanaians eat locally produced products to promote economic growth and reduce risk of carcinogenic diseases, which they claim are caused by GMOs

News: Ugandan news outlet reports on scientists' disappointment over President Yoweri Museveni's refusal to sign biosafety bill, National Agricultural Research Organisation Director General Ambrose Agona noted his position captures myths of the bill's opponents

News: Ugandan news site reports producers want to use GM crops as part of solution to pest, disease plagues; critics argue large corporations want to control food production through GMOs

More Africa items

Asia

News: India news site reports another farmer dies in Tamil Nadu after spraying pesticides on cotton crop, notes many experts consider Bt cotton a failure as it has been unable to keep its original purpose of staving off pests

Commentary: Arvind Kumar of India's Sunday Guardian claims Monsanto is responsible for new Punjab policy contributing to smoke in Delhi, claims Monsanto seeks to discourage rice production to promote its GM crops, links GM corn to bee deaths

Commentary: Masipag's Alfie Pulumbarit writes for Philippine Daily Inquirer, compares golden rice to Dengvaxia vaccine, claims potential risks of feeding trials on children are unknown, argues golden rice could be a Trojan horse allowing entry of large companies

More Asia items

Europe

Announcement: U.K.'s John Innes Centre announces development of speed-breeding platform in collaboration with University of Queensland and University of Sydney, highlights potential combination with other technologies such as CRISPR

Commentary: Italian activist site publishes article by Vandana Shiva, who criticizes Monsanto's plans to expand use of digital agriculture in the future, claims agroecology is the only way to sustainably feed the world

News: French anti-biotech NGO Inf'OGM's Eric Meunier in fourth part of series questions whether EU's GM crop approvals are legal; claims scientific assessments are inconsistent, noting French experts reject applications as incomplete while EU experts accept them

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Greenpeace Mexico's Angelica Simon writes year in review article for Sin Embargo, lists revocation of Monsanto's GM soybean permits as good news, highlights goals and challenges for 2018

News: Uruguayan news site reports political parties issue statement expressing concern over GM crop approvals, say they want assurances the crops and associated pesticides will not impact health and environment

News: Agencia EFE reports Mexican Senate approved changes to biodiversity law; indigenous and environmental groups criticize the law, claiming it ignores indigenous groups' rights and enables large companies to patent biological resources

News: Bolivia's Pagina Siete reports on Deputy Minister for Consumer Rights, Guillermo Mendoza's announcement of new GMO labeling mandate, going into effect Jan. 1, companies will have two years to add labels to products

News: Bolivian news site reports President Evo Hernandez asks for proposal from Santa Cruz producers on using GM crops to increase production; notes without biotech crops farmers abandoning corn planting because they're losing money

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Commentary: Research team led by University of Queensland's Amy Watson and John Innes Centre's Sreya Ghosh write letter in Nature Plants, presenting "speed breeding" method, noting potential integration with other modern technologies like gene editing

Commentary: New Zealand news site columnist lists Italy's Federico Infascelli's faked research on GMOs among biggest frauds in science

News: New Zealand radio broadcaster asks how agriculture should respond to potential threat of synthetic food undercutting prices, notes Gates Foundation, others support synthetic foods

[More Oceania items](#)

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Recent global biotechnology developments included news that Uganda's president decided not to sign the country's biosafety bill into law. A peasant leader in Mexico claimed that transgenic soy was still being planted despite a court moratorium, and Bangladesh approved a new GM rice variety.

- Uganda's president, Yoweri Museveni, decided not to sign the country's national biotechnology and biosafety bill. Local media outlets reported that, in a letter to Parliament, Museveni urged legislators to incorporate strict coexistence measures to protect local crop varieties from GM pollen and to investigate the impact on farmers' ability to save seeds. [See more](#)
- Mexico's *La Jornada Maya* highlighted claims by local peasant leader José Dolores López Barrios that the illegal sowing of transgenic soy in the Yucatan Peninsula had resulted in bee die-offs and had negatively affected honey producers in the region. Barrios added that beekeepers had not been compensated for their losses. [See more](#)
- Bangladesh's *The Daily Star* reported that the government had approved five new varieties of rice, including a hybrid rice with increased zinc tolerance and a transgenic rice developed to be more easily reaped by mechanical harvesters. [See more](#)

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE: Your next snapshot will be sent Tuesday, Jan. 2, when the normal distribution schedule resumes. Please check the monitoring portal for the latest updates.

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North America

Commentary: Purdue University president Mitch Daniels writes for Washington Post, argues rich countries' avoidance of GMOs is immoral as well as anti-science, emphasizing need for the technology to help feed growing populations in developing nations

Commentary: Nathaniel Scharping writes for Discover Magazine on threats to banana industry posed by Panama disease TR4, notes use of GE or CRISPR is a possible solution, highlights Queensland University of Technology's development of resistant strains

Interview: Food Tank interviews Purdue University's Jayson Lusk about his work on controversial food questions, Lusk notes policy changes on GMO labeling could result in manufacturers switching to more expensive, non-GM ingredients, raising food prices

Commentary: Frances Townsend of Foreign Policy argues U.S. needs to strengthen research and development in agriculture to prevent China from taking the competitive lead, believes regulators shouldn't block proposed mergers

News: Wisconsin State Farmer reports on recent Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin (PDPW) summit, highlights comments by UC Davis animal geneticist Alison Van Eenennaam, who spoke about regulatory hurdles hindering biotech livestock improvements

Commentary: Maria Bowman, Catherine Greene and Fred Kuchler of USDA's Economic Research Service write blog post on recent report on impact of Federal organic and nutrition labels and private food company labels, noting consumer confusion on non-GMO label

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Uganda Grapevine reports Museveni refuses to sign food "corrupting" GMO bill citing concerns over mixing with indigenous crops, labeling and patents

News: Uganda Soft Power news channel amplifies reports President Museveni seeking biosafety bill revisions; adds quotes of concern of GMO monopoly over organic, need for precautionary measures and concerns about EU trade impact

News: Uganda's Daily Monitor reports on President Museveni's decision not to sign Biosafety Bill into law, sending it back to Parliament to examine patent rights of indigenous farmers and sanctions for mixing GMOs with indigenous crops and animals

Commentary: Biotechnology and Stewardship for Sustainable Agriculture in West Africa (BSSA) director Walter Sandow Alhassan writes for Ghana's Joy, criticizing Peasant Farmers Association of Ghana's article warning citizens against eating GMOs during Christmas

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: The Philippines' Business Mirror reports on Pilipino Banana Growers and Exporters Association, Inc. (PBGEA) executive director Stephen Antig's opposition to GM banana field trials in Mindanao, arguing it could negatively impact produce marketing

News: Zac Sarian, Manila Bulletin's Agriculture Editor, writes for his personal blog, reporting on Filipino banana expert Agustin Molina Jr.'s opposition to field trials of Panama disease-resistant GM bananas in the Philippines, highlighting concern about exports

News: Bangladeshi news outlet reports on release approval for the country's first biotech rice variety, designed with strong stems to make reaping with mechanical harvesters easier, another zinc-rich rice variety was also approved

Review: CAB Reviews paper by Indian scientists examines research on impact of transgenic Bt cotton on soil health, with focus on persistence of cry toxin, if any, and impact on soil ecosystem functioning, finds no substantial evidence of adverse effects

News: Vietnamese news outlet reports researchers at Russia's St. Petersburg National University announced development of GM carrots that protect against viruses that cause the flu, stating that feeding them to cattle could improve their immune systems

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Dutch publication Eos reports on development of Panama disease-resistant GM banana by Dutch and Australian researchers, the scientists will next look for additional resistance genes, and examine whether yield and taste have remained unchanged

Commentary: Spanish NGO Observatorio OMG responds to decision by Australia and New Zealand to allow human consumption of golden rice, cites number of reasons environmental groups are opposed to its introduction, including lack of post-marketing epidemiological studies

Commentary: GenOk's Thomas Bohn writes short communication for Food and Chemical Toxicology,

criticizing European Food Safety Authority for ignoring data demonstrating combinatorial effects of Crytoxins and Roundup in 'stacked' GM plants

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

[News: Mexico's La Jornada reports on Independent Agricultural and Peasant Workers' Center leader Jose Dolores Lopez Barrios' claims that continued presence of GM soybeans, in spite of court order, directly causes death of millions of bees and impacts honey exports](#)

[Commentary: Adriana Varillas writes editorial comment for Mexico's Radio Formula QR in opposition to biodiversity law, amplifies concerns of ETC Group director Silvia Ribeiro, who claims it will allow companies to patent traditional genetic resources](#)

[Commentary: Guillermo Correa of Mexico's Quadratin labels several presidential candidates as deceitful, criticizes Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador's proposed appointment of Víctor Villalobos as Ag Secretary due to his stance on GMOs, which he claims harm peasants](#)

[News: Oaxaca's El Imparcial reports local artist Francisco Toledo registered with State Electoral Institute and Civic Participation of Oaxaca \(IEPCO\) to contest municipal presidency of Oaxaca de Juárez, Toledo is known for work against GMOs and transnational companies](#)

[News: Uruguay news source reports NGOs express concern over government's approval of four transgenic events for commercial use, warn about exposing society to effects that may result from massive use of 2,4-D and dicamba, along with wide use of glyphosate](#)

[News: Uruguayan ag news outlet reports on Monsanto agronomist Marcos Carrera's statement on ideological debate surrounding GMOs, following Ministries of Public Health and Housing and Territorial Planning and Environment's vote against new GM materials](#)

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

[News: Argentina's AgroMeat reports on Food Standards Australia New Zealand's \(FSANZ\) announcement that its comprehensive safety assessment of golden rice found no health or safety issues associated with consumption](#)

[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 a French journalist had been injured during an anti-GMO protest. Concerns over Bt cotton use in India remained elevated, according to officials in various farming regions. Bolivia's president called for a proposal on how the country could begin cultivating GM crops.

- A journalist with *France Bleu* was reportedly attacked by police firing tear gas during a supermarket protest organized by the Volunteer Reapers. An editorial in that publication said police specifically targeted the journalist and called the action "intolerable." About 15 Volunteer Reapers had joined the protest to criticize the use of GM animal feed. **See more**
- As cotton harvests in India continue, the use of Bt cotton remains controversial. Maharashtra's governor urged researchers to develop new varieties that can withstand pink bollworm predation, while in Telangana farmers called for Monsanto to pay compensation over the illegal proliferation of an herbicide tolerant cotton in that region. Telangana officials announced that they would be strictly policing cotton seed sales next year. **See more**
- Bolivian president Evo Morales asked local business leaders to offer a proposal on the country's cultivation of GM crops, adding that he'd like to review the analysis by March. Specifically, Morales noted the interest in cultivation and eventual export of soybean, corn, cotton and cane. **See more**

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North America

[Commentary: Dietician writes for Parents magazine on "Science Moms" documentary, summarizes food myths and facts on GMOs, organic pesticide use, and celebrity food fads](#)

[News release: Elsevier promotes Journal of Dairy Science literature review concluding all stakeholders must be involved in evaluating scientific, ethical impacts of genome editing, genetic modification to avoid miscommunication](#)

[Commentary: Washington Examiner runs op-ed by chairman emeritus of free market think tank analyzing proposed Bayer-Monsanto merger, warning it could stifle competition in seeds and crop protection, asserting merged company will be so dominant that competition in sectors will be impossible](#)

[News: Bloomberg BNA reports on Monsanto's opposition to planned restrictions on 2018 dicamba use in several states, Monsanto's Scott Partridge argued the states' "focus is misplaced," and that there is no evidence to support cutoff dates or maximum temperatures](#)

[More North America items](#)

Africa

[News: Angola's state-run news agency reports Mozambique launches second phase of testing new varieties of GM maize designed to resist drought and insect attacks; work carried out under auspices of](#)

Water Efficient Maize for Africa (WEMA) project

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science blogger discusses impact of decision by Burkina Faso cotton traders to phase out cultivation of GM cotton, says national study shows introduction of GM cultivars in country led to 22 percent increase in yield over conventional cultivars

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Deccan Herald reports lawmakers warn Indian government against introduction of more GM crops because of unreliable regulatory system; critics point out 14 laws and regulations under five different ministries and six regulatory bodies to supervise entry and growth of GM crops

News: Outlook India reports governor of Maharashtra urges researchers to develop GM seeds that can withstand pest attacks, citing concern over farmers deaths in Yavatmal allegedly due to pesticide poisoning; governor spoke at Shri Vasant Rao Naik Agriculture Biotechnology College

Commentary: The Hindu Business Line runs op-ed by global commodities market specialist analyzing problem of bollworms attacking cotton crops in India's Maharashtra region; says attacks on seed technologies unjustified and brings roles of regulators, policymakers into question

News: The New Indian Express reports Telangana ag officials will check sales of illegal Bollgard 3 GM cotton seeds during next harvest season across the state, ag scientist GV Ramanjaneyulu called on gov't to immediately track firms producing and selling these seeds

News: Philippines' SunStar reports Pilipino Banana Growers and Exporters Association (PBGEA) opposes proposed GM banana field trials in Mindanao, executive director Stephen Antig noted they welcome the development, but don't know if their market will buy it

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: France Bleu's Florence Beaudet writes editorial condemning tear gas assault of a France Bleu journalist, while he was covering a Volunteer Reaper anti-GMO protest at Intermarche d'Aubenas

News: France's L'Obs reports on assault of a France Bleu journalist with tear gas while he was covering a Volunteer Reaper demonstration against "hidden GMOs" in food at a supermarket in Aubenas, Ardeche

Commentary: Keine-Gentechnik lists wishes for 2018, such as German government amending Genetic Engineering Act regulating GM plants in close cooperation with organic and environmental groups, European Court of Justice ruling GE organisms should be considered GMOs

Commentary: French anti-GMO NGO inf'OGM amplifies survey by Coalition for the Protection of African Genetic Heritage (Copagen) of farmers who grew Bt cotton in Burkina Faso from 2013 to 2016, says results show promises of GMO promoters not realized

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Bolivian news site reports president Evo Morales asks for proposal by end of March to allow use of GM soybeans, corn, cotton and sugarcane; general manager of Bolivian Foreign Trade Institute says with GM crops Bolivia can become agro-exporting country

News: Bolivian news site reports president Evo Morales agrees to review proposal by end of March for four GM crops; government also allows exports of soy, meat sorghum and sugar

News: Uruguayan news source reports Rural Association of Uruguay praises President Vazquez's

"sensitivity and diligence" in approving new GM events to be used in commercial agriculture; Biosafety Cabinet authorized four new events in soybeans and corn, three in soybeans for evaluation, several others for research

News: Argentina's El Tiempo reports on Faculty of Agronomy of Universidad de Buenos Aires (FAUBA) researchers' assessment that coming "third revolution of the Pampas" will involve coexistence of ag models using transgenic crops and agroecology

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News release: Food Standards Australia New Zealand calls for submissions on application to permit food from a GM cotton line, which has been modified to be resistant to piercing and sucking insects; FSANZ CEO says no public health or safety concerns identified in assessment

[More Oceania items](#)

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 Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2017 9:02:06 PM

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Global Crop Protection Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Continued coverage and analysis of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's draft risk assessment for glyphosate and related issues, dicamba drift and chlorpyrifos use in California dominated crop protection monitoring today.

- The U.S. EPA's draft human health and ecological risk assessments for glyphosate for public comment continue to draw interest from the media and environmental groups, including *Politico Pro Europe*, *Food & Environment Reporting Network* and legal news outlets anticipating future opposition from environmental groups. Food & Water Watch and Sustainable Pulse published responses highlighting several reasons why the agency's conclusion should be different. **See more** Roundup-related litigation discussion remains steady. Joanna Szabo of Top Class Actions announced a new lawsuit against Monsanto alleging Roundup resulted in a diagnosis of non-Hodgkin lymphoma, and Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and Baum law firm announced the filing of 50 new San Francisco Roundup cancer lawsuits against Monsanto. **See more** In the EU, we continue to see coverage of farmer concerns over the potential loss of glyphosate. In addition, *Politico Pro* reported that a German lawmaker in the People's Party, Peter Jahr, said Parliament's call for an independent authority must go "hand in hand" with increased resources. Jahr also asserted that the European Food Safety Authority's opinions based on science do not always fit with the public or political opinion and that often a political decision is given preference. The Austrian province of Carinthia has reportedly informed the EU Commission that it plans to ban glyphosate for three more years. Lastly, European Commissioner Vytenis Andriukaitis wrote a piece in *Ouest France* calling for a broader debate over pesticides following the glyphosate controversy, noting the movement toward transparency. **See more**
- Several U.S. ag news sites reported on dicamba drift-related developments, including a West Central Distribution-sponsored webinar highlighting efforts by BASF and EPA to help farmers avoid off-target drift, a *Bloomberg BNA* piece on Monsanto's opposition to planned restrictions on 2018 dicamba use in several states and an Iowa State University agronomy professor's historical perspective on dicamba. Late yesterday, the South Dakota Department of Agriculture announced it has approved Engenia, Xtendimax with Vapor Grip technology and Fexapan herbicides for use in the state for the 2018 growing season. **See more**
- Sen. Tom Udall reportedly said he would lift his hold on the Pesticide Registration Improvement Act, which would impose fees on pesticide registrants to generate funding for the Office of Pesticide Programs, if the EPA responds to his concerns about chlorpyrifos. In addition, *Western Farm Press* reported on the California Department of Pesticide Regulation's interim mitigation measures to reduce chlorpyrifos exposure while it reviews comments and makes its final risk assessment. A California news site highlighted comments by NGOs contending that classifying chlorpyrifos under Proposition 65 shows that state is ready to take more direction concerning regulation and call for a statewide ban. **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 crop protection items, **[click here](#)**.

Africa

Commentary: Silke Bollmohr of EcoTrac Consulting writes for Kenya's Daily Nation, argues it is time to question use of herbicides, points to controversy surrounding health effects of glyphosate, recommends mulch and cover crops to improve soil health

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: The Thailand Life warns readers about unsafe levels of pesticide residues in Thai produce, amplifying Thailand Pesticide Alert Network's assessment that nearly 64 percent of Thai produce exceeds its MRL, provides tips for finding pesticide-free food

News: Outlook India reports governor of Maharashtra urges researchers to develop GM seeds that can withstand pest attacks, citing concern over deaths of several farmers in Yavatmal allegedly due to pesticide poisoning; governor spoke at launch of new building at Shri Vasant Rao Naik Agriculture Biotechnology College

Commentary: Former Chief Secretary of Andhra Pradesh writes for The Hans India, warns that humans are equally vulnerable as wildlife to negative impacts of industry, highlights recent farmer poisonings in Yavatmal due to pesticide exposure

News: The Telegraph India reports govt audit finds India's food safety regulator has approved food products without adequate testing after analysis reveals 99 percent of food samples were not analyzed for pesticides, notes Calcutta lab claimed 60 percent of samples met standards when they had not been analyzed for pesticides since 2015

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Ouest France reports stores are trying to sell their stocks of glyphosate at year anniversary of ban on sale to individuals, with some stores opting to break the law by advertising the products; Water & Rivers of Brittany representative expresses surprise at the advertisements appearing again after April complaint filed

Announcement: Public Health France launches Coset-MSA national study on occupational health and risks in agriculture, says diverse occupational exposures in ag include phytosanitary products

Commentary: Member of European Parliament from France's National Front party announces she voted against authorization of GM oilseed rape that confers tolerance to glyphosate and glufosinate ammonium, says glyphosate classified as probable carcinogen and glufosinate ammonium is reprotoxic

Commentary: Epoch Times France's INSPIRED segment praises El Salvador's success in becoming independent from products of multinational companies like Monsanto, no longer relying on GM seeds and Roundup, notes the country's production increased by 40 percent

Commentary: UFC-Que Choisir, other NGOs demand action plans for glyphosate, EDCs, cancellation of recent authorization of bee-killer pesticides as nation's food congress nears completion

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

There were no notable developments in today's monitoring of Latin America. Click below for the latest items.

[More Latin America items](#)

North America

Commentary: Sonoma County, Calif. NGO amplifies Le Monde Monsanto Papers series to warn local pesticide spraying is cause high local rates of childhood cancer; endorses organics bill

Announcement: EPA requests ad hoc expert nominations for Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and

Rodenticide Act Scientific Advisory Panel on physiologically-based pharmacokinetic modeling to address pharmacokinetic differences between and within species on six pesticidal active ingredients

News: Central Oregon TV news source KTVZ reports Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Division extends public comment period to Jan. 31 on rules to protect farmworkers and their families from pesticide drift

Commentary: Washington Examiner runs op-ed by chairman emeritus of free market think tank analyzing proposed Bayer-Monsanto merger, warning it could stifle competition in seeds and crop protection, asserting merged company will be so dominant that competition in sectors will be impossible, especially for start-ups

Commentary: Steemit blogger warns readers about use of glyphosate in pre-harvest treatments on several crops, points to studies linking it to endocrine disruption, recommends buying organic

Commentary: Ben Hewitt of Institute on the Environment's Ensia magazine examines use of glyphosate for pre-harvest desiccation, explains benefits for farmers and contribution to dietary exposure, highlights claims by Charles Benbrook and Stephanie Seneff

Commentary: PLOS Biology Birnbaum collection piece co-authored by Environmental Defense Fund staff claims gaps in U.S. food regulation put health at risk, says FDA does not effectively assess, manage safety of chemicals including EDCs

More North America items

Oceania

News: Australia's Northern Daily Leader reports New South Wales Environment Protection Authority is reminding landholders, contractors to use herbicides responsibly in summer to avoid environmental, economic damages from drift, notes agency will keep eye out for non-compliance

More Oceania items

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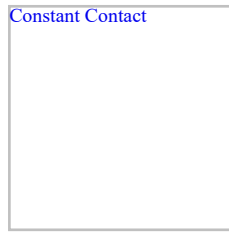
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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology developments included continued remembrances of Harvard scholar Calestous Juma, who passed away last week. In Uruguay, the country's environment minister criticized recent GM crop approvals.

- Remembrances for Harvard scholar Calestous Juma continued today, with commentary in U.S. and African news sites highlighting Juma's staunch support for African agricultural innovation. [See more](#)
- Uruguay's National Biosafety Monitor approved 14 new GM crops, including four new GM maize and soy varieties. The news prompted criticism from Environment Minister Eneida de León, who said the science on crop risks remained unclear. [See more](#)
- In Mexico, Greenpeace criticized the potential agriculture secretary nominee of presidential candidate Andrés Manuel López Obrador. Media outlets reported that the group claimed that Victor Villabolos, who had been named as a possible choice for the position, was a promoter of transgenic crops despite the crops' clear environmental and economic risks. [See more](#)
- In association with the Global Landscapes Forum occurring in Bonn, the International Institute for Environment and Development announces launch of SENTINEL project, a UK and Africa coordinated effort to preserve environmental systems while meeting Africa's food needs. The four-year project aims to reorient "ill-informed" agricultural policies in Africa that fail to account for climate change and socioeconomic needs of farmers. [See more.](#)

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

North America

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science posts Global Leadership Fellow's tribute to the late Harvard professor Calestous Juma, citing his call for Africa to embrace GE crops, noting his positive voice in debate about GMOs in writer's native Uganda, praising Juma's books, including "The New Harvest," "Innovation and Its Enemies"

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science memorializes Harvard professor Calestous Juma, who died Dec. 15 after career of advocating for innovation in agriculture in his native Kenya, notes he was criticized by anti-GMO activists for his support of genetically modified crops, wrote about historical opposition to innovation

Commentary: Antonio Regalado of MIT Technology Review examines recent developments in gene editing, highlighting Calyxt's soybeans with higher fatty acid content, examines debate over how products of gene editing should be regulated

Commentary: MIT Technology Review's David Rotman writes letter from the editor, examines great potential of CRISPR and Talen to enable greater number of scientists to develop new plant varieties, notes anti-GMO activism keeps small scientists away

News: Journal de Montreal reports anti-GMO group asks Canadian Food Inspection Agency to disclose what companies bought 4.5 tons of AquaBounty's GE salmon in 2017, claims four of five orders were for catering, may have been used for meals in restaurants, hospitals, schools

Report: USDA Foreign Agricultural Service's GAIN Report gives cotton and products update for West Africa, finds 2017-2018 cotton production forecast falls due to drought and high pest pressures in Burkina Faso, notes farmers sprayed more pesticides to control fall armyworm than when they planted Bt cotton

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Slow Food says Uganda biosafety bill threatens food sovereignty, calls on small farmers to reject GMOs, embrace local biodiversity to solve country's pest and malnutrition issues

News: Uganda's New Vision reports banana farmers will be able to grow GM bananas with improved pro-vitamin A nutrients, starting in 2021; local breed enhanced with gene from Australia, modified banana has orange flesh

Commentary: Writing in Real Clear Science, Kevin Folta says his visit to see Uganda GM banana field trials shows how Western anti-GMO rhetoric can derail humanitarian progress, notes Uganda passage of biosafety bill offers hope to deliver important technologies to local farmers

News: Nigerian news agency reports National Biosafety Management Agency grants Int'l Institute of Tropical Agriculture field trial permit for GM cassava

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: India's Hindu Business Line reports Telangana farmers ask government to force Monsanto to pay compensation for damages from spread of illegal Bt3 cotton; Monsanto denies charges

News release: Chinese ag biotech trait and corn seed provider Origin Agritech announces progress update on growth platforms focused on development, commercialization of superior corn seed products, high-value biotech traits, including biotech traits for insect resistance and herbicide tolerance

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: International Institute for Environment and Development researcher previews Bonn Global Landscapes Forum, says IIED launching UK-funded SENTINEL project to address challenge of producing enough food for Africa's growing population while preserving ecosystems

News: French news outlet reports authorities halt Volunteer Reapers demonstration handing out flyers, labeling GM food products in Aubenas supermarket; activists aimed to raise awareness in advance of holidays of GMOs in foods

News release: French farmers' union Coordination Rurale announces it signed open letter addressing December Ministerial Conference of WTO in Argentina, joining 75 groups and individuals calling for changes in international agricultural trade, arguing rules have destructive effects on peasant farmers

Commentary: Maurizio Bongioanni of Slow Food Italy reacts to recent article in La Stampa on use of GM feed in livestock sector, makes several counter-arguments about GMOs, claims they don't decrease pesticide use and that long term health impacts are unknown

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Uruguay's Montevideo Portal reports on opposition to National Biosafety Cabinet's recent approval of 14 new GMOs, highlights concerns about impacts of associated agrochemicals, and REDES - Friends of the Earth Uruguay's book on 20 years of GM use

News: Uruguayan news outlet reports on Departmental Board of Montevideo's approval of GMO labeling decree, following similar regulations in Paysandu, Maldonado and Lavalleja, highlights challenges in creating a national GMO labeling law

News release: Greenpeace Mexico denounces possible appointment of Victor Villalobos as Ag Secretary in Morena's cabinet, due to his favorable stance on GMOs, claims GMOs damage biodiversity and lead to genetic contamination of native seeds

News: La Jornada Maya reports on Change.org petition in which over 50 organizations call on Quintana Roo gov't to reduce pollution in Bacalar Lagoon and declare a Transgenic Free Zone, highlighting concerns about negative environmental impacts

Announcement: Brazil Senate news service reports GMO labeling was among 58 proposals approved by ag-agrarian reform commission in 2017; notes bill awaits analysis of Committee on Social Affairs

[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

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Today's global biotechnology monitoring featured a new India parliamentary recommendation on GMOs, coverage of Giorgio Fidenato's acquittal for GM crop cultivation and a *Politico* preview of 2018 U.S. biotech regulation.

- In India, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science and Technology, Environment and Forests tabled a report today recommending that no GM crop, including GM mustard, be introduced in the country unless its biosafety and socio-economic desirability is evaluated by an independent and transparent process. The news was reported by *United News of India*. [See more](#)
- An Italian news outlet reported the Court of Udine acquitted farmer Giorgio Fidenato for growing GM corn in Friuli in 2014. According to the report, Fidenato noted plans to seek compensation for damages and to plant GM corn in 2018. [See more](#)
- *Politico Pro* reported the U.S. Department of Agriculture is planning to tackle 27 final rules in fiscal 2018 to ease regulatory requirements, including one governing regulations of GMO labeling, which the agency plans to tackle first with a final action delivered in July ([see more](#)). Meanwhile, a *Politico Pro* feature suggested biotech proponents may increase lobbying in 2018 for the Trump administration to update the rules governing biotech crop approvals. According to the report, supporters see the current administration as the best shot for passing changes to the framework, adding that if action doesn't begin soon, policymakers will likely run out of time to pass meaningful legislation. [See more](#)

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North America

Commentary: Senior fellow of American Council on Science and Health writing on council's website demands retraction from science website for publishing biased article without revealing writer's ties to anti-biotechnology organization, U.S. Right to Know

News: Politico Pro's morning ag news roundup reports on USDA's plans to carry out 27 rules in 2018 to reduce regulatory requirements, USDA noted final action on rule for how food manufacturers can label products with GE ingredients will come in July

News: Politico Pro reports on ag biotech sector's hope that Trump's USDA will revamp antiquated rules that hinder innovation, highlights CropLife International study finding gov't approval of a GE plant takes 11 years and \$136 million, and developments in gene editing

Commentary: CEO of Independent Natural Food Retailers Association writing in Whole Foods Magazine predicts demand for organic food, non-GMO verified products will continue to grow, placing more demands on growers

Commentary: Alex Berezow of The American Council on Science and Health supports proposal to scrap term "GMO"; notes biological attributes should be basis for regulation not method of creation

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Study: Study in Journal of Sustainable Development examines effect of utilization of biotech products on farm produce output in Owerri Agricultural Zone of Imo State, finding use of biotech can increase productivity and total farm output

Commentary: Joseph Opoku Gakpo of Cornell Alliance for Science reports Burkina Faso abandoning GM cotton amid buyer complaints cotton length shorter; notes farmers forced to return to non-GMO cotton, heavy pesticide use

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Pakistan's Dawn reports farmers want biotech, but approvals are slow, Monsanto's Lance Wang is impressed by farmers' willingness to embrace new technologies, but lamented slow rate of mechanization in the ag sector

News: Indian news agency reports parliamentary committee on science recommends government evaluate bio-safety, socio-economic impact of genetically modified crops before allowing importation

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Inf'OGM's Eric Meunier begins series on latest applications for commercial authorizations of GM plants in the EU since Oct. 2016, highlights 14 requests for new products, eight applications for renewals, and one withdrawal

News: Serbian news outlet reports on Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications, Rasim Ljajic's statement that citizens have nothing to fear if GMO regulations are amended to enable WTO membership

News: Italian news outlet reports on Court of Udine's acquittal of farmer Giorgio Fidenato for growing GM corn in Friuli in 2014, following EU Court of Justice ruling, Fidenato noted plans to seek compensation for damages, and to plant GM corn in 2018

News: Politico EU reports EU Commission issued formal objections to Bayer's proposed deal with Monsanto, according to two people briefed on the case, Bayer may need to make more significant concessions, Bayer's Utz Klages wouldn't comment on rumors

News: Italy's La Stampa reports on controversy surrounding GMOs, as Italy prohibits cultivation but allows imports, highlights opposition by Slow Food and Coldiretti, and farmer Giorgio Fidenato's legal battle over his decision to grow GM corn

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Inter Press Service reports on uncertainty in results of NAFTA renegotiations for Mexico, U.S. Institute for Agricultural and Trade Policy analyst Steve Suppan believes the new agreement will involve entry of GMOs and synbio products

News: Mexico's Sinembargo reports on corruption study of nine states with upcoming gubernatorial races by Impunidad Cero y Transparencia Mexicana, highlights situation in Yucatan, where indigenous communities fought against Monsanto's GM soy

Commentary: Cida de Oliveira of Brasil De Fato claims companies like Monsanto are investing in new technologies such as CRISPR due to "failure" of transgenics, claims GM crops failed to reduce pesticide

use, resulting in negative environmental impacts

News: Argentina's La Nacion reports on National Commission for the Defense of Competition's (CNDC) investigation of level of concentration that would result in Argentina from Bayer-Monsanto deal

News: Huffington Post Mexico reports Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador shifts to right wing in third attempt to reach the presidency, Greenpeace criticized his proposed Ag Secretary, Victor Villalobos, over promotion of so-called "transgenic FTA" with U.S. and Canada

Campaign: Union of Civil Society Organizations of Bacalar and over 50 civil organizations and institutions sign collective petition to Quintana Roo Governor Carlos Joaquin Gonzalez and six other gov't officials, calling for declaration of a GE-free zone

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: New Zealand newspaper reports biotechnology company urging legal changes to encourage gene-editing technology after release of two scientific papers on possible use of technology to control pests, prevent disease

News: Australia's Farm Weekly reports agricultural lobbying groups oppose government investigation into compensation for organic farmers whose crops contaminated by GM material; lobbying groups claim inquiry unnecessary, intended to quash GM farming

Commentary: Australian science writer says empathy, seeking common ground with public more important than explaining science behind contentious issues such as genetically modified foods

News: Australian Broadcasting Corporation reports Grain Producers South Australia (GPSA) commissions market analysts Mercado to investigate whether South Australia's GM crop ban actually results in price advantage for SA farmers

News: Australian ag news site reports Syngenta CEO Erik Fyrwald laments politicizing debate over use of pesticides, GM technology, warns of unscientific arguments by environmental NGOs potentially leading to removal of beneficial ag products, methods, calls claims of organic ag practices capable of feeding the world "a myth"

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 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - Dec. 18, 2017
 Date: Monday, December 18, 2017 4:02:49 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

Happy holidays and Happy New Year!

The Favorable Outcomes newsletter is taking a holiday break, with the next edition planned for Tuesday, Jan. 2. But before we go, there are still some more stories from 2017 that are worth sharing.

In the holiday spirit, we've included a Christmas wish from Ruth Kava of the American Council on Science and Health for Golden Rice and other important biotech crops to be made available to the people who need them. And Amanda Zaluckyj of The Farmer's Daughter USA asks for Amazon shoppers to avoid making donations to support the Non-GMO Project's "fear and lies" and instead give to a charity that is doing good.

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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: Neurological Health Foundation



The Neurological Health Foundation (NHF), founded in 2010, promotes a "beyond organic" approach for pregnant women to avoid having children with autism and other neurological disorders.

Stories Worth Sharing

[Josh Bloom: Leading endocrine disruptor scientist "so wrong" with claim that fireworks are linked to autism](#)

[Omni Ben-Shahar: Consumers drawn to non-GMO labels because they're bombarded by misleading claims about GMO risks](#)

[Amanda Zaluckyj: Use Amazon Smile to support charities that are actually doing good, not to spread Non-GMO Project's "fear and lies"](#)

[Andrew Porterfield: "Big Ag" narrative about corporatization ignores that 97 percent of U.S. farms are family-owned](#)

[Ruth Kava: Golden rice - and golden potatoes - should be made widely available to fight vitamin A deficiency](#)

[Cameron English and Kevin Folta: Banning dicamba technology would be excessive, but use does need further refinement](#)

[Bloomberg: Investors hesitant to pursue GMO technology because public opinion lags behind scientific findings on safety](#)

[Robert Mwanga: Crops that are biofortified and resistant to insects and drought are key to producing more high-quality food](#)

[Justin Cremer: South African farmer "firm believer" in biotech after](#)

NHF's founders promote treatments and cures for autism that include homeopathic chelation therapy and doctor-prescribed organic diets. NHF is in the news recently urging women and children adopt a GMO-free, organic diet and avoid endocrine-disrupting chemicals with the release of its annual Healthy Child Guide and the launch of the Pregnancy Kitchen initiative - branded with the USDA Organic seal - offering meal services via partners including Whole Foods Market.

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about the foundation

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[USDA, University of Maryland scientists find Varroa mite-linked virus in two-thirds of sampled U.S. beehives](#)

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What's Trending?

[U.S. National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences director behind series of academic papers questioning food and chemical safety](#)

[European Commission committee gives preliminary approval to definition of endocrine disruptors in pesticides](#)

[Vote on proposed European neonic ban delayed until next year, possibly after European Food Safety Authority finishes assessment](#)

[U.S. EPA releases risk assessment documents for neonics ahead of planned public comment period](#)

[U.S. Congressional committee threatens to pull funding if International Agency for Research on Cancer refuses to be more transparent](#)

Calendar highlights

December 21	January 3-7	January 5-10
Volunteer Reapers trial in France	Society for Integrated & Comparative Biology 2018 Meeting	American Farm Bureau Federation annual convention

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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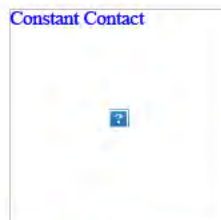
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 To: Diane Wray-Cohen@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Dec. 15-17, 2017
 Date: Sunday, December 17, 2017 9 04:26 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Global biotechnology monitoring included an announcement the Gates Foundation will designate \$300 million to develop crops that will thrive despite climate change. Anti-biotech NGO African Center for Biodiversity announced it will release a report in 2018 recommending harmonized seed regulations in Africa. *Agence France-Presse* continued reporting on the wheat test plot that was vandalized in France.

- *Reuters* reported the Gates Foundation pledged \$300 million to help smallholder farmers in Asia and Africa adapt to climate change by developing drought-, heat-, disease- and pest-resistant crops. Christophe Noisette of the activist group Inf'OGM called it a "false solution." **[See more](#)**
- ACB announced it will recommend harmonized seed laws for southern and eastern African nations, which it says will facilitate trade across borders. The recommendation also would ensure that smallholder farmers can save seeds, which ACB says would free farmers from being locked into buying seeds from large agribusinesses or larger farms. **[See more](#)**
- French seed company Limagrain announced there were no GM crops planted in the fields vandalized by the anti-biotech group Volunteer Reapers in Verneuil l'Etang, about 50 kilometers south of Paris. Activists scattered several varieties of wheat seed in the field. A company official told *Agence France-Presse* one to two years of research on conventional grain were lost as a result. **[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: Food Navigator reports on Tyson and Unilever's departure from Grocery Manufacturers Association, Radobank analyst Nick Fereday believes recent exodus represents a "breakdown in consensus" on issues like GMO labeling and added sugar](#)

[News: CBC reports environmental groups FOIA scientists' emails, post them on Internet regarding PR firm recruiting scientists for online forum on gene drives; scientists maintain discussions weren't nefarious and environmental groups also organized for the forum](#)

[News: Canadian agricultural news site reports gene drive has great potential for disease prevention, eradicating exotic species, but also could drive extinction for species involved and presents unknown issues](#)

[More North America items](#)

Africa

[News: Quartz Africa writes memorial article on Harvard Professor Calestous Juma, highlights his most recent book, "Innovation and its Enemies," in which he examined resistance to innovative technologies such as GMOs](#)

News: Malawi's Maravi Post reports on African Biosafety Network of Expertise (ABNE) Legal and Policy Program officer Akile Sunday's advice to scientists on importance of compliance with biosafety laws to lessen legal fights encountered during trials

News: Reuters reports Gates Foundation pledges to fund research on heat-, drought-resistant crops, unveils \$300-million plan to aid smallholders in Asia, Africa

News: South Africa's Daily Maverick reports on African Centre for Biodiversity's (ACB) call for revisions of legislation on plant breeders' rights, ACB's Mariam Mayet warned about potential criminalization of smallholders collecting and saving seeds

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: Science journalist writes in Hindustan Times that India needs conversation on gene editing, but notes it failed to allay GMO fears and science institutions are not proactive with policies

News: India's The Hitavada reports on Maharashtra Government's call on Central Government to conduct investigation into marketing of illegal genes in Bt cotton, announced by Ag Minister Pandurang Fundkar

News: Argentina's Chacra reports on Agribusiness Minister Luis Miguel Etchevehere's meeting with Chinese Vice Minister of Agriculture Qu Dongyu, Etchevehere requested early approval of Argentine GM products so producers can use them without trade disruptions

News: Bangladeshi news outlet reports on development of late-blight resistant GM potato variety by Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute, Michigan State University, University of Minnesota and Simplot, potentially saving farmers Tk 100 crore annually in fungicide costs

Commentary: GMWatch's Claire Robinson amplifies recent studies demonstrating GM contamination of native Mexican maize varieties, highlights negative environmental implications, and authors' recommendations on how it can be avoided

News release: Navdanya announces Vandana Shiva sends letter to Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change demanding criminal investigation against Monsanto for genetic contamination, following discovery of illegal Bt cotton

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Agence France-Presse reports French seed company Limagrain says there were no GM crops in field destroyed by Volunteer Reapers; company says it lost one to two years of research on conventional wheat

News: Deutsche Welle says signing Mercosur-EU FTA not possible at politically charged Argentine meeting; says biggest issues remain Latin America's use of GMOs, lack of traceability, and ethanol

Commentary: Ural Federal University and E1.RU launch Scientists vs Myths project, highlights expert Alexander Yermoshin's dismissal of several myths about GMOs, such as that they cause cancer and allergies, describes the breeding process

News: Agence France-Presse reports 70 members of Volunteer Reapers collective entered a Limagrain wheat variety testing platform in Seine-et-Marne, and sowed about 20 hectares of peasant wheat seeds in opposition to "hidden GMOs"

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Argentine news site reports Ministry of Agribusiness approves GM safflower to make chymosin, an animal enzyme needed to make cheese

News: Mexican news site reports Greenpeace criticizes Mexican presidential candidate's choice for agriculture secretary, says Victor Villalobos supported FTA that promoted GMOs, encouraged GM maize in Oaxaca

News: La Jornada reports that biologist, author Elena Alvarez Buylla focuses on GM corn, says genes are interrelated rather than isolated, so we should not apply genetic engineering to organisms

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: The West Australian reports farm lobbies concerned regarding WA Parliament investigation into compensation for organic farms contaminated by GMOs; Pastoralists and Graziers representatives say there's no need for law to cover "very rare" occurrences

News: Australia's Farm Online reports on anti-GMO groups' criticism of Office of the Gene Technology's (OGTR) proposals for products of gene editing, highlighting statements from Gene Ethics and Friends of the Earth

[More Oceania items](#)

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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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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Today's global biotechnology monitoring featured a Volunteer Reaper anti-GMO demonstration, coverage of an Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa media engagement meeting and a *Bloomberg* feature on GMO innovation obstacles.

- The French anti-GMO group Inf'OGM announced Volunteer Reapers entered a wheat seed variety testing platform run by French seed company Limagrain and proceeded to sow wheat from peasant and farmer seeds. The demonstration was held to denounce the opacity of the seed firm in its lobbying for deregulation of new breeding techniques. **See more**
- The Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA) is leading an interactive meeting for media and member organizations in Uganda, which aims to engage the media on issues of food sovereignty. Speaking with a local news outlet, AFSA Programmes Coordinator Bridget Mugambe said emerging policies in Africa support industrial agriculture models versus smallholder farmers, citing the New Alliance for Food Security as an example. The meeting runs through tomorrow (Dec. 15). **See more**
- *Bloomberg* published a feature examining the roadblocks for GM crop developments, quoting the University of California-Berkeley's Peggy Lemaux, who believes anti-GMO activists are keeping investors away. Cornell Alliance for Science director Sarah Davidson Evanega is also featured in the piece, noting how delays in biotech adoption negatively impacts developing nations. **See more**

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

North America

Study: University of Illinois researchers document host plant resistance to western corn rootworm in maize varieties

Commentary: Joan Conrow analyzes shift in Hawaii's GMO and hybrid seed industry, highlighting DowDuPont's plans to close operations on Molokai and expand them on Kauai, believes use of indoor operations may pre-empt activist claims about pesticide drift

Campaign: Center for Food Safety email blitz is part of end-of-year fundraising, notes it is suing EPA to force it to withdraw approval for Monsanto's Roundup-Ready crops

Commentary: "Farmer's Daughter USA" Amanda Zaluckyj criticizes Non-GMO Project's participation in Amazon's Smile Program, notes that while they are technically a non-profit, they spread false propaganda about safe GM technology

Campaign: Organic Consumers Association urges readers to send in money to its Millions Against Monsanto campaign, says their efforts helped reduce acreage cultivated with GM crops, resulted in Campbell's and Nestle leaving GMA over food labeling efforts, and sued Monsanto over labeling Roundup as "safe for humans"

Campaign: Green America's GMO Inside urges supporters not to buy Starbucks gift cards due to

company use of milk from cows given GM feed and antibiotics, recommends gift cards for other brands like Chipotle and Patagonia, and for Green America membership

More North America items

Africa

News: Nigeria's Leadership reports on Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa's (AFSA) interactive meeting for media and member organizations in Entebbe, Uganda, with goal of engaging the media on issues of food sovereignty, according to AFSA's Bridget Mugambe

News: Nigeria's Pulse News Agency reports on National Biosafety Management Agency (NBMA) Director General Rufus Ebegba's call on super stores to immediately formalize GM products with the agency, in order to avoid business disruptions

News: Egyptian news outlet reports on National Research Center's development of GM wheat seeds and a new microorganism compound to boost yields in spite of arid climate, lack of official GMO regulation keeps such developments stuck in the lab

Commentary: Michael J. Ssali of Uganda's Daily Monitor argues GM technology is much needed in farming, highlighting health, environmental and economic benefits, and successful applications in several countries across the globe

More Africa items

Asia

Commentary: Slow Food notes Masipag resists GM crops, Golden Rice in Philippines' Visayan Islands, by saving native rice seed, develops new varieties through selective breeding, protests government efforts to promote Golden Rice

News: The Hans India reports farm unions in Andhra Pradesh demand stern action against companies involved in spread of illegal herbicide-tolerant GM cotton seeds, Vissa Kirankumar of Rythu Swarajya Vedika pointed to risks posed by glyphosate and resistant weeds

More Asia items

Europe

Announcement: Technical University of Denmark's (DTU) National Food Institute seeks researcher for science-based advice on GMO and chemical risk assessment, primary task will be implementing GMO health risk assessments

Report: ACT Alliance EU publishes position paper on food security and climate change, advocates alternatives to climate-smart agriculture, promoting agroecology, argues use of GM seeds is unsuitable for poor farmers, as it necessitates use of chemical pesticides

Commentary: Inf'OGM's Christophe Noisette examines recent action by Volunteer Reapers against Limagrain, sowing peasant and farmer wheat seeds on 15 hectares of test plots to oppose deregulation of new GMOs

More Europe items

Latin America

News release: Argentinian NGO Movimiento Patagonia Libre announces it recently held an event entitled "Gritos de la Mapu" in Piedra Buena, participants consolidated a firm position in opposition to "extractivist activities" such as transgenics

News: Argentina's La Izquierda Diario reports several organizations gathered in protest of WTO summit,

police arrested several protesters

News: Mexico's Proceso reports on lawyer Jorge Mendiburu's assessment that revocation of permits for Monsanto's GM soybeans is not final, due to legal challenge, he believes this is in spite of a 'serious' crime attempted against the country's biosecurity

Campaign: CLOC-Via Campesina publishes declaration of Food Sovereignty Forum Territories of Peace for the Dignified Life Summit of the Peoples in protest of WTO summit, speaking out against violence brought by ag companies against native seeds, and introduction of dangerous technologies

[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

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Today's global biotechnology monitoring featured a hearing on a Food Sovereignty Ghana GMO opposition suit, the discovery of GMOs in birdfeed in Switzerland and the launch of a new U.S. government comment period.

- The Human Rights Court in Accra, Ghana, was scheduled to hear the case brought by a Food Sovereignty Ghana-led NGO coalition against the National Biosafety Authority seeking declarations affirming GM rice and cowpea commercialization have met international and domestic risk assessment and GMO management laws. In anticipation of the hearing, Ghana Parliamentary Agriculture Committee member Yaw Frimpong Addo published an op-ed accusing Food Sovereignty Ghana of attempting to block the introduction of GMOs ([see more](#)). A piece by Joseph Opoku Gakpo of the Cornell Alliance for Science also amplified criticism of the NGO ([see more](#)).
- The Swiss Federal Office for the Environment announced inspectors identified birdseed contaminated with GM oilseed rape, prompting officials to contact importers to take measures to reduce impurities. The agency added that birdseed from trade will be regularly monitored in the future. The announcement was amplified by Swiss anti-GMO NGO Schweizer Allianz Gentechfrei. [See more](#)
- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration solicited comments on how it should collect input for its consultation for foods derived from new plant varieties. The agency will accept comments through Feb. 12. [See more](#)

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North America

Campaign: SynBio Watch letter from 10 anti-GMO NGOs to CBD adds allegations of undisclosed conflicts of interest to gene drive FOIA initiative seeking to exclude Gates Foundation supported academics from providing input to regulation of NBTs

Commentary: Science news piece by Cameron English and Kevin Folta highlights dicamba debate, lesser-known facts ignored by media; explains crop damage linked to dicamba drift predates Monsanto's herbicide-resistant crops by almost 50 years; notes DuPont and BASF more responsive to farmer complaints than Monsanto

Announcement: FDA announces open comment period through Feb. 12 regarding proposed guidance on collection provisions for FDA's consultation procedures for foods derived from new plant varieties

News: Daily Caller reports on reasons behind Sonny Perdue's concerns about allowing states to limit what items can be purchased with food stamps, highlights his statement about some states possibly trying to restrict GM foods

News: Mother Jones reports Sen. Elizabeth Warren warns of ag business consolidations monopolizing global seed, pesticide markets, urges Trump administration to block Bayer-Monsanto merger

Campaign: Just Label It asks supporters to send emails urging their members of Congress to support Homegrown Organic Act of 2017, says bill would help producers switch to organic farming, points out

organic crops grown on less than 1 percent of U.S. farmland

News: MIT Technology Review reports on California Cherry Board funded research at University of California, Riverside to develop gene drive technology with potential to control invasive *Drosophila suzukii* fruit fly, highlights debate over ethical implications and regulation

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Joseph Opoku Gakpo of Cornell Alliance for Science examines Food Sovereignty Ghana's efforts toward court ruling against GM crops, highlights criticism of the NGO by Ghana National Farmers and Fishermen Association, parliamentarians and scientists

News: Ghana's Joy reports on Parliamentary Ag Committee member Yaw Frimpong Addo's criticism of Food Sovereignty Ghana's attempts to block introduction of GMOs, emphasizing need for ag innovations, arguing those who want GM crops should have access

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Times of India reports on professor HM Desarda's criticism of industrial agriculture and GM crops, ahead of Global Climate Change Conference organized by ag universities of Maharashtra, claiming this type of agriculture destroys biodiversity

News: Reuters reports India's cotton output is likely to fall short of record high predicted by industry analysts, due to damage caused by pink bollworms, which have become resistant to Monsanto's Bt cotton technology in certain regions

News: India's Research Matters reports on Indian Institute of Technology researchers' development of GM cowpea variety resistant to Mungbean Yellow Mosaic India Virus (MYMIV) using RNAi, scientists are planning field trials

News: India news site reports Maharashtra govt still trying to determine cause of pesticide-related deaths among farmers; state bans sale of five pesticides and registers case against Gharda Chemicals; ag official blames unauthorized dealers, while Gharda blames Chinese sprays; probe finds standard practices not followed by local officials

News: Bangladeshi news source reports government to introduce GM potato, called "3-R-gene potato," resistant to fungal late-blight disease; project will infuse Diamant potato variety with three resistant genes to fight late blight; supporters say project will increase potato production, growers can spend less on pesticides

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Dutch broadcaster reports Drenthe province national leader in soy cultivation, notes government wants Dutch farmers to grow non-GM soy instead of only importing GM soy; director of Dutch soy processor Agrifirm says customers increasingly asking for non-GM soy

News release: Swiss Federal Office for the Environment announces inspectors find birdseed contaminated with GM oilseed rape, notes birdseed regulated as feed, often retains germination, can be spread in environment; GM oilseed rape plants found growing near two bird feeders

News: EurActiv reports EU and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation pledge over 500 million euros for ag research and innovation over next three years, possibly implying use of GMOs, which Bill Gates has supported for addressing climate change in Africa

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Argentina's Pagina 12 reports on plenary entitled "Youth against Free Trade", within the framework of Week of Global Action against the WTO, a member of Paraguayan group Namoseje Monsanto explained the conflict with big companies centers around land

Commentary: Ramiro Thomas of Argentina's La Izquierda Diario amplifies ETC Group study that found peasant agriculture feeds 70 percent of the world, highlights reasons why industrial ag model only feeds 30 percent, points to negative environmental impacts

News: Cuba's Bohemia reports on recent biotech event at Varadero resort, where prominent scientists in the field spoke, including Nobel Laureate Richard Roberts, who spoke about benefits of GMOs, highlights his campaign against Greenpeace

News: Latin American Herald Tribune reports on Argentine President Mauricio Macri's speech at opening of WTO conference in Buenos Aires, he emphasized importance of public-private dialogue, highlights prominent companies represented, including Monsanto

Commentary: Chile's National Association of Rural and Indigenous Women (ANAMURI), posting on sister organization CLOC-Via Campesina, issues statement of solidarity supporting struggles of Brazil's peasant movements, including MST, as they engage in hunger strikes

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Commentary: Inf'OGM's Charlotte Krinke and Eric Meunier examine Australia's draft regulations for new GM breeding techniques, highlighting proposal to regulate products of oligonucleotide-directed mutagenesis as GMOs, and ongoing mutagenesis debate in France

[More Oceania items](#)

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Caitrin.Martin@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Welcome to the Bonus Eventus network!
 Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2017 3:06:24 PM

Welcome!

Dear Caitrin,

Welcome to the Bonus Eventus network!

You now have access to a series of tools to stay abreast on key food and agriculture issues. These include a community networking site, an issues intelligence monitoring portal and a stakeholder wiki.

If you haven't done so already, you'll need to create an account. Once your registration is confirmed, you'll be ready to access the tools below.

COMPLETE YOUR PROFILE NOW

Bonus Eventus Network Tools

[Stakeholder Research](#)
[Issues Intel Monitoring](#)
[Community Forums](#)
[Calendar](#)

Introduction

Bonus Eventus is a private social networking and communications platform for stakeholders who desire an informed, collegial and science-based public dialogue and understanding about key food- and agriculture-related issues.

The tools were developed by v-Fluence and the White House Writers Group with the support of academic, commercial, government and NGO stakeholders interested in meaningful dialogue on important food and agriculture issues.

For additional information, [click here](#).

Stakeholder Research

Bonus Eventus, in cooperation with the nonprofit Academics Review, provides a private stakeholder research wiki with profiles on more than 1,000 individuals, organizations and coalitions seeking to influence public attitudes on food and agriculture issues.

We encourage your contributions to keep these community-edited profiles up to date with the highest quality and most current information.

Members may share individual articles from the wiki with the public, but note that in doing so, you take responsibility for the accuracy and quality of that information.

STAKEHOLDER RESEARCH WIKI

Issues Intelligence Monitoring Portal

Everyone in the Bonus Eventus Community can view a general news feed on the site's home page, and customized content feeds are available to individuals or groups.

Topic feeds include plant biotechnology, crop protection, pollinator health, endocrine-disrupting chemicals and agriculture-focused water and climate issues.

As a paid service, v-Fluence provides issues intelligence monitoring reports with expert analysis using historical data and trends.

BONUS EVENTUS MONITORING

Community Forums/Networking

Bonus Eventus offers members a range of collaboration tools:

General Forum

Any member of Bonus Eventus may start a discussion thread visible to ALL members of the community.



Instructions

Using the Monitoring Portal

Navigating Forums

View/add to the calendar

Editing the Stakeholder Wiki

Have a tip for us?

v-Fluence is continually working to upgrade and develop products to better serve your needs.

If you have any questions, suggestions or feedback, please contact us at monitoring@bonuseventus.org.

We'd love to hear from you.

Groups

Existing organizations and informal groups may create private working spaces for collaboration and information sharing.

Training

Training information includes best practice resources for science advocacy, risk communications, news media and social media.

Issues Library

Members may share slides, background documents, images and videos with the community.

Calendar

Bonus Eventus offers a shared calendar where members can let the community know about conferences, presentations and other events.

v-Fluence topic analysts routinely update calendar items. However, any member may submit event information to be posted.

For more information, contact:

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jay.byrne@v-fluence.com

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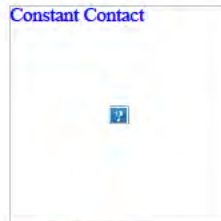
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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Today's global biotechnology monitoring featured India government action against Monsanto over failed Bt crop performance and GMO labeling developments in Brazil and Uruguay.

- India's *CNN-News18* reported that the Maharashtra ag department registered formal complaints against Monsanto and five other seed companies in response to Bt cotton crops' failure to protect against pink bollworm. Officials allege Monsanto deceived farmers and the government. [See more](#)
- The Brazilian consumer group Proteste voiced opposition to the proposed Brazil GMO labeling initiative. According to a media report covering the group's advocacy, the Committee on Social Affairs will vote on the policy in a meeting tomorrow (Dec. 13). [See more](#)
- Officials from Uruguay's Montevideo region reinstated a local 2013 GMO labeling law previously placed on hold due to disagreement among various stakeholders on its viability and interpretation. Media reports note the government approved updates to the policy to require labeling if GMOs exceed 1 percent within an individual ingredient of a food product or 1 percent of the entire product. Labeling proponents expressed anger about implementation delays due to ongoing resistance by commercial interests. [See more](#)

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

North America

Commentary: Natural News advises readers to avoid using non-GM seeds for produce, notes organic produce not GMO, not doused in pesticides, claims organic farming better for environment

Announcement: National Corn Growers Association announces expansion of Take Action program to fight insect resistance; NCGA chairman and farmer Don Duvall says "Now is the time to take action before insects become resistant to Bt technology like weeds have become resistant to herbicides"

Interview: Farm Journal interviews Marianne Smith Edge of A Fresh Look on recent survey that found gap between what moms value in food and their understanding of how GMOs help achieve those values, she notes ag community can help close the gap

Campaign: GMO Free USA uses Facebook page to promote sales of T-shirts emblazoned with slogan "Thank an Organic Farmer," states goal of selling 100 organic cotton T-shirts to help NGO's fund-raising campaign

Commentary: World Food Prize posts piece by 2016 Laureate Robert Mwanga listing innovations in food production likely to have significant impacts in next decade, grouped into those that increase quantity and quality of food and feed, such as biofortified foods, and those that focus on storing and processing food to prevent loss

Commentary: Science magazine's Jon Cohen examines claims that there is a covert coalition seeking to manipulate UN discussions on gene drive regulations, highlights responses from researchers dismissing

accusations from well-organized environmental NGOs

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: The Guardian reports on Uganda's progress in developing improved, disease-resistant bananas following passage of biosafety bill, National Agricultural Research Organisation's Priver Namanya Bwesigye hopes they will be released for public use by 2021

News: Nigeria's Leadership reports on domestic scientists' research on biotech solutions to food sufficiency, highlights Institute of Agricultural Research (IAR), Zaria researcher Muhammad Ishiyaku's work on bt cowpea, and recent success in trials

News: Nigeria's Blueprint reports on National Biosafety Management Agency's (NBMA) call on GMO dealers to follow due process in importing GM seeds and grains, Director General Rufus Ebegeba noted NBMA will penalize importers that violate import laws

News: EnviroNews Nigeria reports on biotech workshop for Ghanaian members of Parliament, organized by National Biosafety Authority, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research's Victor Agyeman noted crucial role of science in economic development

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: International Institute for Sustainable Development reports Japan became 40th country to ratify Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress in Context of Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, triggering Supplementary Protocol's entry into force on March 5, 2018

News: India's CNN-News18 reports Maharashtra ag department registers formal complaints against Monsanto and five other seed companies, following Bt cotton crops' failure to protect against pink bollworm, to which they should be resistant

News: Armenia News reports on Monsanto's assurance that it does not import GM seeds, and none were found at customs offices, according to Ag Minister Ignati Arakelyan, who also announced establishment of a special working committee to evaluate legislation

News: India's Tribune Trust reports on Punjab Biotechnology Incubator's (PBTI) organization of five-day training workshop on GMO detection for Environment Ministry officials and Bangladesh Environment Department scientists

Commentary: Political analyst Yasmeen Aftab Ali writes for Pakistan Today, criticizes passage of seed bill allowing import and commercialization of GM crops, claims GM crops have had negative economic impacts in India and Burkina Faso, promotes organic ag

News: Pakistan Observer reports on Economic Cooperation Organization Food Security Committee's call on member states to develop sustainable ag development strategies to help achieve food security, emphasizing need for a seed supply project

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Italian news site reports on letter from local writer and historian opposing GMO cultivation and free trade agreement between EU and Canada, saying "consequence would be a total surrender to the multinationals"

Report: EU Parliament ag committee adopts opinion issued by environment, public health, food safety committee recommending EU cultivation of protein crops, argues move will limit imports of GM soy from

countries with looser food-ag standards

Study: Study in Journal of Agribusiness and Rural Development evaluates Lithuanian consumers' attitudes toward GM foods, finds majority have negative views of GMOs, but only a quarter of respondents actively seek out GMO information on product labels

Commentary: Inf'OGM's Guy Kastler warns about transnational seeds companies' efforts to secure industrial property rights, patents and plant variety certificates (VOC) on products of new breeding techniques, by influencing the system to their advantage

News release: Germany's Testbiotech claims EFSA withholding access to data from feeding trials with GE soybeans, warns health risks from consumption of those soybeans and glyphosate used on them being concealed, notes letter from European Commission indicates importation of GE soybeans might be allowed soon

More Europe items

Latin America

Commentary: Alternate Argentinian news site reports on march against WTO summit in Buenos Aires, says one key point for Argentina will be Free Trade Agreement between EU and Mercosur, and implied "mandatory approval of the 'Monsanto Law' and free imports for the benefit of European companies"

News: Brazil news outlet reports local consumer groups denounces country's proposed GM labeling bill in advance of Committee of Social Affairs vote on Dec. 13

Commentary: Venezuelan radio outlet profiles agroecology and food sovereignty movement, highlighting policy goals of various groups, including Venezuela Free of Transgenicos and National Network of Seed Producers

News: Uruguayan news site reports Montevideo will reinstate GM food labeling following suspension in 2015; city's Departmental Board approves requiring labeling if GMOs exceed one percent within an individual ingredient of a food product or one percent of the entire product

News: Mexican news outlet reports on maize fairs for indigenous communities organized by State Commission for Indigenous Peoples (COEPI), to create awareness and resistance to transgenics

News: Argentinian news site reports on march by social and political organizations in city of Parana against proposed changes to national health law; decree by by protesters includes demand for environment free of agrotoxins and transgenics

Announcement: Brazil's School of Magistracy (Emagis) of the Federal Regional Court of the 4th Region announces launch of journal Revista do TRF nº 95, includes judgement prohibiting GM crops within 10 km of federal conservation units in Rio Grande do Sul

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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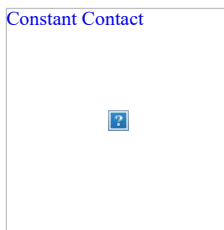
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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Dec. 11, 2017
 Date: Monday, December 11, 2017 9 05:05 PM

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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 an Armenian agriculture ministry meeting on the country's GMO policy and continued response to the World Trade Organization summit.

- A biosafety working group within the Armenian Ministry of Agriculture reportedly met today and recommended the country adhere to the precautionary principle when making regulatory decisions on genetically modified crops, prompting media to report the country is moving toward banning the use of GM products. According to reports, working group members made the recommendations based on an argument that the safety of GMOs has yet to be proven. The chair of the group requested members compile a draft bill for review in two weeks. **[See more](#)**
- Argentine news outlet *La Izquierda Diario* published two commentaries today responding to the WTO summit. In one of the pieces, Carlos Vicente of Multisectoral NO to the Monsanto Seeds Act warned the summit will force approval of the "Monsanto Law." In a separate piece, one of the publication's columnists praised protests against the summit, arguing the voices of activists are needed to challenge the event positioned to favor multinationals in the wake of WTO's decision to ban NGOs and journalists. **[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: Cattle rancher and agriculture advocate Amanda Radke writes in Beef Magazine about recent USDA survey indicating over half of consumers want foods labeled if it contains DNA, calls it "wake up call" and says "consumers need a lesson in basic biology, food production and the cycle of life"](#)

[Commentary: Civil Eats interview with Food First! promotes claim that capitalism is cause of food insecurity; organic promoting Holt-Gimenez says organic agroecology political change, not expensive inputs needed to transform agriculture](#)

[Announcement: U.S. Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service posts notice of petition received from seed company seeking determination of nonregulated status of canola genetically engineered to accumulate long chain omega-3 fatty acid, notes public comment period open until Feb. 9](#)

[Audio: Kevin Folta's Talking Biotech podcast features discussion with independent agronomist Karen Corrigan on recent controversy surrounding new dicamba crop technology she urges growers to carefully follow label instructions to minimize drift](#)

[Commentary: Joan Conrow writing for Genetic Literacy Project highlights organic industry infighting fueled by USDA allowing hydroponic, aquaponic farms to use organic label, notes hypocrisy of NOSB rejecting GE ag practices that eliminate pesticide use, citing some organic farmers lobbying for GE inclusion](#)

[Commentary: Gary Truitt of Hoosier Ag Today expects it won't be long before consumers are willing to pay more for GM foods, highlighting several developments of GM products with consumer benefits, emphasizes importance of fighting villainization](#)

Report: USDA's Economic Research Service examines five case studies showing federal gov't role in food labeling, including voluntary non-GMO labeling, finds mandatory federal standards do not automatically lead to improved consumer understanding

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Ghana news site posts Alternative Medical Association of Ghana president urging parliamentary ag, health committee chairmen to oppose Plant Breeder's Bill, stresses uncertainty over potential impacts of GMOs on human health, environment

Commentary: South African ag research advocacy group highlights Ugandan professor's keynote address global food security conference citing population growth to express importance of Africa's role in food production, stress need for government policies to allow use of science, technology in agriculture

News: Nigerian news outlet reports 90,000 metric tons of GM maize were smuggled into the country, according to National Biosafety Management Agency Director General Rufus Ebegba, who highlighted NBMA's actions in collaboration with Customs Service

Video: Open Forum On Agricultural Biotechnology in Africa posts video on YouTube stressing importance of biotechnology to food production, highlighting need for African governments to increase spending in support of ag biotech

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Armenian news outlet reports on Ministry of Agriculture biosafety working group decision to prohibit use of GM products in Armenia and adhere to precautionary principle, as it argues GMO safety has not been proven

News: Times of India reports Telangana gov't calls on district officials to take stringent action on dealers and manufacturers of fake seeds, insecticides and fertilizers, following reports of unauthorized GM cotton seeds in the state

News: Deccan Chronicle reports on concerns that pink bollworm will destroy 40 percent of Telangana's cotton crop this year, partly due to unseasonal rains and sales of spurious seeds, which failed to provide resistance to the pest

News: The Hindu reports farmers in Sangareddy district of India's Telangana state allege they were sold herbicide-tolerant cotton seeds at experimental stage prior to approval from Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee, resulting in huge economic loss

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Nature research journal posts editorial citing U.N.'s Sustainable Development Goals to stress importance of plant biology in global food security, stresses need for high-tech ag solutions including creation of more efficient, higher-yielding crops

News: Russian state-sponsored Sputnik Radio amplifies ETC Group (called a "human rights watchdog") FOIA campaign claiming US military investing in "genetic extinction" technologies turning gene-drives into "ethnic weapons;" contrasts with quotes from Vladimir Putin noting responsible development of technology in Russia

Commentary: University of Sheffield's Peter Horton writes opinion piece for journal Food Security, calls for radical change in food production and consumption, supports use of modern technologies such as GM crops and gene editing

Commentary: Scotland news site piece by Leyton R&D consultant highlights five examples of how life sciences are revolutionizing farming, examples of work being done by clients including pesticide trials

News release: Germany's Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) announces publication of revised scientific report on new breeding techniques by its technical authorities, taking into account public comments received by Oct. 13, 2017

Commentary: German anti-GMO news site criticizes Federal Ministry of Agriculture (BMEL) report on genome editing, noting it does not show any substantive changes following public comment period, and that its statements on safety contrast those of ENSSER

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: ETC Group's Silvia Ribeiro writes for Mexico's La Jornada, examines emails obtained by ETC Group and Third World Network showing U.S. military and Gates Foundation's investment in gene drives, argues the technology presents an unacceptable threat

News: Mexican news outlet reports on Supreme Court decision blocking GM corn and soy in Yucatan Peninsula, Greenpeace's Maria Colin Olmos called the ruling a victory for society and environment, as 25,000 families depend on honey production

News release: REDES - Friends of the Earth Uruguay announces publication of new book, "20 years of transgenic crops in Uruguay," detailing negative socio-economic and environmental impacts since their adoption, includes proposals for food sovereignty, agroecology

News: Uruguayan news outlet reports on Friends of the Earth's new publication on social, environmental and economic impacts of GM crops after 20 years, highlights concerns about pesticides, effects on biodiversity, and intellectual property

Commentary: Andres Garces of Argentina's La Izquierda Diario promotes protest against WTO summit in Buenos Aires, led by Socialist Workers' Party (PTS), criticizes WTO for protecting multinationals' profits, warns about so-called Monsanto Law

Commentary: Carlos Vicente of Multisectoral NO to the Monsanto Seeds Act writes for Argentinian news outlet against WTO summit, claims it will force approval of the "Monsanto Law," which he claims will criminalize native seeds and facilitate their appropriation

[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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Stakeholder database

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

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Diane.Wray-Cohen@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - Dec. 11, 2017
 Date: Monday, December 11, 2017 4:02:38 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

As the world's population continues to grow, what's the best way to ensure there's enough food for everyone?

In this week's Favorable Outcomes newsletter, there are four pieces - from Calestous Juma, Mark Lynas, Michael J. Ssali and Tracy Powell - that examine this question. Juma and Ssali focus on methods for producing more food in Africa (and Uganda, in particular) while Lynas and Powell take a more general approach.

Two other articles - from Cameron English and Stephan Neidenbach - ask why anti-pesticide activists are opposing genetically modified crops that have been shown to reduce pesticide usage. And an editorial from *Nature* criticizes the subject of this week's Stakeholder Spotlight - Edward Hammond - and his associates for unfairly spinning the debate around gene drives.

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: Edward Hammond



A Texas-based contract researcher who has previously worked on behalf of the Third World Network, Greenpeace International and the African Centre for Biosafety, Hammond

Stories Worth Sharing

[Cameron English: "Activist interference" main obstacle preventing use of biotechnology that could reduce pesticide usage](#)

[Hank Campbell: Science media must demand accountability from "anti-science social authoritarian progressives" like Gillam, Hakim](#)

[Calestous Juma: To fight hunger, African countries must leverage new technology and improve farmer training](#)

[Julie Kelly: Scaring women with anti-pesticide claims only adds to "humiliating and painful" process of fertility treatments](#)

[Mark Lynas: Feeding growing population without increasing farmland requires better crop genetics and modern techniques](#)

[Josh Bloom: France considering replacing glyphosate with product that is more expensive, more toxic to marine life](#)

[Michael J. Ssali: Uganda's adoption of biotechnology aimed at boosting production, not aiding foreign companies](#)

[Tracy C. Miller: GMOs and pesticides have boosted human health by making food more abundant and affordable](#)

recently released emails (obtained via Freedom of Information requests) suggesting regulations on new breeding techniques were being manipulated by the Gates Foundation, Monsanto and the U.S. military.

Learn more about Hammond [HERE](#).

CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES

Nature: Gene drive technology deserves ongoing scrutiny, but release of scientists' emails was "unfair attempt" to create polarizing spin [?](#)

Stephan Neidenbach: Why are Maryland activists opposing GM crops proven to reduce agricultural run-off? [?](#)

John S. Gless: California chlorpyrifos restrictions that ignore "overwhelming body of scientific evidence" will hurt citrus farmers [?](#)

Society of Toxicology: Data have "overwhelmingly demonstrated" that GM foods are as safe and nutritional as non-GM foods [?](#)

CLICK FOR BONUS EVENTUS MONITORING

What's Trending?

European Commission committee to consider neonic regulations / European Food Safety Authority draft assessments leaked

European Food Safety Authority, European Chemicals Agency launch consultation on EDC criteria

Bollworm damage reportedly rampant in Indian cotton crops / Activists blame pesticide use for cotton farmers' deaths in Tamil Nadu

Glyphosate opponents seek legal means to annul reauthorization vote

Calendar highlights

December 10-13	December 11-14	December 12-13
World Trade Organization ministerial conference	Convention on Biological Diversity Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice meeting	European Commission Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed considers EDC criteria and neonic regulations
December 12-13	December 12	December 13
EDC-MixRisk meeting	Collaborative on Health and the Environment webinar: "Examining Environmental Contributors to Autism"	EFSA webinar: Guidance on allergenicity assessment of genetically modified plants

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, December 10, 2017 9 01 03 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Global biotechnology developments over the weekend included activist commentary on and protests at the World Trade Organization meeting in Argentina. There was continued reporting on investigations into farmer deaths in India.

- NGOs Friends of the Earth and Global Justice Now criticized Argentine President Mauricio Macri for banning their representatives from the WTO meeting in Buenos Aires. Activist Alberto Villareal said the action undermines WTO legitimacy. La Via Campesina announced protesters would gather to denounce the "devastating effects" the WTO has had on peasant agriculture. [See more](#)
- During a Nagpur, India, seminar called "Bt Cotton, A Boon or Curse to Farmers," panelists concluded that Bt cotton benefited only Monsanto, noting farmers' profits did not increase despite increased yields. They blamed Bt cotton's failure to control pests as a contributor to farmers' deaths from pesticide spraying. Monsanto's P Suresh said farmers in the area failed to follow prescribed Bt cotton cultivation regimes, contributing to pest resistance. He also urged a crackdown on illegal Bt cotton seed sales. *The Hindu* reported the state of Telangana is acting to check illegal seed production and sale. [See more](#)

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

North America

Commentary: Alex Berezow of American Council on Science and Health laments growing polarization in scientific debates on issues like GMOs and pesticides, highlights activist targeting of Kevin Folta and Maryland-based scientist Michael Miles

Commentary: Alberto Villarreal of Friends of the Earth Latin America and the Caribbean writes for Common Dreams, criticizing WTO for banning him and other NGO reps. from its upcoming meeting in Buenos Aires, argues it undermines WTO's legitimacy

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project's Andrew Porterfield examines what is actually meant by "Big Ag," frequently used in anti-GMO activist rhetoric, points to technological advances, notes labor-saving costs of consolidation give people time to argue about it

Commentary: Forbes' Omri Ben-Shahar criticizes major food brands for pushing GMO opposition into the mainstream by marketing products as non-GMO, even when there is no GM counterpart, hopes the label's overuse will cause superstitions to dissolve

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Nigerian news site reports in effort to stop GM food importation, farmers plan to flood maize market to lower price by up to 50 percent

News: Uganda-based news site reports during food symposium in Rwanda, CGIAR official urges East

African parliamentarians to adopt GMOs to address food security,

News: Reuters publishes investigative report on issues surrounding Monsanto's Bt cotton in Burkina Faso, highlighting Burkina Faso's decision to abandon the technology due to poor fiber quality, and conflicts with Monsanto over royalties and compensation

News release: South Africa's Inkatha Freedom Party announces Human Rights Commission conducted its first seminar on GMOs and impact on human rights, IFP's Inkosi Russel Cebekhulu noted it is an important step for addressing risks of GMOs and glyphosate

News: Kenyan news outlet reports on scientists' call on gov't to lift GM crop ban to address fall armyworm, Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization's Felista Makina noted adoption of GM maize would have prevented crop destruction

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Times of India reports on seminar organized by state ag department on pink bollworm, Yavatmal farmers claims attack has destroyed 50-to-90 percent of cotton crop this year due to resistance against Bt cotton, want improved technology

News: The Hindu reports government of India's Telangana state keeping vigil on illegal production and sale of unapproved GM cotton variety with herbicide-tolerant trait known as BG-III; federal government forms Field Inspection and Scientific Evaluation Committee to inspect spread of herbicide-tolerant cotton variety

News: Reuters reports Competition Commission of India (CCI) fines Monsanto 15 million rupees (\$233,000) for delays in filing replies to questions as part of investigation into whether Monsanto abused its dominant position as a GM seed supplier

News: Times of India reports NGO gathers stakeholders to analyse causes of death in Yavatmal, agricultural activist claims Bt cotton increased yields but not profits; Monsanto representative says farmers didn't follow cultivation regimes, leading to increased resistance in pink bollworm, urges stopping illegal sales of Bt cotton

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Announcement: GenOk announces its director, Anne Ingeborg Myhr recently appeared on Dagsnytt 18 program with Norwegian Biotechnology Council's Kristin Halvorsen, to discuss proposed amendments to the Biotechnology Act

News: Swissinfo reports on discovery of GM oilseed rape in bird feed sold in Switzerland, raising concerns about potential release into the environment in spite of the country's GMO moratorium through 2021

Commentary: Global Justice Now's Nick Dearden criticizes Argentine President Macri's decision to ban NGOs from WTO meeting, says it is dictatorial move; says WTO protects large corporations

News: Food Navigator reports European Academies' Science Advisory Council wants evidence-based approach to addressing food security

News: Bloomberg News reports Bayer will hear objections from EU antitrust regulator regarding its purchase of Monsanto

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Mexican news site reports Mayan leaders say they must continue fight against Monsanto and GMO cultivation, insist federal government support their right to local control over their environment, autonomy

News: Uruguayan news site reports Departamento Board of Montevideo extends GMO labeling law to include foods made from GMOs or ingredients produced from them

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: Australian Broadcasting Corporation reports on upper house standing committee parliamentary inquiry's examination of compensation mechanisms for West Australian farmers whose crops are contaminated by GMOs, following Green Party petition

News release: Western Australian Parliament announces launch of inquiry into mechanisms for compensation for economic loss to farmers caused by genetically modified material, with submissions to close on Feb. 16, 2018

More Oceania items

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Dec. 7, 2017
 Date: Thursday, December 7, 2017 9:02:30 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 an NGO news conference criticizing GM soy cultivation in Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula and activist previews of events protesting the upcoming World Trade Organization meeting in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

- Peasant farming groups held a news conference today in Mexico calling for a complete ban on GM crops in the Yucatan Peninsula. Leaders claimed that the international agriculture industry violated human rights in promoting GM soy and warned that the crop varieties would undermine peasant livelihoods and pollute indigenous environments. **See more**
- Activists with La Via Campesina previewed coordinated actions protesting the World Trade Organization meeting scheduled for next week. Among other issues, NGOs affiliated with the actions highlighted leaked documents outlining an EU trade deal being negotiated with Mercosur nations. Greenpeace Netherlands, which released the document, accused EU countries of threatening Latin American biodiversity. **See more**
- Controversy over Bt cotton in India continued as activists linked the trait's failure to protect against pink bollworm to farmer poisonings in Tamil Nadu. The groups called for compensation for farmers and educational programs to help farmers identify alternatives. **See more**

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

North America

Commentary: Stephen Neidenbach writes for Medium, accuses Maryland Pesticide Network of trying to destroy Chesapeake Bay by opposing GMOs shown to decrease pesticide use contributing to run-off, and prompting transition from more to less harmful pesticides

News: Fast Company amplifies Independent Science News claim that emails obtained from University of North Carolina show Gates Foundation paid PR firm to influence UN's moratorium on gene drive technology, which allows for editing of genes in order to cause extinction in an animal species

Commentary: Writing in The Conversation, Calestous Juma says Africa can learn from Green Revolution to address hunger, malnourishment, including increasing food production, nutritional value through technical training for farmers, investing in rural infrastructure, leveraging new technologies

Commentary: Nature editorial emphasizes importance of continued scrutiny of gene-drive technology by scientists, argues recent email release by NGOs is an "unfair attempt to create damaging and polarizing spin," notes it could damage trust in scientists

Commentary: Attorney William A. Ruskin blogs that anti-biotech movement failed to establish "alternative facts" in court, notes judge dismissed case claiming Wesson vegetable oil ads were deceptively labeled "100% natural" because it used GMOs

Interview: Surflin talks to Hawaiian surfer Dustin Barca, subject of new documentary, who ran

unsuccessfully for mayor of Kauai, organized marches there against GMOs, helped get bill passed that required companies to disclose pesticide use and GMO crop plantings, establish buffer zones around schools, hospitals

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: Indian news source reports cultivation of Bt cotton rampant in Odisha state despite government restrictions; agricultural scientist says recent study found American bollworm has developed resistance to toxin produced in GM cotton plants, article notes some researchers believe GM cotton hurting environment

Report: Sustainable ag NGOs issue conclusions of probe into Tamil Nadu farmer poisonings, deaths, finding government at fault for failing to restrict hazardous chemicals, also citing "debt trap" perpetuated by Bt cotton; seeks compensation for affected families, better farmer education regarding GM agriculture

News: Indian news outlet reports on activists' call for pesticide ban after five deaths in Perambalur and Ariyalur districts due to alleged exposure, highlights farmers'™ increased use of pesticides to fight bollworm attacks on Bt cotton

Commentary: Navdanya's Seed Freedom asserts "Gene Drives Files" show U.S. DARPA spending \$100 million on accelerating research into gene drive technology, Gates Foundation paying PR firm to influence UN CBD's discussions on technology as opponents call for international moratorium on technology

News: The Philippine Star recaps 13th National Biotechnology Week celebrating how biotech contributes to food security, health services and a safer environment

More Asia items

Europe

News release: Greenpeace releases EU free trade agreement with Latin American countries, claims EU Commission, European governments fail to be transparent, claims deal is threat to climate change, South American environments

News: Belgian news site reports Greenpeace warns EU-Mercosur free trade agreement threatens environment in Latin American countries, blames lack of transparency of talks

News release: European Seed Association recaps recent Agri-Food Chain Coalition event highlighting importance of innovation in agri-food sector, notes coalition's call for support of plant breeding innovation

Commentary: French anti-biotech NGO, Inf'OGM, says that EU's decision to label products with 1 percent or more of GM ingredients by weight is political decision and not a scientific one, adds that it means GMOs are present but not labeled

News: U.K.'s Verdict reports on release of emails showing U.S. DARPA investing \$100 million in gene drive technology in bid to reduce numbers of malaria-carrying mosquitoes, notes UN Convention on Biological Diversity debating whether to halt research on gene drive technology next year

More Europe items

Latin America

Commentary: NGOs including Via Campesina announce they reject free trade agreements with Europe, saying meetings were secretive, will negatively impact employment, development of countries, will encourage privatization and dismantle the public sector

News: Mexican news site reports Mayan leaders claim GMOs threaten their environment, social, and economic livelihoods and demand Yucatan area be declared GMO-free; complain of human rights violations, discrimination against indigenous people

News: Mexican news site reports Mayans demand entire Yucatan peninsula be declared a GE-free zone, notes pressure from the group got agency to revoke Monsanto's permit to cultivate GM soy in the area; Mayans' complaints include human rights violations, discrimination

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Australian Associated Press reports West Australian farmers may receive compensation if crops are contaminated by GMOs, standing committee on environment and public affairs will conduct a parliamentary inquiry, in response to Foodwatch petition

News: Australia's Weekly Times reports on trials of new GM safflower variety, developed using CSIRO's gene-silencing technology to produce high oleic oil for industrial use, farmer David Jochinke believes consumers won't oppose since it's not intended for food use

Announcement: Australian Department of Health's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator posts invitation to comment on GM perennial ryegrass field trial, will take submissions through Jan. 18, 2018

[More Oceania items](#)

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From: Jay Byrne
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 Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2017 9:02:43 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 India's Telangana state had called for the destruction of illegal herbicide-tolerant cotton. In related news, media outlets reported that a political leader was detained and then released during protests over failing Bt cotton. European news outlets continued to highlight a Norwegian group's recent policy statement on new plant breeding techniques (NBTs).

- In India, Telangana's agriculture secretary, C. Parthasarathi, issued a letter to district collectors, calling on them to report any illegal herbicide-tolerant cotton and to destroy it. In the statement, Parthasarathi warned that the illegal cotton risked "contaminating" native varieties and that widespread use of glyphosate would destroy biological resources. [See more](#)
- In related reports, media outlets reported that political leader Yashwant Sinha had been arrested and later released over his participation in protests that linked failing Bt cotton traits to farmer pesticide poisonings. Sinha warned that an outbreak of Bt-resistant pink bollworm was placing significant stress on farmers, and he called for the government to meet demands for compensation and for holding seed companies accountable. [See more](#)
- European news outlets continued to highlight the Norway Biotechnology Council (Bioteknologirådet) statement on new plant breeding techniques. A U.K. fish industry site highlighted the implications for salmon breeding, while commentary in *Nationen* pointed out the need for public education on the issue. [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: Gizmodo reports on ETC Group claims that DARPA investment in gene drives lacks transparency, but counters that defense agency has been significant voice warning about gene drive risks](#)

[Commentary: March Against Monsanto amplifies media reports about alleged attempts by Gates Foundation to manipulate UN decision-making process regarding gene drives, claims GM technology could be used to kill entire species, calls on gene drive opponents to submit comments via online forum](#)

[Commentary: Real Clear Science's Cameron English examines ways in which anti-GMO activists inhibit technologies designed to reduce pesticide use, highlighting Kevin Folta's assessment that his disease-resistant strawberries will likely never come to market](#)

[Commentary: Natural foods company Garden of Life announces it will become part of Nestle, says deal signals that USDA Organic and Non-GMO Project Verified nutrition, based on real, whole and plant-based foods, will be made available to more people at prices they can afford](#)

[Commentary: Beyond Pesticides blog highlights request from 100 NGOs for U.S. government to boost funding of monarch butterfly conservation to \\$100M; blames glyphosate, Roundup Ready crops and neonics for causing decline](#)

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News release: Burkina Faso's National Biosafety Agency (ANB) recaps recent information workshop on biotechnology and biosafety, focusing on challenges of modern biotech and regulatory system for GMOs; presenter outlined risks and benefits of using GMOs

Commentary: Bioscience for Farmers in Africa fellow Michael J Ssali criticizes recent article in Uganda's The Independent for misrepresenting GM technology, argues current local developments are designed specifically to benefit Ugandans, not foreign companies

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Press Trust of India reports political party leader detained by police while protesting government's "apathy" toward cotton and soybean farmers of Vidarbha region; protesters want police reports filed against bogus Bt cotton companies, compensation for cotton farmers affected by pink bollworm

News: The Indian Express reports senior political party leader decides to continue agitation until government accepts all his demands for cotton farmers to be compensated for losses incurred due to pink bollworm infestation, as well as action against seed companies manufacturing bogus Bt cotton seeds

News: Indian news outlet reports on Telangana ag secretary C Parthasarathi's letter to all district collectors, calling for district-wide reports on herbicide-tolerant cotton growing areas in response to reports of unapproved Monsanto Bt cotton technology

News: Indian news outlet reports Telangana gov't will take "stern" action against sale and supply of Monsanto's herbicide-tolerant cotton seed, BG-III, currently unapproved in India; Ag department has established committees to evaluate cases of unapproved use

News: Associated Press of Pakistan reports federal interior minister says China-Pakistan Economic Corridor opening up horizon of development to world; Lahore Chamber of Commerce official says GM crops have important role to play in lessening environmental impact, improving ag sustainability

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Hans Bardsgard of Norway's Nationen examines Biotechnology Council's proposal for updating GMO regulations, notes genes in foods we eat have been manipulated for 10,000 years, argues the Council has an education job to do

News: U.K. fish industry news site reports on Norwegian Biotechnology Advisory Board's proposal for new regulations for GMOs, which will be closely followed by Norway's salmon sector, currently investing in CRISPR research

Commentary: Belgium's L'Echo runs lawyer's analysis of EU Court of Justice ruling that Member States can't oppose GMOs authorized at European level, except to prove serious risk to health or environment, substantially reducing "precautionary principle" applied to GMOs

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Ecuadorian news outlet examines Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) Citizens' Forum declaration voicing concern about Argentine gov't decision to revoke environmental NGO's registrations for WTO meeting

News: University of Costa Rica's news outlet reports on environmental organizations' accusations against gov't for failing to fulfill promises included in the "environmental pact," Jaime Garcia criticized lack of action on mandatory GMO labeling

News: Mexico's La Jornada reports Autonomous University of Chapingo plans early 2018 presentation of public policy proposal to rescue native corn; calling for avoidance of GMOs, researcher Gerardo Noriega claimed GM corn would contaminate 50 native varieties

News: Mexico's La Jornada reports on Autonomous Metropolitan University (UAM) researcher and Seeds of Life director, Adelita San Vicente's recent claims that discourse of using GMOs to feed the world is wrong, during forum on resisting GM maize in Mexico

Commentary: Argentina magazine runs crop monitoring adviser's description of armyworm developing resistance to Bt maize, notes most seeds are now treated with neonics that are inefficient at controlling the pest

[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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Subject: Your Bonus Eventus registration details
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Hello caitrinmartin,

Thank you for registering!

You may login here: <https://community.bonuseventus.org>. If you have any questions or issues logging in, please email us at info@bonuseventus.org.

Thanks very much!

The Bonus Eventus Team

From: [Jay Byrne](#)
To: Caitrin.Martin@fas.usda.gov
Subject: Welcome!
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2017 3:05:45 PM

Welcome!

Welcome to the Bonus Eventus network!

You're now just a click away from a wealth of knowledge on food and agriculture issues. All that's left for you to do is to set up your own personal account and password.

[Register Now](#)

You'll soon receive a separate note with more in-depth instructions on how to use the many tools included in the Bonus Eventus community, including research on noteworthy stakeholders and tracking of key media activity and activist campaigns. Some highlights are noted below

You'll also be receiving our weekly Favorable Outcomes newsletter featuring articles worth sharing.

Knowledge is **Power**

STAKEHOLDER DATABASE

A library of background information on key players influencing food and agriculture issues - and who's funding them

ISSUES MONITORING PORTAL

Daily tracking of current events, news coverage and activist activities on food and agriculture issues

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Connect with other experts and influencers seeking favorable outcomes and science-based dialogue. Or find an expert in a particular field.

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See upcoming events of note - or let the network know of an event you're planning or attending.

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Thank you!

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Today's global biotechnology developments included an announcement from the U.S. Society of Toxicology outlining the safety of products made using genetic modification. In Europe, the Norwegian Biotechnology Council issued policy recommendations calling for gene-edited products to be regulated under a less restrictive program than current GM crops. The European Academies Science Advisory Council (EASAC) also issued a report calling for Europe to foster innovation in order to meet future food needs.

- The U.S. Society of Toxicology announced that it was releasing a new issue statement on the safety of GM food and feed. The group affirmed previous academic societies' conclusions on the safety of current products. In a forum article associated with the statement, the group noted that GMO labeling mandates have little food safety relevance but can reflect consumer concerns. **See more**
- In a policy report on the "Opportunities and challenges for research on food and nutrition security and agriculture in Europe," the EASAC urged European policy makers to emphasize innovation in addressing future food security. In its report, the group noted that dietary changes would be required. The group also highlighted the potential of gene editing to be a central part of future agriculture. **See more.**
- Norway's biotechnology council (Bioteknologirådet) released an official statement on regulating products of so-called new plant breeding techniques (NBTs). The group will accept public comments on the proposal through May and will conduct in-person outreach sessions in early 2018. **See more**

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

North America

News release: Society of Toxicology announces new issue statement, "Food and Feed Safety of Genetically Engineered Food Crops," to coincide with publication of new forum article in its official journal, "Toxicological Sciences," that reviews 20 years of research finding foods obtained from GE crops safe and nutritious

News: AgWeb Farm Journal's "US Farm Report" highlights Oklahoma State University survey showing 80 percent of consumers want labels on foods that contain DNA, points out farmers and ranchers should keep in mind many consumers don't know basics of food, let alone complex topics such as GMOs

Announcement: USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service posts notice in Federal Register of petition received from Texas A&M AgriLife Research seeking determination of nonregulated status of cotton genetically engineered for ultra-low gossypol levels in cottonseed; public comment period runs through Feb. 5, 2018

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Nigerian newspaper reports CEO of National Biosafety Management Agency urges dealers of GM

seeds and grains to follow due processes, asserts agency will penalize importers who break laws, says NBMA's key responsibility to ensure practice of biotech and use of GMOs safe for human health, environment

News: Nigeria's state-run news agency reports National Biosafety Management Agency says it won't disrupt legitimate activities of seeds and grains dealers, anyone who wants to import or release GM seeds or grains should get permit, forum held to brainstorm on efforts to maximize benefits of GM seeds and crops

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: The Times of India reports government of Telangana state orders destruction of unapproved GE cotton under widespread cultivation; order concerns herbicide-tolerant cotton developed under commercial name of Roundup Ready Flex, which authorities claim to be spreading rapidly, contaminating other cotton hybrids

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Norwegian news outlet reports on Biotechnology Council's proposal to soften Gene Technology Act, exempting products of gene editing from most stringent regulations, which will still apply to transgenic products

News release: Norway's Biotechnology Council announces a majority 18 out of 20 members support softening rules on GMOs, so that some GMOs only trigger a reporting obligation rather than a full approval process

Announcement: Norway's Biotechnology Council announces its presentation of proposals for future of GMO regulations, inviting public dialogue and debate, deadline for comment submissions is May 15, 2018, public meetings will be held during Jan.-March, 2018

News: Germany's Frankfurter Rundschau reports Gates Foundation spent \$1.6 million to recruit gene drive advocates to influence UN-convened expert group on synthetic biology, prevent moratorium on gene drives called for by 170 groups including Friends of the Earth International, La Via Campesina

News release: European Academies' Science Advisory Council (EASAC) announces publication of report calling for urgent action on food and nutrition security, authors argue embracing advances in genome editing and precision agriculture will be crucial

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Pew Charitable Trusts' Kara Coleman provides analysis of Pew Latin America Fellow Daniel Rodríguez-Leal's research using CRISPR to fine-tune output of yield genes in tomatoes, highlights potential applications in other crops

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: New Zealand Herald reports on U.S. military's interest in local research on gene drives to eradicate predatory rats, Landacre Research's Dan Tompkins noted importance of addressing concerns, as some see conservation use as a backdoor for ag applications

[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 anti-biotechnology activists ETC Group and Testbiotech accusing the Gates Foundation of promoting the "risky" technology of gene drives. In Australia, public comments opened on proposed amendments to the country's National Gene Technology Scheme.

- ETC Group and Testbiotech, in preparation for a meeting tomorrow (Dec. 5) of the Convention on Biological Diversity's Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Synthetic Biology, released over 1,000 emails that they claim show the Gates Foundation and the U.S. military were attempting to lobby United Nations officials in support of so-called "gene drive" technology. The groups warned that the technology was "error-prone" and could have significant unintended effects. [See more](#)
- Australia's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator announced that comments had opened on the proposed amendments to the country's national gene technology scheme. The proposed changes would exclude some gene-edited crops from regulation as GMOs and would require licenses for any application of so-called "gene drive" technology. [See more](#)

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North America

News release: ETC Group announces over 1,200 released emails reveal U.S. military is the top funder of gene drives, as well as Gates Foundation's \$1.6 million lobbying campaign, highlights allegations that PR Firm Emerging Ag seeks to influence UN discussions

Commentary: Jonathan Latham writes for Independent Science News, criticizes Gates Foundation for hiring PR firm Emerging Ag to allegedly manipulate UN decision-making process on gene drives, according to FOIA-obtained emails

Report: Washington University Law Review report examines how federal GMO labeling law will alter public disclosure, argues that the new law is not a death knell for consumer autonomy, and that it will do little to weaken the fight against GMOs

Commentary: Amanda Zaluckyj of "Farmer's Daughter USA" publishes her Santa's Naughty List for 2017, with Cargill at number one for partnering with Non-GMO Project, the list also includes Netflix, Chipotle, Politico and Azure Farms

Commentary: Astrobiologist David Warmflash writes for Genetic Literacy Project, examines why Non-GMO Project label offers nothing to consumers, notes Non-GMO Project verification does not guarantee GMO-free status, warns about spread of pseudoscience

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Announcement: Burkina Faso's National Biosafety Agency (ANB) announces National Scientific Committee for Biosafety (CSNB) held a statutory session in Ouagadougou from Nov. 23-24, topics included amending draft decree relating to simplified procedure for GMO authorization

Announcement: Burkina Faso's National Biosafety Agency (ANB) announces it recently held an information and awareness workshop on biotech and biosafety on Nov. 27, with goal of increasing public awareness and curbing spread of false information

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: The Hindu Business Line profiles chairman of state ag commission who decries loss of high percentage of cotton crop in two regions to pink bollworm, says farmers in some districts who experimented with Indian non-GM seeds saw their crops escape PBW attack, asserts pest has developed immunity to GM technology

News: Manila Bulletin reports on SL Agritech Corp. (SLAC) CEO Henry Lim Bon Liong's argument that the Philippines should not push for GM crop adoption until Europe and China begin accepting GMOs

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science posts blog by Filipino corn farmer touting his success with pest-resistant Bt corn, which he says gives him yields 10 times higher than conventional corn, asserting shift to modern ag technology on his island could improve its economy, reduce poverty, improve food availability

News: Filipino news source reports on recent media seminar on food safety organized by PhilRice, IRRI and Biotechnology Coalition of the Philippines, notes speakers point out widespread planting of GM corn throughout country, while others tout potential for GE golden rice to address nation's problem with vitamin A deficiency

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News release: Testbiotech warns Gates Foundation lobby campaign is targeting UN Convention on Biodiversity in support of release of GE mosquitoes containing a gene drive, claims gene drive technology is error-prone with unpredictable long-term effects

Commentary: Inf'OGM's Christophe Noisette amplifies ETC Group's release of 1,200 documents showing U.S. military funding for research on gene drives, and Gates Foundation's lobbying activities to promote their use, notes Inf'OGM will continue its analysis

Commentary: Eric Meunier of France's Inf'OGM examines High Council for Biotechnology's (HCB) published opinion on regulation of products of new breeding techniques, warns Scientific Committee's report does not discuss risk assessment of NBTs

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Cuba's official news agency reports on Biotechnology Havana 2017, running through Dec. 6, with theme of "Agricultural Biotechnology in the 21st Century," focusing on how biotech can contribute to new forms of food production, organized by Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology

News: Mexican news outlet reports Antonio Buen Abad Dominguez of College of Agronomists of Mexico A.C. (CIAM) Delegation San Luis Potosi argues firms wouldn't dare to plant GM soy outside of established areas, as it would risk closure of operations

Commentary: Catiana de Medeiros of Brazil's Landless Workers Movement (MST) promotes BioNatur Agroecological Seeds Network's celebration of 20 years of resistance in production of agroecological

seeds, summarizing the event

News: Mexican news outlet reports on Fiesta de Maiz celebrated by Raramuris communities in the Sierra Tarahumara of Chihuahua, Technical Consultancy (Contec) has advised the communities to protect their original seeds, the Raramuris are wary of transgenic maize

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Commentary: Courtney Young of Australian Food Sovereignty Alliance argues it is essential that products of new breeding techniques are regulated as GMOs, highlights three reviews of the technology taking place this summer, encouraging readers to participate

Announcement: Australia's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator launches comment period on proposed amendments in Gene Technology Technical Review; comments due Feb. 21

[More Oceania items](#)

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 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - Dec. 4, 2017
 Date: Monday, December 4, 2017 4:45:44 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

After a combative and prolonged debate, glyphosate gained approval last week to remain on the market in Europe. But was it a real victory for farmers? In this week's Favorable Outcomes newsletter, David Zaruk explains why the vote to allow glyphosate usage for five more years - instead of 10 or 15 - should be seen as a "hollow" win.

Other commentary pieces explore the Non-GMO Project's questionable labeling practices and the International Agency for Research on Cancer's refusal to discuss its glyphosate assessment before Congress although it receives millions of dollars in U.S. taxpayer funding. There are also articles on the "Food Evolution" documentary and the "Science Moms" video - plus the latest piece from the moms themselves.

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: National Association for Genetic Safety



A [Swiss newsletter](#) recently questioned what happened to the purported \$25 million [Factor GMO](#) study announced by the Russia-based National Association for Genetic Safety (NAGS) and widely promoted by

■ Stories Worth Sharing

[David Zaruk: Five-year reauthorization for glyphosate a "hollow victory" because safe chemical deserved longer renewal](#)

[David Warmflash: Non-GMO project a "misinformation campaign" with consequences that hurt millions of children](#)

[Kavin Senapathy: Laughable Non-GMO Project certified products include kitty litter, liquor and homeopathic concoctions](#)

[Ross Pomeroy: With bee population rising, biggest myth about the "bee apocalypse" is that there actually is one](#)

[Richard Zuber: New IARC director must make key reforms to restore agency's credibility following glyphosate assessment](#)

[Henry Miller: "Scientific illiteracy," flawed advocacy research spur misguided regulation of GM crops, pesticides blamed for killing bees](#)

[Paul Driessen: IARC unwilling to provide accountability, transparency in return for Americans' \\$48M investment](#)

[Science Moms: Misogynist tone in shill accusations against us](#)
 --> [Bad Science Debunked: "Science Moms" video worth watching](#)

U.S. and European environmental NGOs and organic interest groups.

NAGS claims to be an independent, Moscow-based environmental NGO that sponsored the promised-but-never-delivered report. The NAGS co-founder and executive director was in the news recently, but not for her work as an anti-GMO environmentalist. Elana Sharoykina is now the director of a Putin-linked conservative Russian media outlet apparently tied to promoting politically disruptive news reports on behalf of the Kremlin, leading to questions as to whether NAGS is another Putin-tied propaganda initiative to help destabilize Western institutions.

Learn more about NAGS [HERE](#).

CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES

Emil Javier: Organic farming also uses pesticides that can be harmful, should not automatically reject new chemicals [?](#)

Maria Andrade: Best technology and trained professionals needed to ensure food security [?](#)

Ryan Tipps: "Food Evolution" documentary shows GMO supporters are armed with data, passion and education [?](#)

Florida farmers see GE trees as solution to citrus greening [?](#)

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What's Trending?

European Commission releases new draft criteria for endocrine-disrupting chemicals in pesticides

Water Efficient Maize for Africa scientist calls for Kenya to lift GMO ban after successful field trial

Special investigation on India farmer deaths due out after Dec. 11, reportedly will not exonerate pesticide companies

North Dakota, Arkansas move forward with new dicamba rules

Calendar highlights

December 3-6	December 4	December 5-8
3rd International Conference on Global Food Security	Tyrone Hayes lecture at Trinity University	Convention on Biological Diversity group meeting on synthetic biology
December 5	December 7	December 7-8
Norway Biotechnology Council presentation of policy recommendations for new gene technologies	Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services pollinator symposium	U.S. National Toxicology Program board of scientific counselors meeting with glyphosate studies update

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Dec. 1-3, 2017
 Date: Sunday, December 3, 2017 9:04:42 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 an activist blaming deaths of Indian farmers on Bt cotton usage. A Swiss newsletter questioned what happened to the "Factor GMO" study and the millions of dollars donated to fund the GMO research project. NGOs responded to news that Argentina rescinded accreditation for the World Trade Organization's meeting on free trade agreements.

- Activist Bharat Dogra wrote in *The Hindu* that the Maharashtra area where farmers died from what is claimed to be pesticide poisoning has a large concentration of Bt cotton usage. Dogra argued that rather than reduced pesticide use, the area has seen increased spraying and linked the poisoning to the Bt cotton. An article on the Indian news site *Mint* noted a report on the farmers' deaths will be presented to the Maharashtra state legislature during a legislative session starting Dec. 11. According to the *Mint* article, the report "did not exonerate" pesticide manufacturers. **[See more](#)**
- A Swiss science industry newsletter noted that three years ago, the Russian NGO National Association for Genetic Safety raised a reported \$25 million for a three-year research project on GMO safety. The newsletter reported that although the website still accepts donations, no research is forthcoming and inquiries are not returned. The newsletter also reported Italy's Ramazzini Institute has a similar crowd-sourcing project and its director, Fiorella Belpoggi, also had a leading role in "Factor GMO" until he left the project "under unclear circumstances." **[See more](#)**
- The *Financial Times* reported Argentina banned 60 NGOs from a WTO meeting Dec. 10-13 in Buenos Aires on free trade agreements due to fears of protests at the event. Global Justice Now's Nick Dearden said the Argentine government took an authoritarian approach and said a U.S.-U.K. trade agreement would "change food standards." **[See more](#)**

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

North America

[Commentary: Joan Conrow warns EPA grant for outreach project on Kauai supporting anti-GMO activists, targeting companies that grow GMOs and hybrid seeds on island, notes grant recipient wants to work with NGO that sued in effort to stop state land lease to Kauai seed company, contested water use by seed companies](#)

[Commentary: Carol Adl of YourNewsWire amplifies story of farmer Jerry Rosman's claims that GM feed made his pigs sterile, highlights his efforts to help other farmers shift to organic, accuses Monsanto of going after farmers](#)

[News: Seeker reports on development of golden potato rich in vitamins A and E, Glenn Davis Stone of Washington University is skeptical about its release onto the market, noting biotech companies haven't shown interest in "superfoods" developed by universities](#)

[Commentary: The National Law Review runs article from Washington firm discussing Center for Food Safety's withdrawal of lawsuit asking USDA to release study on digital disclosure methods for GMO](#)

labeling, saying it indicates NGO got promise from agency to accept public comments on consumer study

Interview: Cornell Alliance for Science interviews former Ag Secretary Tom Vilsack, he emphasizes need to better communicate sound science, examines opposition to GMOs, highlighting need for increased transparency, points to potential benefits of gene editing

News: The Gainesville Sun reports University of Florida president says university researchers, growers, others will beat citrus greening; researchers, growers say genetic engineering, research are invaluable to citrus industry

Commentary: We Love GMOs and Vaccines' Stephan Niedenbach gives tongue-in-cheek apology regarding FOIA request on his public funding effort to raise money for classroom copy paper, technology; notes list of donors can be found online

More North America items

Africa

News: Kenyan news source reports scientists successfully test GM maize samples resistant to drought, attacks by pests and diseases, including resistance against fall armyworm, but country's 2012 ban on importation and use of GM crops will derail approval of the corn seed to benefit farmers

Commentary: Nigerian news site editorial notes NABDA declared GMOs safe, but says this contradicts WHO statement that general statements about GMO safety is impossible; reporter says there are three health risks associated with GMOs

Announcement: South Africa's Parliamentary Monitoring Group posts summary of briefing by Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) on Plant Improvement and Plant Breeders Bills, DAFF noted the bill would allow smallholders to exchange seeds

More Africa items

Asia

News: Times of India reports Maharashtra state gov't is accepting complaints from farmers against Bt cotton seed manufacturers, and may levy fines on the companies to help compensate farmers for their losses

News: The Hindu reports lack of regulations regarding unauthorized cotton seed has Indian states in confusion; claims Monsanto's BGIII field tests contaminated other fields intentionally or unintentionally before pulling the variety out of India

Commentary: Syed Mohammad Ali of Pakistan's Express Tribune examines role of agribusiness in Indian farmer suicides, places large portion of blame on Bt cotton seeds, criticizes New York Times' coverage for not telling the full story, and for ignoring Vandana Shiva

Commentary: Author, activist questions who is to blame for farmer pesticide poisonings in India, notes area has high concentration of Bt cotton planting, says farming becoming more hazardous due to GM crop cultivation

Commentary: Writing Part 2 of organic farming series for Manila Bulletin, Philippine government ag expert Emil Javier explains organic crops are not pesticide-free, recommends organic sector replace older pesticides with new, better options whether they are synthetic or natural, notes negative effect of copper sulfate on honeybees

More Asia items

Europe

News: French ag news outlet reports on Confederation paysanne's proposal that French dairy sector

convert to 100 percent non-GMO fed by 2021

News: EurActiv reports Bayer will launch transparency initiative next week, granting EU consumers access to product safety data, with goal of restoring trust following EU decision to reauthorize glyphosate for five years

Commentary: David King, credited as one of the founders of the anti-GM food campaign, writes for The Ecologist, summarizing successes in the movement over the past 20 years, looking ahead to future challenges in opposition to gene editing

Commentary: Belgian news outlet editorial notes many ag decisions are politicized by environment groups, points to relative lack of outcry on most recent GM trial proposals, argues glyphosate debate demonstrates that the loudest voices are not necessarily informed

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Uruguayan news outlet reports on Under Secretary of the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries, Enzo Benech's acknowledgement of delays in approvals of new biotech events, he believes the regulatory framework is excellent, notes the decision is political

News: Mexican news site reports pressure from indigenous people groups caused agency to revoke Monsanto's permit to market GM soy in 7 states, claiming the business failed to establish controls to prevent GM soy cultivation; however the agribusiness is challenging the decision in court

News: Financial Times reports Argentina bans over 60 activists from WTO meeting in Buenos Aires due to fear of protests, highlights statements from Friends of the Earth and Global Justice Now

News: Brazilian news site reports Unicamp professor says biotechnology sector is in decline, says Bayer's purchase of Monsanto points to industry struggling to stay alive

More Latin America items

Oceania

Commentary: Alan Broughton of Australia's Green Left profiles Vandana Shiva and Navdanya, claims industrial ag practices involving GM seeds and pesticides threaten biodiversity and human health, praises her work to protect seed biodiversity

More Oceania items

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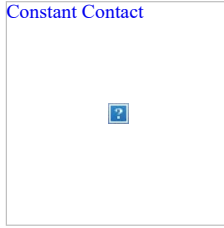
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 Date: Thursday, November 30, 2017 9:00 53 PM

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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 media coverage of Kenya's successful field trial of a drought- and insect-resistant maize. Activists in Mexico claimed international agricultural companies were attempting to undermine judicial powers protecting native environments.

- Researchers with the Water Efficient Maize for Africa (WEMA) project held a news conference Wednesday to highlight the success of a GM maize field trial. *The Star* reported that the maize had proven resistant to fall armyworm and was drought-tolerant. WEMA researcher Murenga Mwimali noted that the country's ban on GM crops currently would prevent farmers from utilizing the crop. [See more](#)
- Activists with the Colectividad del Maíz told news outlets that a group of transnational agriculture companies, led by DuPont, was seeking to overturn judges' ability to stop GM crop cultivation. The activists pointed to recent decisions blocking maize and soy plantings and said they were "certain" that the country's supreme court would uphold the judicial power. [See more](#)
- Indian organic agriculture activist Vandana Shiva called for legal proceedings against Monsanto, claiming that the company's faulty Bt cotton crops led to farmer deaths. Shiva claimed that Monsanto had been behind the illegal spread of herbicide-tolerant Bt cotton seeds in several planting regions. [See more](#)

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North America

Commentary: [Kavin Senapathy looks at "The 5 Most Laughable Non-GMO Project Verified Products" in Forbes; list includes cat litter, "stuff with no G to M," junk food, and items that don't have a commercially available GMO alternative](#)

Commentary: [Writing for GMO Answers, farmer's daughter says people should keep up on agriculture with same diligence as seeing a doctor, urges readers to view Food Evolution to see how farmers grow safe food with GMOs for consumers and themselves](#)

News: [Harvest Public Media reports Hurricane Maria impacted large agribusinesses' seed research on the island](#)

Commentary: [March Against Monsanto criticizes Bayer video comparing skateboarding and GMOs, claims Bayer and Monsanto have committed "crimes against humanity"](#)

Campaign: [Organic Consumers Association extends deadline thru Dec. 4 for Arctic Apple scavenger hunt to identify stores selling GM Arctic Apples](#)

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Kenyan news site reports scientists developed fall armyworm-resistant GM maize, scientists ask government to allow its use to help farmers deal with the pest

News: Kenyan news outlet reports on successful field trials of stem borer-resistant and drought tolerant GM maize, as part of Water Efficient Maize for Africa project, WEMA scientist Murenga Mwimali called for lift of Kenya's GMO ban

News: The Guardian (Nigeria) reports on gov't efforts the get media's help in educating Nigerians about benefits of biotech, summarizes key points in GMO debate, highlights wide consensus on GMO safety, but also reports on studies that cast doubt on negative health effects

News: Ghana news site reports General Agricultural Workers' Union issue statement for National Farmers Day warning Plant Breeders Bill will undermine smallholder farmers with introduction of GMOs

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: IANS reports Vandana Shiva letter asks Union environment minister to conduct criminal investigation into Monsanto, alleging company contaminated country with illegal Bt cotton cultivation

Interview: Vietnamese news site talks to food security professor Paul PS Teng at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore about GM foods; Teng says some countries "strongly opposed to GMOs because they do not understand" what they are, asserts GMOs safe, and warns organic foods can not feed world

Letter to the editor: Mahaletchumy Arujanan of Malaysian Biotechnology Information Centre writes to local news outlet in response to recent letters on GMOs, supports open discussion based on sound science, rather than scaremongering

Commentary: Philippine Daily Inquirer columnist Micky Fenix recounts participation in recent Food Forum in Cebu City, where Teresa Ruelas of Cebu Farmers Market discussed efforts to block GM crops in the province

Announcement: International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) announces it had a strong presence at recent Borlaug Dialogue International Symposium in Iowa, ICRISAT scientist Pooja Bhatnagar-Mathur spoke on importance of biotech for facilitating sustainable, nutritious and healthy food choices

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Interview: Organic farmer, Soil Association policy officer discuss NBTs with University of Oxford Food Climate Research Network blogger; farmer believes CRISPR gene editing should be adopted by organic industry, while Soil Assoc. says NBTs require GMO regulations

Commentary: Non-GMO association's blog notes Germany's Federal Office for Consumer Protection and Food Safety reports German seed is mostly GM-free; official says results prove it's possible to keep seeds GM-free and implement zero-tolerance policies

News release: German Non-GMO association announces there are 7,000 foods with GMO-free labeling, calls on Germany's "Jamaica coalition" government to ensure GMOs do not enter country without being labeled

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Mexican news outlet reports Collective of Corn members denounces DuPont's call on Supreme Court to declare that ruling against GM corn cultivation is unconstitutional, supporters of the ban voiced

confidence that the court will rule in their favor

News: Mexican news source reports Jose Miguel Mulet presents book at international book fair; author tells news outlet public should feel comfortable eating GM food without fear

News: Mexican news site notes Jose Miguel Mulet's book explains biotechnology from a scientific viewpoint; says no technology is good or bad, it depends what you make with it, needs rigorous discussion without "so many lies"

Commentary: Nutritionist writing in Brazil news site claims GMOs harms soil, is inferior to organic food regarding nutrition, and GMOs treated with pesticides that harm health, cause cancer

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: Australia's Cosmos magazine reports on Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences researchers' development of new GM plant breeding method, using magnetic nanoparticles to introduce foreign DNA into pollen, directly generating GM seeds from plants

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Nov. 29, 2017
 Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 9 04:11 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 South Australia's extension of a GM crop moratorium. Mexican activists continued to respond to the government's revocation of Monsanto's permits for GM soy release.

- South Australia's Lower House passed an extension of the state's moratorium on GM crop cultivation, finalizing the ban through 2025. Greens leader Mark Parnell called the decision a "significant advantage" for local farmers. [See more](#)
- Activists continued to respond to last week's news that Mexico's SENASICA had withdrawn permission for Monsanto to sell transgenic soy varieties. Writing in *La Jornada Maya*, a biologist with the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) argued the gesture was meaningless given widespread illegal cultivation of the crops. In a news release, U.S. advocacy group Organic Consumers Association claimed the move was a victory for local communities. [See more](#)

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North America

Commentary: [Bad Science Debunked](#) blogger writes positive review of [Science Moms](#) documentary, notes that while those who have been convinced by anti-GMO propaganda may not change their opinions, it is a helpful film for confused parents

Commentary: [AgDaily's Ryan Tipps](#) lists six takeaways from "[Food Evolution](#)" documentary, praises the film for demonstrating that food is an emotional issue, and that pro-GMO people do have a tribe, encourages readers to attend a screening or watch it streaming

News: [Bloomberg](#) reports on debate over organic health benefits, noting evidence claiming organic is more safe is far from clear, premium prices may not afford all that's promised

Commentary: [Hoover Institution - Henry Miller](#) explains science, worrisome trends such as conflating association and causation, increasing occurrences of flawed advocacy research designed to give a false result to support a cause, pointing to 2012 article by [Seralini](#) linking rat tumors to GM corn

Campaign: [Canadian NGO Vigilance OGM](#) urges supporters to contact five major retailers whose positions on GE salmon are unclear, and ask them to adopt clear, long-term policies

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Announcement: [FAO Regional Office for Africa](#) announces joint call with [African Union Commission](#) on African governments to adopt biotech to address food insecurity and malnutrition, especially in face of climate change and expected population growth

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: [The Hindu continues series on farmer distress with 13th article on Telangana's cotton farmers, negatively impacted by untimely rain, bollworm resistance to BG-2 technology, and the state's illegal sale of Bt3 seeds](#)

News release: [Chinese company Origin Agritech Ltd. announces it has entered a commercial biotechnology trait and corn germplasm license agreement with KWS SAAT SE, facilitating KWS' entry into China's corn biotech market](#)

News: [Pakistan's The International News reports agriculture technologists urge government to implement Seed Rules 2016 for biotech product registrations; experts say biotech applied by Pakistani farmers would enhance productivity, help address country's food security challenges](#)

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: [The Telegraph \(U.K.\) reports on Environment Secretary Michael Gove's statement that GM crops will continue to be banned post-Brexit, in order to secure future trade deal with the EU, trade deals with the U.S. may be compromised](#)

Event: [Germany's Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture \(BMEL\) to host Third Dialogue on the new Molecular Biology Techniques \(Nov. 29, 2017\), to facilitate open and transparent dialogue with all stakeholders](#)

News release: [Testbiotech, in context of event by Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture \(BMEL\) with focus on new breeding techniques, refers to BfR study which found that 82 percent of respondents want strict regulation and labeling of NBTs](#)

News: [EU Observer reports proposal to modify EU's comitology process has stalled, summarizes call for reform over frequent deadlock on controversial issues such as GMOs, highlights recent committee vote to renew glyphosate's license](#)

Commentary: [Inf'OGM's Christophe Noisette amplifies Corporate Europe Observatory's complaint to Common Transparency Register, accusing Monsanto of failing to comply with legal transparency obligations by underreporting expenditures and groups representing its interests](#)

Commentary: [Swiss GM-Free Alliance amplifies German Federal Agency for nature conservation \(BfN\) report on products of new breeding techniques, argues their exclusion from Gene Technology Act would result in serious security gaps in Swiss risk assessments](#)

Interview: [Swiss news outlet interviews German Development Minister Gerd Muller, to help developing countries meet food needs of growing populations, he believes GM seeds are not the answer, but calls for a "green revolution from below" for small farmers](#)

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: [UNAM biologist writes in La Jornada Maya, says Senasica's withdrawal of GM soybean permits is laughable, noting that the technology is already in the country and will be very difficult to take away](#)

News: [ISAAA Crop Biotech Update reports Argentina announces commercial approval of GM soybean event, new biotech crop tolerant to glufosinate-ammonium herbicides and inhibitors of HPPD enzyme; commercial release of event requested jointly by Syngenta Agro SA and Bayer SA](#)

News: Bolivian news outlet reports on National Customs along with the Association of Oilseed and Wheat Producers' (Anapo) announcement of plans to use reagents to identify transgenic contraband grain entering the country

News: Bolivian news source reports customs officials and NGO representing oilseed and wheat producers promote use of reagents to identify transgenic and contraband grains that could be imported and labeled as produced in Bolivia; article also highlights efforts to prevent smuggling of contraband transgenics into country

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: Australian Associated Press reports on South Australia's approval of new six-year moratorium on GMOs, Greens MP Mark Parnell notes the ban means any decision to allow use of GM crops would require a vote of both houses of parliament

News release: Australian Green Party's South Australia Parliamentary Leader, Mark Parnell MLC announces passage of extension of South Australia's GMO moratorium for six years, Parnell argues the moratorium provides price premiums for state farmers

More Oceania items

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 Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 9:04:26 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology developments included ongoing reporting on the Philippines' National Biotechnology Week. In the U.S., news outlets amplified a *Politico* article on potential rifts in food industry lobbying efforts.

- Media outlets in the Philippines continued to report on the country's National Biotechnology Week activities. Writing in *SunStar*, columnist Robert L. Domoguen recounted a speech in which the country's agriculture minister voiced his support for the development of Golden Rice. *Business Mirror* reported on a news conference where local researchers highlighted positive traits in biotech products and crops. [See more](#)
- U.S. food news outlets amplified a *Politico* report claiming that food companies were abandoning the Grocery Manufacturers Association lobbying group largely over conflicts on transparency policies and millennial-focused marketing. *Food Dive* quoted GMA communications exec Roger Lowe, who defended the organization's track record on GMO labeling. [See more](#)

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North America

Commentary: Food Dive's Cathy Siegner weighs in on wave of food company departures from Grocery Manufacturers Association, in spite of efforts to meet transparency demands with recent GMO disclosure law, notes it may signal splintering within the trade group

News: MediaPost reports on recent big food company departures from Grocery Manufacturers Association, GMA's executive vice president of strategic communications Roger Lowe criticized Politico's coverage, notes recent efforts regarding GMO labeling

Event: NASEM committee to host first public meeting on study - "The Potential for Biotechnology to Address Forest Health" - featuring testimony from study sponsors and invited speakers (Dec. 1)

Video: Hammer Museum in Los Angeles hosts Q&A session with Neil Neil DeGrasse Tyson, Bill Nye and Scott Hamilton Kennedy following screening of Food Evolution documentary, moderated by UCLA Geneticist Bob Goldberg

Commentary: Writing for The Federalist, Julie Kelly argues by prioritizing fight against climate change, Pope Francis ignores real problems harming the poor, hungry for which he claims to advocate, citing his condemnation of GMOs among examples

News: SeafoodSource reports investing expert and HighQuest Partners managing director, Philippe de Laperouse sees big opportunities in aquaculture, on debate over GE salmon, he believes use of gene editing within species may be more publicly acceptable

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News release: Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa establishes climate change-environment and consumer working groups to promote agroecological practices, products to address climate change and consumer nutrition/health

Commentary: Nayanika Mukherjee of India's Down to Earth examines whether GM crops are a viable solution to Africa's pest problems, points to growing rates of pest resistance to Bt crops, calls for more research on regional biotech applications

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News release: Philippine Rice Research Institute exhibits climate change-ready rice varieties developed through biotechnology at National Biotechnology Week; representative says biotech can boost farmer yields, income

News: Filipino business news outlet reports on 13th National Biotechnology Week, where Saturnina Halos of Biotech Coalition of the Philippines explained there is no reason to fear GMOs, as we have consumed them for years in food, clothing and medicine

Commentary: Robert L. Domoguen of the Philippines' SunStar recounts recent event where Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel F. Piñol publicly expressed support for the golden rice project, highlights its importance in fighting vitamin A deficiency

News: Philippine Daily Inquirer provides background information on National Biotechnology Week, observed every last week of Nov. per Proclamation No. 1414, signed in 2007, to promote safe and responsible use of modern biotech

News: Indian news outlet reports on meeting organized by Bharat Krishak Samaj, where seed experts and farmers warned that multinational companies are pushing transgenic and hybrid seeds, emphasizing importance of seed sovereignty and biodiversity

News: Hindustan Times report examines cotton crisis in Maharashtra, emphasizing issues with pests developing resistance to crop protection treatments, Bt seeds will lay path for additional farmer debt, suicides

Commentary: The Hindu BusinessLine's A Srinivas writes positive review of "A Frayed History: The Journey of Cotton in India," highlights the book's discussion of Bt cotton and its declining performance over time

Commentary: Third World Network amplifies recent paper in Pest Management Science showing that 38 weed species have now developed resistance to glyphosate, and Crop and Pasture Science paper on resistance in Australia, calls for alternatives to GM crops

News: Pakistani news outlet reports on Sino-Pak International Conference on Innovations in Cotton Breeding and Biotechnology, where Chinese cotton expert Zhang Rui noted China has developed over 200 Bt varieties, and is ready to share technology with Pakistan

News: Pakistani news outlet reports on Sino-Pak international conference on "Innovations in cotton, breeding and biotechnology," Chinese scientist Zhang Rui described developments in disease-resistant cotton, noting China is ready to transfer technology to Pakistan

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: European Seed Association says Agri-Food Chain Coalition innovation symposium emphasized importance of new technologies to feed growing EU population, called on EU institutions to ensure innovation is at center of food-ag policy

Report: European Food Safety Authority's Panel on Genetically Modified Organisms issues risk assessment for Bayer oilseed rape varieties for authorization renewal, finds there is no evidence of new hazards, modified exposure or scientific uncertainties

Report: European Food Safety Authority's GMO Panel issues risk assessment of Monsanto GM four-event stack maize variety and its 10 subcombinations, finds it is as safe and nutritious as its non-GM counterpart, and poses negligible environmental risk

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News release: Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (Embrapa) promotes meeting of women farmers on agroecology and food sovereignty on Nov. 28, with goal of increasing articulation and knowledge in favor of sustainable agriculture

Commentary: Juan Castellanos of Dominican publication Listin Diario examines diseases plaguing citrus crops in the region, promotes biotech as a viable solution for resistance, believes GMOs will eventually be accepted in spite of current widespread opposition

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Announcement: Australia Department of Health schedules public webinars for consultation for national gene technology regulatory scheme (Nov. 28 and Dec. 6); phase two consultation comment period closes Dec. 15

[More Oceania items](#)

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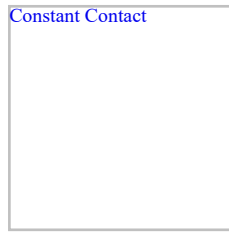
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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Diane.Wray-Cahen@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Nov. 27, 2017
 Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 9:02 07 PM

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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 an activist group had sued for information on GM crop cultivation in Ghana. European news outlets reported on efforts to develop a low-gluten gene-edited wheat.

- Ghana's *Joy* reported that advocacy group Food Sovereignty Ghana filed a lawsuit against the National Biosafety Committee seeking information on whether efforts to commercialize Bt rice and cowpea had complied with local regulations. The lawsuit is similar to the group's February 2015 suit, which was struck down by the court. A spokesperson for Food Sovereignty Ghana said that further legal actions could follow in an attempt to demonstrate that GM crops are not needed in the country. **See more**
- European media outlets amplified news that Spanish researchers have successfully developed a wheat with reduced toxins for gluten allergy sufferers. The findings were released in *Plant Biotechnology Journal*. *The Independent* quoted a representative of Coeliac U.K., who said that celiac disease patients were likely to embrace wheat without "problem" gluten. **See more**
- Science communicators affiliated with the "Science Moms" documentary, writing in *Medium*, criticized U.S. Right to Know activist Carey Gillam for claiming in her book "Whitewash" that documentary participants were funded by Monsanto. The authors go on to refute that and other claims and call for a nuanced dialogue on science issues that don't revert to insults about funding. **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: Science Moms Alison Bernstein, Anastasia Bodnar, Jenny Splitter, Kavin Senapathy, Layla Katirae and Natalie Newell write for Medium, addressing misogyny inherent in shill accusations against them, criticizing Carey Gilliam's accusations in her new book

Video: Biology Fortified, Inc., posts YouTube video of interview with Neal Carter, president of Okanagan Specialty Fruits, updating the release to stores of its Arctic Apples; Carter says testing showed consumers found idea of biotech "less scary" when process of genetically engineering non-browning apple explained to them

Commentary: Organic Authority's Emily Monaco examines whether label fatigue is diluting meaning of certified organic, points to recent study showing that consumers equate non-GMO with organic, promotes new certified transitional and regenerative labels

News: Canadian news outlet reports Ecology Action Centre and the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network will host U.K.-based biologist and molecular geneticist, Ricarda Steinbrecher, in talk about GMOs, amid concerns surrounding GE salmon, apples and potatoes

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Ghana's Joy reports on Food Sovereignty Ghana's lawsuit against gov't over plans to commercialize Bt cowpea and Bt rice, Ghana National Farmers and Fishermen Association (GNAFF) dismissed the suit as action without merit

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science's Nkechi Isaac examines Nigeria's public education campaign on GMOs, Nigeria chapter coordinator for the Open Forum on Agricultural Biotechnology, Rose Gidado, noted importance of media in sensitizing the public

News: Epoch Times reports on increase in Burkina Faso's cotton yields after switching from Monsanto's variety to conventional seed, highlights Interprofessional Association of Cotton in Burkina's (AICB) call for compensation from the company

Commentary: Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa promotes its recent agroecology training session in Thika, Kenya, led by Colombian agronomist Jairo Restrepo, who pointed out implications of regional trade agreements on seeds

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Filipino business news outlet reports on recent statement by head of Department of Agriculture's Crop Biotechnology Center, Roel R. Suralta, in which he explained how biotech speeds up the breeding process, boosts yields and improves farmer incomes

News: Indo-Asian News Service reports remarks by Vandana Shiva claiming chemical fertilizers and pesticides hurting India's seed diversity, harmful effects of Bt cotton causing stress for nation's farmers

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Independent (U.K) reports on development of low-gluten CRISPR wheat by Institute for Sustainable Agriculture in Spain, Coeliac U.K. CEO Sarah Sleet noted the development is a technique of interest to people with coeliac disease

News: U.K.'s Daily Mail reports Spanish researchers use CRISPR-Cas9 gene-editing tool to create new kind of wheat with only 15 percent of gliadins, a form of gluten, found in normal wheat; people who suffer from celiac disease and those who follow "clean eating" movement avoid gluten

News: Russia Today reports scientists at Institute for Sustainable Agriculture in Spain use CRISPR-Cas9 gene-editing method to remove most gliadins, a type of gluten, from wheat; development could help people with celiac disease who have an immune response to glutens in wheat, rye, barley

Commentary: Editor for Belgium's De Standaard examines lack of objection to Flemish Institute for Biotechnology's (VIB) proposal for GM maize field trials, in spite of widespread opposition in the past, highlights Greenpeace's admission that they are focusing on other issues

Commentary: Food Climate Research Network posts blog by one of authors of ETH Zurich's study on feeding world with organic agriculture, summarizing its findings that efforts to implement sustainable agriculture need to address whole food system, including consumption and not only production

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Paraguayan news outlet reports on Institute of Agricultural Biotechnology (Inbio) report finding that maize yields have grown 33 percent after adoption of biotech crops, Inbio manager Estela Ojeda highlighted resulting economic benefits of boosted yields

News release: Argentinian NGO Confluencia Fuera OMC announces press conference on Nov. 30 to

present program for its Week of Action against the WTO from Dec. 7-13, denouncing trade within framework of capitalism as a false development proposal

News: Mexican news outlet reports on Morena party platform's statement that NAFTA is a "useful instrument," the platform objects to entry of transgenic maize, pointing to negative impacts of indiscriminate maize importation on small farmers and biodiversity

News: Cuban news outlet reports Mexcian civil court rules to uphold suspension of GM corn commercialization, according to members of Colectividad del Maiz, Oaxacan resident Valentn Genaro noted the ban will remain in place until Supreme Court ruling

News: Mexican news outlet reports on Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food's (Sagarpa) revocation of Monsanto's GM soybean permits in seven states, for failure to fulfill necessary controls to prevent risks to the environment

News: Yucatan news outlet reports on claims by International Mangrove Network representative Marco Antonio Rodriguez Vadillo that spread of Monsanto's GM soybeans is a result of gov't corruption, and leads to health and ecological risks

News: Argentinian news outlet reports on Argentine Workers' Central Union (CTA) member organizations' formation of Council of Development of the Food Sovereignty, with goal of protecting seed biodiversity in face of so-called "Monsanto law"

News: Brazilian news outlet reports on Agronomic Institute of Campinas' (IAC) development of GM orange resistant to yellow and citrus canker caused by bacteria Xylella fastidiosa and Xanthomonas citri, respectively

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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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Diane.Wray-Cohen@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - Nov. 27, 2017
 Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 4:03 58 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

This week's Favorable Outcomes newsletter features several pieces with a common theme: Look closer to find the real truth.

In a piece written for *Forbes*, Kavin Senapathy explains how the Non-GMO Project's label is essentially meaningless and conveys a false sense of morality and responsibility. Mark Lynas describes how an academic paper claiming that organic farming could feed the world is counting on some unrealistic developments - including a massive shift toward vegetarianism - in order to reach that goal. And Emil Javier similarly details how organic farming's supposed benefits are far from reality.

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: Collaborative on Health and the Environment



The Collaborative on Health and the Environment (CHE) is a leading promoter and amplifier of claims that low doses of alleged endocrine-disrupting chemicals are causing a wide range of public health risks. With help from science advisor and

Stories Worth Sharing

[Kavin Senapathy: "No label exemplifies meaningless buzzwords better than the Non-GMO Project"](#)

[Mark Lynas: Paper claiming organic farming can feed the world relies on "impossible" scenarios](#)

[Matt Ridley: "Short-sighted opposition to biotechnology" leaving African farmers at the mercy of pests and diseases](#)

[Emil Javier: Benefits from higher-cost organic farming "more perceptions than reality"](#)

[Ronald Bailey: Genetically modified virus could save Florida oranges if "bioluddites" don't get in the way"](#)

[Andrew Porterfield: Gene editing holds promise for crop breeding if public and regulators are willing to accept it](#)

[Angela Logomasini: Why a fully organic Thanksgiving was "simply not necessary" for public health](#)


[Hank Campbell: 1950s Thanksgiving cranberry scare helped lay foundations for today's endocrine disruption fear-mongering](#)

[Bob Barr: Debunked IARC claims about glyphosate causing cancer leads to "major comeback" of cocaine crops in Colombia](#)

Collegium Ramazzini president Philip Landrigan, CHE promotes organic diets to prevent autism, cancer and other ills while lobbying to ban pesticides and other chemicals. CHE is a project of **Commonweal**, which promotes a range of litigation tactics targeting environmental pollution allegations involving chemicals.

To learn more about CHE, click [HERE](#).

[CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES](#)

Profile: Alison Van Eenennaam "one of agriculture's leading voices of reason" 

[CLICK FOR BONUS EVENTUS MONITORING](#)

What's Trending?

European Union approves 5-year reauthorization of glyphosate

Mexican courts blocks sowing of genetically modified corn / Government revokes permit for Monsanto GM soy

French court strikes down government approval of two sulfoxafloz-based pesticides due to concerns about bee health

Thai NGO federation says it will sue government after tests found glyphosate, atrazine, paraquat on vegetables

Calendar highlights

November 28-30	November 28-30	November 29-30
Scientific Advisory Panel on endocrine disruption screening methods	4th Global Science Conference on Climate Smart Agriculture	Sustainable Foods Summit Asia-Pacific
November 30	November 30 - December 1	November 30
POLITICO EU Agriculture and Food Summit	Joint international symposium on risk assessment and consumer health protection	Philippines presentation of the findings of the Lancet Commission on Pollution and Health


[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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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Nov. 23-26, 2017
 Date: Sunday, November 26, 2017 11:01:45 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 Thanksgiving holiday weekend included two setbacks for biotechnology in Mexico. At the Food and Agriculture Organization regional ag biotech meeting in Ethiopia, the country's agricultural minister highlighted biotech's ability to increase production.

- International media reported a Mexican regulatory agency revoked Monsanto's permit to commercialize GM soy in seven states. *Reuters* reported Monsanto's response that the permit was withdrawn based "on unwarranted legal and technical grounds." Mexican news site *Reforma* reported the action was taken because Monsanto's GM soy was planted in areas where it is not authorized. [See more](#)
- A Mexican court rejected an appeal to lift a ban on commercial GM maize planting. The court found it is not authorized to rule on the matter, so it will be determined by the Supreme Court. *Agencia EFE* reported the decision maintains the ban. A *La Jornada San Luis* editorial called the decision, along with the ban on GM soy, a beginning of policy "that prioritizes food security, the conservation of agricultural heritage and the protection of health." [See more](#)
- Chinese news agency *Xinhua* reported Ethiopian Minister Eyasu Abraha said the country is promoting biotechnology use to increase food production and nutrition. Conference participant Rajeev Varshney wrote for India's *Down to Earth*, noting that many biotech products would help improve food security while using fewer resources. [See more](#)

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

North America

News: Politico reports Italy's most powerful farmers' union, Coldiretti, has launched campaign to resist Canadian wheat imports that have been sprayed with glyphosate during the harvest period; Canada sees stance as a protectionist trade policy having nothing to do with safety standards

Commentary: Center for Food Safety's Bill Freese highlights recent testimony at FDA public meeting on its biotech outreach initiative, criticizes statements by Biology Fortified's Karl Haro von Mogel, calls on FDA to avoid myths put out by biotech industry

Commentary: Center for Food Safety urges FDA, USDA not to present as fact what CFS says are discredited claims about GE crops and food; adds biotechnology's "poster child" Golden Rice has not saved a single child from vitamin A deficiency

Commentary: Ronald Bailey writes for Reason Foundation, describes development of GE virus to combat citrus greening, and USDA's expected authorization for use in 2019, hopes anti-science groups won't disparage the fruit from treated trees

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Taiwo Hassan of Nigeria's New Telegraph argues recent rejection of 90 tonnes of unapproved GM maize should serve as wake-up call that Nigeria is not ready for GMOs, claims Monsanto seeks to control food staples under false humanitarian pretext

Commentary: Huffington Post South Africa columnist says it's time for Africa to embrace GM technologies, which could reduce insecticide use, reducing input costs while maximizing yield for farmers

Commentary: Nigerian news site columnist says technology, including GMOs, can drive agricultural growth in Nigeria; praises start-ups such as Farmcrowdy that infuse technology into farming

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Pakistani news site reports ag conference concludes with hope Pakistani cotton will be disease-free with Chinese genetic technology; completion of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor would strengthen relations between the countries

Commentary: Third World Network says GM cotton now failing to control pink bollworm as pests become resistant to Bt toxin, leading to increase in insecticide usage

News: The Hindu reports more Indian farmers using native cotton variety, hope to make as much profit as with Bt cotton seed

Commentary: Dr. Emil Javier notes organic farming trend produces lower yields, higher priced food; notes organic farmers claim chemicals and pesticides destroy soils, but notes Rothamsted, University of Illinois plots continuously farmed since mid-19th century without problems

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Dutch-Belgian law firm posts article analyzing what EU Court of Justice's decision in Fidenato case means for Member States, which now must not adopt national emergency measures prohibiting certain authorized GMOs on sole basis of precautionary principle

News: French news site reports anti-GM activists converged on a shipping port to protest imports of GM soybeans, were blocked in tense but cordial encounter with dock workers

Commentary: Italy's Luca Coscioni Association criticizes Italian gov't for failing to support agricultural research, including new techniques such as CRISPR, accuses Ministers Galletti and Martina of holding the scientific process hostage

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Reuters reports on Monsanto's statement criticizing Mexico's ag sanitation authority SENASICA for withdrawing its GM soy permit in seven states, arguing the withdrawal was made on unwarranted legal and technical grounds

News: Reuters reports Argentina authorizes new genetically modified soybean seeds resistant to herbicides other than glyphosate as EU debates whether to extend glyphosate license; ag expert says it's not clear if potential glyphosate ban in Europe would impact shipments of soy-based products from Argentina

Commentary: Mexican news site claims Monsanto conspired to have GM soy cultivated in fields against

court orders, blames "complicity and corruption" in institutions; claims effect on environment is irreversible, according to Greenpeace

More Latin America items

Oceania

News release: GE-Free New Zealand urges government to protect "market advantage" as GE-free nation during negotiations for new version of TPP, notes GE-free conditions were being negotiated away during previous TPP negotiations because they were seen as barriers for trade

News: Australia's Grain Central recaps panel discussion featuring ag industry leaders on gene editing's possibilities for agriculture, whether regulation keeping up with latest developments, will consumers accept gene-editing more readily than they have GMOs

More Oceania items

More Bonus Eventus Resources

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Nov. 22, 2017
 Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 4:50:43 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology developments included the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's public release of comments on an agricultural biotechnology education campaign. Mexican news outlets previewed an expected Friday court decision on the country's GM maize moratorium.

- Following the Nov. 17 conclusion of a comment period, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration posted over 500 comments submitted in response to its questions about agricultural biotechnology outreach. Several industry groups - including the National Milk Producers Federation and the Biotechnology Innovation Organization - highlighted the importance of explaining GM crop safety. Activists with Soil Not Oil, Center for Food Safety and Consumers Union urged the agency to be clear about agricultural biotechnology's drawbacks. **See more**
- *La Jornada* reported that a First Circuit Court is expected to decide Friday (Nov. 24) on whether to extend Mexico's four-year GM maize moratorium. Reporter Angelica Enciso noted that 26 amparo lawsuits had been filed against commercialization of the crops and highlighted Colectividad del Maíz claims that transgenic maize varieties threaten landrace varieties. **See more**

Due to the Thanksgiving holiday, your next Global Biotech Snapshot will be sent Sunday, Nov. 26. Please check the monitoring portal for updates in the meantime.

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

North America

News: Agri-Pulse reports on various stakeholders' comments to FDA on its biotech outreach program, Biotechnology Innovation Organization noted that while many consumers are concerned about GMO safety, they do not understand what GMOs are

Announcement: U.S. FDA posts comment received from Grocery Manufacturers Association under Agricultural Biotechnology Education and Outreach Initiative, suggesting FDA consider prioritizing messages to consumers that products of ag biotech techniques as safe as conventional

Commentary: Geneticist Alison Van Eenennaam submits comment to FDA on its biotech outreach program, she argues simply presenting consumers with scientific facts will not be effective, suggests partnership with Cooperative Extension System

Announcement: U.S. FDA posts comment received from Center for Food Safety under Agricultural Biotechnology Education and Outreach Initiative, urging agency to mandate on-package labeling of foods containing GMOs, not rely solely on information provided by corporations producing GMOs

News: WIRED reports on release of non-browning GM Arctic apples in U.S. stores, highlights Okanagan Specialty Fruits' Neal Carter's description of long regulatory process, reports other biotech companies will closely monitor consumer reception

Commentary: Alli Willis of Non-GMO Project's lifestyle site, Living Non-GMO amplifies articles on

negative impacts of Bt crops on human health and the environment, including Jonathan Latham's "supertoxin" paper, and GenOk paper on insect resistance

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: News Agency of Nigeria reports on National Biosafety Management Agency's (NBMA) signing of Memorandum of Understanding with National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) on proper GMO regulation

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Announcement: International Service for the Aquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications announces release of final declaration by 2017 International Food Biotechnology and Biosafety Workshop in Ankara, Turkey, emphasizing need for modern biotech for sustainable ag

News: Times of India reports seed and pesticide industry associations deny responsibility in recent pesticide-related deaths, Crop Life India called for case-by-case investigations to determine exact causes

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Report: USDA Foreign Agricultural Service annual GAIN Report on agricultural biotechnology in Bulgaria notes government views ag biotech skeptically, NGOs push anti-biotech agenda, government has opted out in terms of cultivation, poultry and livestock stakeholders continue to import biotech feed

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Mexico's La Jornada reports First Collegiate Court in Civil Matters of the First Circuit will decide on whether or not to maintain precautionary measure prohibiting GM corn cultivation on Friday, Nov. 24, 2017

News: Mexican news outlet reports on recent event at San Miguel Arcángel church in Tancanhuitz, where local community groups met to promote conservation of native corn varieties and oppose introduction of transgenics

Commentary: Victor Toledo of Mexico's Regeneracion criticizes recent La Gaceta Universitaria article in support of GMOs, claims GMOs negatively impact human health and the environment, calls for a UNAM discussion forum

[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](#)

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database More information on the people and organizations influencing food and agriculture issues.	calendar See where news could be happening next. Or let allies know about an upcoming event.	community Connect with academic experts and researchers, journalists and agriculture allies.
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 Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 9:01 56 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology developments included reporting on the launch of "Biotechnology Week" in the Philippines. In the U.S., lawmakers and agriculture stakeholders warned of the impacts of a withdrawal from the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

- The *Philippines Information Agency* reported on the launch of National Biotechnology Week in Quezon City. At a ribbon-cutting ceremony, Deputy House Speaker Sharon Garin emphasized the environmental and economic benefits of GM crop farming. A local media report noted highlighted a "farmer-artist" show on the theme of biotechnology in agriculture. **See more**
- In separate statements, U.S. senators and Texas Farm Bureau representatives warned the U.S. Commerce Secretary that a withdrawal from NAFTA could have widespread negative consequences for the country's agricultural sector. The Texas group noted that the sector employed over half a million people while the senators called for a detailed analysis of the trade agreement's impact. **See more**
- French media outlets reported on Coordination Rurale protests over the country's importation of GM soybeans. Local news sites claimed that over 200 activists blockaded ports in Lorient and Montoir-de-Bretagne. In a statement to *Agence France-Presse*, a spokesperson for the group linked the event to concerns over the European Union's discussions on glyphosate. **See more**

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

North America

Commentary: [BIO's Karen Batra highlights role of biotechnology in producing many favorite Thanksgiving foods, including sweet corn, squash, cheese, potatoes, beer and sugar that sweetens pumpkin pie](#)

Commentary: [Genetic Literacy Project's Andrew Porterfield touts use of CRISPR technology in crop breeding to introduce desirable traits, make crops less susceptible to plant diseases, notes food industry members created Coalition for Responsible Gene Editing in Agriculture to spark conversations](#)

Commentary: [Monsanto amplifies Animal Frontiers article examining "why scientists and regulators are confident in food products derived from livestock that have been fed GM animal feed"](#)

Video: [Institute for Responsible Technology posts Jeffrey Smith video denouncing "Peel Back the Label" campaign, claims "biotech bullies created yet another front group to mislead the public and attack major companies who commit to non-GMO ingredients"](#)

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: [News Agency of Nigeria reports on National Biosafety Management Agency Director General](#)

Rufus Ebegba's explanation of the agency's neutral stance on GMOs, noting its job is not to stop or promote GMOs, but to ensure their safety for humans and the environment

News: Nigeria's state-run news agency reports director-general of National Biosafety Management Agency calls it unbiased umpire in matters relating to GMOs to ensure practice of modern biotechnology safe for citizens while boosting nation's economy, notes mandate to ensure GMOs safe for health, environment

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Philippine Information Agency reports on opening ceremonies of 13th National Biotechnology Week in Quezon City; keynote speaker Deputy House Speaker Sharon Garin underscores importance of biotechnology for food security, highlighting increased yields, environmentally friendly practices

News: Philippine business news site reports farmer-artist showcasing painting exhibition titled "Linang: Agriculture biotechnology and art" during National Biotechnology Week Nov. 20-24 in Quezon City; farmer-artist says biotechnology is key to tackle food security

News: The Hindu reports pink bollworm affected nearly half of Maharashtra's cotton crop, with potential losses of Rs. 10,000 crore, according to Kishore Tiwari of Vasant Rao Naik Shetkari Swavalmban Mission, who called for an alternative to Monsanto's Bt cotton

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Thierry Levent and Michel Gay write for France's Contrepoints, criticizing ideology of fear surrounding GM food, pesticides and endocrine disruptors, they note some organic pesticides are toxic, point to organic-related food poisoning incidents

News: Ouest-France reports on Coordination Rurale's protest in Lorient, where over 200 people gathered in opposition to imports of GM soybeans

News: French news site reports on protest at port of Lorient by Coordination Rurale against glyphosate-treated GM soybeans, adding they want to take samples to prove soybeans entering France are GM

News release: University of Cambridge announces publication of report by Bonnie Wintle and Christian R. Boehm from Centre for the Study of Existential Risk, highlighting potential benefits and risks of future biotech and synbio applications

Campaign: Poland's Institute of Citizens Affairs (INSPRO) announces launch of signature campaign appealing to Ag Ministry for introduction of a GMO-free label, includes a competition for signatories, who may submit artwork on theme of food security

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Video: Brazil's Chamber of Deputies posts YouTube video on Environment Committee public hearing on GM foods in the country

News: Argentinian news outlet reports on recent FAO report showing 42 million Latin Americans are hungry, La Via Campesina argues hunger is not due to lack of food, points to negative impacts of industrial ag practices, such as GM crop and pesticide use

News: Uruguayan news outlet reports on changes in food labeling next year, Municipality of Montevideo Director of Social Development, Fabiana Goyeneche pointed to gov't resolution to change the GM label so that it does not misleadingly serve as a warning

Commentary: CLOC-Via Campesina reports on Continental Conference for Democracy and against Neoliberalism in Montevideo Nov. 16-18 with "at least" three thousand activists from 23 countries, fight against WTO and transnational corporations highlighted

More Latin America items

Oceania

Commentary: Agribusiness consultant and former Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association CEO, Jan Davis, writes for Australia's Mercury, analyzing results of recent survey on public attitudes towards GMOs, notes relying on rational argument alone won't work

News: Australian produce news outlet reports on DuPont Pioneer's Kevin Diehl's recent speech at TropAg 2017 in Brisbane, in which he called on scientists to engage with the public on gene editing and biotech, noting facts don't always work

News: Australian news site reports South Australian farmers are enraged after bill narrowly passes extending GM crop moratorium until at least 2025; ag groups call move "anti-science" and "unmitigated disaster", Greens applaud move for protecting organic industry

News release: University of Queensland announces plans to launch new Centre for Horticultural Science in 2018, to be led by ag biotechnologist Neena Mitter, with goal of growing horticulture through high-tech approaches of big data, genomics and biotech

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 commentary included criticism of European agricultural policies on new plant breeding techniques and GM crop imports. In Africa, Ugandan researchers previewed a new disease-resistant banana variety.

- Highlighting France's ongoing Etats généraux de l'alimentation (State of Food) consultations, the NGO France Nature Environnement issued a statement criticizing the country's Haut Conseil des Biotechnologies (HCB) for proposing a product-based regulatory system on plants developed through gene editing. Calling the decision "vague," the group accused the HCB of facilitating agribusiness rather than supporting an agroecological model. **See more**
- French advocacy group Coordination Rurale previewed protests scheduled for Tuesday (Nov. 21) at ports in Lorient and St. Nazaire. In a statement, the group claimed that Europe's importation of GM soybeans from the U.S. and South America threatened local farmers and undermined food sovereignty goals. It also warned of potential health implications from glyphosate residues. **See more**
- Researchers with Uganda's National Agricultural Research Laboratories told reporters with *The Observer* that a disease-resistant banana with higher levels of beta carotene was on track for distribution in 2021. The researchers added that the agency had several beneficial crops under development and praised the recently passed biosafety law for allowing field trials. **See more**

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

North America

Commentary: Kavin Senapathy writes for Forbes about hypocrisy of Non-GMO Project, notes difficulty of defining "genetically modified organism," discusses how GMO opponents have tried to turn debate into social justice issue, laments targeting of women by anti-GMO activists trying to frame food safety as feminist issue

Commentary: Jayson Lusk publishes article in Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy, evaluating farm and food policy proposals of the so-called Food Movement, argues recent proposals lack consistency, and misjudge changes in food and agriculture

News: Seafood Source reports on AquaBounty CEO Ronald Stotish's response to Sobeys' decision not to sell its GE salmon, he voiced disappointment that groups such as Canadian Biotechnology Action Network (CBAN) continue to misrepresent their product

Commentary: Jeffrey Smith of Institute for Responsible Technology warns consumers about health risks of consuming Arctic apples, amplifying University of Canterbury geneticist Jack Heinemann's claims that dsRNA can change human gene expression

News: Carbon Brief reports on outcomes of COP23 talks in Bonn, parties agreed to work on issues linking agriculture and climate change, FAO praised the outcome as a major step toward adapting agriculture to climate change and meeting growing global food demand

More North America items

Africa

News: Ugandan news outlet reports National Agricultural Research Laboratories (NARL) researchers announce field trials for GM bananas, resistant to bacterial wilt and with pro-vitamin A, are ready to go, in hopes of public release in 2021

Commentary: Thomas Lewton of South Africa's Raddington Report examines potential for GM crops to address Africa's food crises, highlighting University of Cape Town researcher Jill Farrant's work on drought resistance, argues GMOs and agroecology are not at odds

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science Fellow Nkechi Isaac examines many benefits of Bt cowpea currently under development in Nigeria, highlights its potential to boost nutrition, notes reduced insecticide use will save costs, protect humans and environment

News release: Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa criticizes African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO) for continuing to exclude civil society and farmer groups from meetings, speaks out against "draconian" seed law

More Africa items

Asia

Commentary: Former Advanta Seeds CEO Ram Kaundinya writes for India's Mint, criticizes India's regulatory systems for biotech and seed industry, provides recommendations on how gov't can promote innovation and curb illegal GM seed use

News: Brazilian farming news outlet reports on China's growing investment in agricultural biotech research, highlights several products in development and their benefits to farmers, human health and the environment, and collaborations with Brazil

More Asia items

Europe

News release: France's Coordination Rurale announces protest on Nov. 21 at ports of Lorient and St. Nazaire in opposition to imports of glyphosate-resistant GM soybeans

Commentary: Matt Ridley of U.K.'s The Times promotes use of GM Bt maize to solve Africa's fall armyworm crisis, criticizes short-sighted opposition to biotech

Commentary: France environmental NGO criticizes opinion issued by nation's High Council for Biotechnology that finds products of new plant breeding techniques should be studied on case-by-case basis; group's president says "new GMOs" not right choice for country to make transition to agroecology

Commentary: U.K.-based anti-GMO author Pat Thomas writes article for new sustainable food magazine, Locavore, claims GMOs were released into the human food chain without any safety testing, voices concerns about patents on seeds

Report: European Food Safety Authority publishes guidance for risk assessment of low level presence of GM plant material in imported food and feed, recommends targeted compositional analysis on case-by-case basis

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Cuban news outlet reports on opening of International Congress of Agricultural Sciences, Agrociencias 2017 in Havana, Mario Pablo Estrada of Havana-based Center of Genetic Engineering and

Biotechnology delivered keynote speech on biotech in the 21st Century

Commentary: La Jornada runs op-ed by prominent Mexican agronomist criticizing MasAgro project intended for sustainable modernization of traditional agriculture, claiming project has effect of creating seed brokers that enable "transnationals" to take over nation's seed industry, displace native maize

Announcement: Website for Latin American and Caribbean social justice NGOs posts final "Declaration of Montevideo" coming out of Continental Conference for Democracy and Against Neoliberalism, includes call for mobilization to repudiate WTO Ministerial Summit in Buenos Aires in December

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: Australia's Weekly Times reports on likely extension of South Australia's GM crop ban through 2025 after passage in Parliament's upper house, highlights opposition to the extension by Grain Producers South Australia and CropLife

More Oceania items

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 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - Nov. 20, 2017
 Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 4:02:48 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

As Americans gather to celebrate Thanksgiving this week, it's the first time - as Julianna LeMieux points out in her piece on this week's newsletter - that genetically modified Arctic Apples could be part of the recipe for the post-turkey apple pie. She explains that apples have been genetically manipulated for years and years, with this latest change being "not much" different than apples from before. In a separate column, Amanda Zaluckyj suggests more than farmers should be thanked for the holiday feast - scientists, safety testers and many others play a role in getting our food from seed to table.

So, as we mark this occasion, here's a hearty thank you for your contributions to our network and beyond.

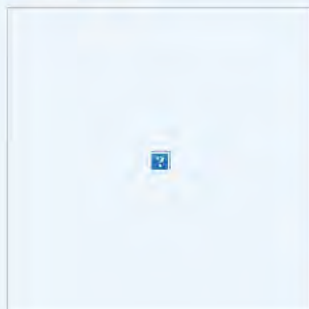
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Please [contact us](#) if you have any questions.

In This Issue

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

Stakeholder Spotlight: International College of Human Nutrition and Functional Medicine



Last week, anti-GMO and anti-pesticide activist Jeffrey Smith was [back in the news](#) for publishing a self-described "peer reviewed" article on the health benefits of removing GMOs from your diet. The [article](#) appeared in

Stories Worth Sharing

[Julianna LeMieux: A new, genetically modified apple could be in your pie this Thanksgiving](#)

[Amanda Zaluckyj: Scientists, safety testers and others - not just farmers - deserve thanks for Thanksgiving bounty](#)

[MEP Christofer Fjellner: Greens using activist IARC scientists to "dress up their purely ideological arguments in scientific reasoning"](#)

[Simran Sethi: "Concerning" study suggest consumers willing to pay similar premium for organic and non-GMO products](#)

[Marcel Kuntz: Official inquiry into International Agency for Research on Cancer needed after glyphosate "scandal"](#)

[Jennie Schmidt: American ignorance about GMOs puts African subsistence farmers in peril](#)

[Ralph Martin: Organic crop yields up to one-quarter lower than conventional](#)

[Ghanaian agriculture researcher urges farmers to give "scientifically proven" biotechnology a chance](#)

[Val Giddings: U.S. FDA must allay "false fears" about GMOs and provide correct information](#)

the International Journal of Human Nutrition and Functional Medicine published by a non-accredited alternative health "college."

Reacquaint yourself with Smith and learn more about the college that published his paper [HERE](#).

[CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES](#)

[Karl Haro von Mogel: U.S. FDA meeting brings together "diverse voices" on biotechnology](#)

[Mark Lynas: Swing dance instructor Jeffrey Smith spreads anti-GMO claims with biased survey results in scientific-looking journal](#)

[Bob Brockie: New Zealand biotechnology regulations rank as most antiquated in the world](#)

[Australian researchers develop genetically modified banana resistant to Panama disease](#)

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What's Trending?

[Monsanto, U.S. farm groups file suit in bid to block listing of glyphosate under California's Prop 65](#)

[U.K. researchers claim study found thiamethoxam exposure can reduce bumblebees' abilities to buzz and collect pollen](#)

[Proposal to extend South Australia GMO ban until 2025 passes Upper House of Parliament](#)

[European Food Safety Authority delays release of neonic review until February](#)

Calendar highlights

November 20	November 20-21	November 22
Royal Society of Medicine workshop: "Pesticides and food: is low dose exposure harmful?"	U.S. National Academy of Sciences committee meeting on "pathways to a paradigm shift in toxicity testing and decision making"	India court hearing on genetically modified mustard
November 22-24	November 22	November 23
FAO meeting on Agricultural Biotechnologies in Sustainable Food Systems and Nutrition in Africa	College of Commissioners to discuss next steps for European EDC criteria	Inf'OGM happy hour debate on GMOs

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

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

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Global biotechnology news over the weekend included reporting and commentary on the United Nations climate summit in Germany. Biotechnology workshops in Ghana have farmers seeking GM seed. Media reported that a study indicated organic farming can feed the world if other goals are met internationally.

- *Reuters* reported the UN climate talks in Bonn, Germany, "broke a long stalemate on agriculture" and should help governments establish wise policies that help reduce greenhouse gas releases from the agricultural sector. Activist Vandana Shiva wrote in a *Deutsche Welle* op-ed that we cannot manipulate natural ecosystems through genetic engineering but must work to develop biomass and biodiversity. [See more](#)
- Ghanaian news sites reported that recent biotechnology workshops have scientists struggling to meet growing demand by farmers for GM seed. A *Business & Financial Times* article noted a recent Women in Science forum in which speakers highlighted the benefits of biotech seeds. [See more](#)
- The Guardian and other media reported that a study published in the *Nature Communications* journal indicates that if the world turns to organic farming, it could feed 9 billion people by 2050. However, those results depend upon drastically cutting food waste and significantly reducing consumption of animal products. [See more](#)

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North America

News: Reuters reports UN climate talks at COP 23 in Germany broke long stalemate on agriculture, leaders now hope to focus more on making agriculture less polluting, better able to cope with climate change

Commentary: Molecular biologist with The American Council on Science and Health explains genetic manipulation "has been part of apple breeding as long as edible apples have been around", and only difference between organic and GMO Arctic apples "is whether the manipulation was done in a greenhouse or a lab"

Commentary: Friends of the Earth analyst writes extensive piece warning that NAFTA renegotiations could hamper efforts to regulate glyphosate, neonics, dicamba, genetically modified seeds and animal antibiotic usage

Commentary: Biology Fortified's Karl Haro von Mogel recounts recent participation in FDA Biotech Education and Outreach public meeting in San Francisco, examines problems in statements made by reps. from Center for Food Safety and Consumers Union

News: Tech news outlet reports on Food Loves Tech expo in Brooklyn, Marion Nestle criticized GMOs as a means of corporate control of the food supply, while former White House chef Sam Kass emphasized importance of technology to feed growing population

News: Science News reports gene-editing tools seen as way to fight disease-spreading mosquitoes and

more may be too powerful to use in current form, two new papers say; adds computer simulation shows standard gene drives can make tweaked DNA spread easily, affecting new territory

Commentary: Kevin Folta continues to call out "anti-GMO darling" Don Huber of Purdue for his "Molecular Bigfoot" claims of pathogen harbored on Roundup Ready crops; posts excerpts of Huber's letter of complaint to Folta's university administration, and says Huber "continues to tour the planet, telling his tall tales to farmers and lay audiences"

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Xinhua reports on Secretary General of African Seed Trade Association (AFSTA) Justin Rakotoarisaona's statement that African farmers will benefit greatly once they embrace biotech, emphasizing importance of coexistence between biotech and conventional crops

News: Ghanaian news outlet reports recent biotech sensitization workshops leave scientists struggling to meet farmers' growing demand for seeds, highlights recent Women in Science forum in Accra, where speakers promoted many benefits of ag biotech

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Indian news site reports Bill Gates says Indian farmers need to integrate technology and use newer, higher yielding seed to increase productivity

News: The Times of India amplifies data from Central Institute of Cotton Research finding 50 percent of cotton in Vidarbha is pest infested lowering yield by 30 percent, notes pink bollworm is likely to have developed resistance to Bt cotton seed engineered to be resistant to the worm

News: Indian news service reports for agri-biotechnology industry in India the difficulty in handling regulations has increased so much even home-bred companies are relocating or expanding research presence abroad

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Cambridge University-affiliated science organization blogger notes "Food Evolution" documentary points out people try to scare consumers away from GMOs, notes best way forward is to publicize GMO success stories

Commentary: German NGO Forum working group on agriculture outlines agroecology policy strategy; elements include challenging claims we need to grow more food, drawing lines to exclude precision and GMO agriculture and making production practices a human rights issue

News: Italian news agency reports on Coldiretti's reiteration of stance against GMOs, following Inf'OGM analysis, noting 76 percent of Italians oppose them, claiming they threaten the environment and "Made in Italy" products

News: German news outlet reports on Berlin-Brandenburg Academy's "Genetic Engineering Report," biochemist Ferdinand Hucho noted "green" genetic modification of plants is still viewed with suspicion, but highlighted excitement about application of CRISPR in humans

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Argentina agricultural news site reports Bt corn effectively reduces carcinogenic microtoxins,

reduces pesticide use, reduces losses due to insect attacks

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News release: Physicians and Scientists for Global Responsibility (PSGR) New Zealand sends letter to all MPs in opposition to GMOs, warns about risks posed by GMOs and products of gene editing, as well as associated pesticides, advocates precautionary principle

Commentary: Commentator on New Zealand news site says country has most antiquated, restrictive biotech laws in world to block GMO use because commission listened to uninformed populous rather than informed experts

News: Australian grain industry news site reports on likelihood that South Australia's GMO ban will be extended through 2025, Wade Dabinett of Grain Producers SA notes the move would be an "unmitigated disaster" for the grain industry

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology news included two developments out of Australia, where South Australian legislators approved an initial vote to extend the region's GMO moratorium and Queensland University of Technology researchers announced a successful disease-resistant banana. Mexican media outlets continued to amplify a recent study claiming that most tortillas contain GM maize.

- The *Australian Broadcasting Corp.* reported that South Australia's Upper House has voted to extend a moratorium on GM crop cultivation in the region until 2025, circumventing the ban's 2019 expiration. Mark Parnell, the parliamentary leader for the region's Green Party, called on the government to move the bill forward in the Lower House before the parliamentary session concludes. [See more](#)
- Researchers with the Queensland University of Technology announced that a field trial of bananas engineered to resist Panama Disease has been successful. The results were published in *Nature Communications*. The news was amplified in Australian, European and food industry-focused news outlets. [See more](#)
- Organic Consumers Association released a new video amplifying recent research from the National Autonomous University of Mexico, where researchers claimed that more than 90 percent of commercially available tortillas contained GM ingredients. The report was also highlighted in columns published by *Diario De Xalapa* and *Actitud Fem*. [See more](#).

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North America

[News: Politico Pro reports on USDA meeting with industry groups, says that despite production delays the agency is willing to move quickly to allow GE virus that would protect trees from citrus greening](#)

[News: Commercial ag funding news site reports former White House nutrition advisor says gene editing is game changer in debate to feed world in light of climate change](#)

[Campaign: Beyond Pesticides urges supporters to sign petition to Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission to stop Bayer-Monsanto deal, amplifies report by Friends of the Earth, SumOfUs and the Open Markets Institute against the merger](#)

[More North America items](#)

Africa

[News: Nigerian news outlet reports on why many stakeholders believe GM foods are unsafe, highlights claims by Marian Bassej-Orovwuje of Friends of the Earth Nigeria, who amplified recent study about "super toxins" in Monsanto's corn](#)

[News release: Burkina Faso's National Agency for Biosafety \(ANB\) recaps information and training workshop for members of national biosafety framework, government stakeholders; topics included](#)

experiments with GM mosquitoes, ongoing debates on GMOs

News: Ghanaian news site reports Prof. Kenneth Danso, Director of Biotechnology and Nuclear Agric Research Institute, calls on country's farmers to embrace ag technology and warns against over-reliance on conventional farming methods, adding "we need to adopt" biotechnology

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: Vogue India reports on gluten debate, "metabolic and functional medicine expert" explains wheat is one of the most genetically-modified grains and heavily sprayed with pesticides, linked to rise in gluten sensitivity

Commentary: The Guam Daily Post columnist discusses research at RIKEN Center for Sustainable Resource Science that developed transgenic strains of rice resistant to drought, notes it may take five to 10 years before product reaches marketplace but praises idea in era of climate change

Interviews: Vivian Fernandes of Smart Indian Agriculture interviews Shriram Brothers, Ajay, Vikram and Ajit of holding company DCM Shriram for Financial Express, they express frustration at gov't delays in approving GMOs and handling of IPR

News: The Hindu previews upcoming International Permaculture Conference and Convergence in India from Nov. 25 through Dec. 2, with speakers to include Vandana Shiva, permaculture designer Robyn Francis from Australia

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Dutch news site reports GM banana being developed is resistant to disease threatening to wipe out Cavendish banana crops, notes disease destroyed another banana variety more than 50 years ago

Commentary: Scott Hamilton Kennedy writes for EuropaBio on "Food Evolution" documentary, says he is not pro-GMO but is pro-science, notes documentary shows how difficult it is to decide how to feed the world

News: Food Navigator reports Germany federal risk assessment institute says focus groups reveal public education on genome editing is essential for public discourse on NBTs, noting majority of participants reject the technology, consider it form of genetic modification

Study: EFSA Panel on GMOs reports it finds no new hazards, modified exposure or scientific uncertainties that would change its conclusions on original assessment for herbicide-tolerant, GM sugar beets

News: Italian environmental news site says study by Frick's Research Institute of Organic Agriculture proves organic farming can sustainably feed 9 billion people by 2050

Commentary: French NGO Inf'OGM says citizens, civil groups must be involved in debate on GMOs, food in general; warns that civil group underrepresented on Estates General of Food, "hidden GMOs" gain ground in France, GMOs are imported into EU, and CETA negotiators seek to undermine rules governing GMOs

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Video: Mexico's Organic Consumers Association posts YouTube video amplifying recent investigation that found more than 80 percent of processed foods made from corn and sold in supermarkets contain transgenics; group claims GMOs, glyphosate used on crops threaten human health, food sovereignty

Commentary: Mexican news outlet columnist amplifies recent study which found that over 90 percent of tortillas contain GM maize, voices concern about health effects of glyphosate residues, and GM contamination of native maize varieties

Commentary: Carla Estrada of Mexico's Actitud Fem warns readers about consuming tortillas, pointing to recent study showing that 90 percent of Mexican tortillas contain GM corn, claims they are toxic due to glyphosate residues, recommends eating native corn tortillas

Commentary: Mexican Senator Manuel Bartlett writes for local news outlet, amplifies study on three mega-projects, including GM soy cultivation in Campeche, imposed by gov't without consulting indigenous communities, highlights accusation of abuse of power

News: Mexico's El Norte reports Mayan groups complain 85 percent of soybeans planted in Campeche region genetically modified, despite judge's 2015 order suspending sowing, commercialization of GM soy; Mennonites accused of violating Biosafety Law of GMOs, Greenpeace Mexico among groups filing complaint

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Australian Broadcasting Corporation reports South Australia's proposal to extend GM ban through 2025 passes Upper House by a single vote, Greens leader Mark Parnell argued extending the ban would benefit state farmers, who fetch premiums for non-GM crops

News: Australian Associated Press reports Queensland University researchers develop GM banana resistant to Panama disease, which is devastating Cavendish crops worldwide

News release: Queensland University of Technology researchers develop GM Cavendish bananas resistant to Fusarium wilt tropical race 4 (TR4), or Panama Disease, three lines showed robust resistance in field trials, while a fourth remained completely TR4 free

Study: Study in Nature Communications demonstrates successful field trials of GM Cavendish bananas resistant to Fusarium wilt tropical race 4, authors note resistance genes could potentially be elevated through gene editing to provide non-transgenic resistance

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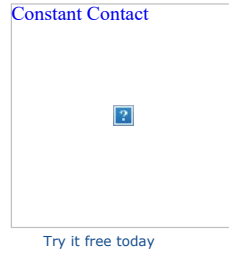
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 To: Diane Wray-Cohen@fas.usda.gov
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Nov. 15, 2017
 Date: Wednesday, November 15, 2017 9:03:12 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Today's global biotechnology developments included a statement from the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) that called for gene-edited organisms to be regulated under current GMO guidelines. In India, news outlets continues to report on a Monday press event featuring a Swiss organic agroecology researcher.

- The German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) issued a legal statement today calling for products of new plant breeding techniques (NBTs) to be regulated under existing genetic engineering guidance. In its statement, the agency said that a product-focused approach would create significant regulatory gaps and noted the importance of a "precautionary" approach. The opinion is at odds with recommendations from several research agencies, including the European Academies Science Advisory Council. [See more](#)
- Indian news outlets continued to amplify statements from a Monday event where Swiss agroecology researcher Angelika Hilbeck said that GM seed varieties were not meeting local farmers needs and expectations. Hilbeck highlighted concerns over Bt cotton use in the country, including pest and weed resistance to major GM crop traits. Reporters at the event also raised questions about GM edible oils being imported without labeling. Hilbeck had previously been invited to speak at the Organic World Congress in New Delhi, which concluded on Saturday. [See more](#)
- Australia's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator released the results from its 2017 survey of consumer attitudes on genetic modification, noting that the results were in line with the results of its 2015 survey. The agency noted that consumers had different tolerances for GM techniques in medicine versus agriculture and were much more positive about gene editing versus traditional genetic modification techniques. [See more](#)

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North America

[News: Newsweek reports researchers at University of Hong Kong create world's first tomatoes genetically engineered to contain extra antioxidants; product reportedly contains 500 percent more vitamin E, 100 percent more lycopene than conventional tomatoes](#)

[Announcement: USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service says it has received petition from Verdeca LLC seeking determination of non-regulated status for new soybean variety genetically engineered for increased yield; public comment period ending Jan. 16, 2018](#)

[News: Reuters reports China's crackdown on GMO soybean imports, anti-smog effort this winter expected to boost soymeal prices, inflate crushers' margins, extend unexpected windfall for oilseeds sector; Beijing delaying safety certificates for cargoes of GMO soybeans, forcing plants to suspend operations](#)

[News: Alternative news site Counterview reports on recent speech in Ahmedabad, India by Swiss agroecology expert Angelika Hilbeck, who claimed Monsanto is seeking deal with Bayer for marketing reasons, amplified report on negative impacts of the merger](#)

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Kenya news outlet reports African Centre for Biodiversity says GM cotton market is likely next target for biotech firms, noting mergers will stiffen competition for Monsanto from ChemChina

Commentary: Retired judge writes for Ugandan news outlet, claims legalizing GMOs will erase Ubuntu (humaneness), links GMOs to rising obesity epidemic in the U.S., citing Wikipedia, points to socio-economic consequences and health risks

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Indian news outlet reports on "panic" among Vidarbha and Marathwada cotton growers due to widespread boll worm attack threatening nearly 50 percent of Bt cotton crop, to which the pest has developed resistance, amid recent pesticide poisonings

News: Filipino business news site highlights claims of pesticides negatively impacting human, environmental health, notes International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications report indicating planting biotech crops reduces pesticide use

News: DNA India reports on press conference at Gujarat Vidyapith, where agroecology promoter Angelika Hilbeck called for better enforcement of biosafety regulations, Kapil Shah of organic farming group Jatan blamed gov't for allowing entry of GM edible oil

News: India's Food & Beverage News reports on controversy of GM edible oil imports without proper labeling, amid debate on GM mustard commercialization, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has yet to draft labeling standards

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News release: Germany Academy of Nature Conservation issues legal opinion arguing EU food and ag law is not suitable to protect nature from NBTs, says new technologies should fall under GMO regulations

Commentary: Keine-Gentechnik amplified BfN opinion calling for new breeding techniques to receive GMO classification, notes ag minister's previous opposition makes it unclear how Germany will decide on issue

Event: Norway Biotechnology Council to present policy recommendations for future regulations of GMO, gene editing (Dec. 5); regional debate meetings to follow

News: Southern France news site reports film festival features documentary presented by anti-pesticide NGO highlighting efforts of chemical industry, lobbyists to monopolize food production, encourage use of pesticides, GM crops despite potential health, environmental hazards

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Member of Argentinian group Hacia El Buen Vivir writes for local news outlet, promotes Encuentros Semilleros movement which supports agroecology and opposes use of GMOs and agrochemicals, pointing to health risks

News: English-language news site amplifies report from Mexican news source about state maintaining GE-free zone despite looming federal order to reverse Yucatan's declaration prohibiting GM crops; ban calls GMOs incompatible with agricultural activity such as beekeeping

More Latin America items

Oceania

Report: Australia's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator publishes results of its 2017 survey on consumer attitudes to gene technology, with similar findings to 2015 study, support for GMOs depends on assurance of safety and regulation, and type of modification

News: Australian grain industry news site reports on Office of Gene Technology Regulator survey on public attitudes towards GMOs, with results closely mirroring those of a 2015 study, 13 percent of the population are strongly opposed to GMOs

Announcement: Australia's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator announces public comment period through Jan. 10, 2018, on proposed commercial release of insect and antibiotic-resistant GM cotton variety by Syngenta, after finding negligible risks

More Oceania items

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

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Today's global biotechnology developments included new criticism of Mexico's biotechnology regulations from local advocacy groups. U.S. advocacy groups held a press event to highlights concerns over agricultural industry consolidation.

- Greenpeace and a collective of Mayan communities groups announced that they'd filed a complaint with the National Service of Health, Safety and Food Quality (SENASICA) over the country's alleged mismanagement of GM soy cultivation in the region. In a statement, Greenpeace claimed that the country's biosecurity system was inadequate. Media outlets amplifying the release highlighted reports that farmers were sowing GM soy varieties despite a court-mandated moratorium. **See more**
- Center for Food Safety, Organization for Competitive Markets, Friends of the Earth, SumOfUs and other advocacy groups held a press event announcing that they had delivered a petition protesting Bayer's pending purchase of Monsanto, noting that a coordinated campaign had generated over 1 million signatures for the petition. The groups warned that the merger would leave over 75 percent of the country's corn seed traits owned by only two agricultural companies. The groups also highlighted two new reports outlining additional concerns over consolidation in the industry. **See more**

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North America

News release: Center for Food Safety promotes National Press Club event where NGOs outlined concerns about agricultural industry mergers, delivered petition protesting consolidation to Department of Justice; highlights its seed exchange platform

News release: Organization for Competitive Markets promotes delivery of one-million-signatory petition calling on DOJ to block Bayer-Monsanto purchase; leaders of NGOs warn merger threatens farmers, consumers by giving companies greater control of food-ag sector

Commentary: Val Giddings comments on FDA GMO education plan urge agency to respond to false fears promoted by special interest groups, give consumers tools to distinguish reliable GMO information from propaganda

Commentary: Consumers Union's Elisa Odabashian submits comments on FDA's educational and outreach initiative on ag biotech, claims there are issues surrounding GMOs in which the science is either unsettled or misrepresented, calls for transparency

Commentary: Quartz previews new apple varieties, including extra-crispy Washington-planted apple, red apple from France and Okanagan's Golden Arctic; says GM apple's success could affect future GM fruits such as wilt-resistant bananas

News: Billings Gazette reports retired Montana State University economist tells Montana Farm Bureau convention attendees farmers are producing more crops per acre thanks to biotechnology

Commentary: Mercola amplifies Indian study finding GM Golden Rice leads to "metabolic breakdown," poor yields in attempt to introduce engineered DNA to India's high-yielding rice variety Swarna, argues using Golden Rice to address vitamin A deficiency in developing countries short-sighted

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Participatory Ecological Land Use Management and African Centre for Biodiversity activists celebrate ITPGRFA Kigali establishment of ad hoc technical group to realize farmers rights as step to restore credibility to the Seed Treaty

News: Nigeria Biosafety Management Agency says it has sent back shipment of maize containing illegal GM traits, highlights agency's role in protecting consumers

Announcement: South Africa's National Council of Provinces Committee (NCOP) Land and Mineral Resources publishes minutes of recent meeting, in which mandates on Plant Improvement Bill and Plant Breeders' Rights Bill were negotiated

Announcement: Burkina Faso's National Biosafety Agency (ANB) announces it recently held a communication session on GMOs and Intellectual Property Rights for its staff, moderator Arouna Ouedraogo argued IPR on plant genetic resources warrants further reflection

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Times of India reports on recent speech by Swiss scientist Angelika Hilbeck, in which she claimed that GM crops have only proven productive for educated farmers with large, irrigated land holdings, and have not met promises of reducing pesticide use

News: Press Trust of India reports Maharashtra state task force finds agrarian crisis is worse due to crop losses caused by pests, drought and suspected pesticide poisonings, task force chairman Kishor Tiwari voiced surprise at pink bollworm attack on Bt cotton

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Report: Swiss ag department explains process, history of GMO testing in seed imports, noting only eight positive tests detected in 15 years, announces pilot study launch for control of alfalfa seeds from U.S., Canada

Event: International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) to host "Speed Up the Cool Down" networking event Nov. 15, offers opportunity to connect with Regenerative Agriculture movement

Event: Paris NGO to host series of lectures on costs, benefits of new gene editing techniques featuring INRA, High Council of Biotechnologies researchers (Tuesdays, Nov. 14-Dec. 12)

Event: European Food Safety Authority announces Dec. 13 webinar to explain its risk assessment process for GMO allergenicity

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News release: Greenpeace, along with Campeche Mayan communities and other NGOs, lodges complaint with National Service of Health, Safety and Food Quality (SENASICA) about widespread illegal GM soy cultivation, claims Mexico's biosecurity system does not work

News: Mexico's Proceso reports on Mayan communities, environmentalists and human rights activists' presentation of complaint to National Service of Health, Food Safety and Quality (Senasica), alleging that 23,000 hectares of GM soy were planted in Campeche

News: Campeche news outlet reports on complaint filed by Collective of Mayan Communities of the Chenes and NGOs on illegal GM soy cultivation in the state, criticizing Monsanto for acknowledging the black market but not knowing where the seeds came from

News: Mexico's Sipse reports on legal controversy surrounding GM soy cultivation in Yucatan Peninsula, highlights Secretary of Urban Development and Environment (Seduma) and Ministry of Rural Development's (Seder) promotion of organic soy in the region

More Latin America items

Oceania

Video: Friends of the Earth Australia posts YouTube video with their campaigner, scientists speaking against federal government's proposal to deregulate gene editing, calling it attempt by GM crop industry to get around regulation, warning GMOs could enter food chain, environment, with no safety testing or labeling

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 Date: Monday, November 13, 2017 9:02:43 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology monitoring featured news of an upcoming Mexican policy decision on GM maize, reports of an anticipated strike in Ecuador in response to the country's GMO seed law, Monsanto's response to the Argentina lawsuit challenging its Intacta soybean patent and amplification of tribunal decision relieving Giorgio Fidenato of charges against his cultivation of GMOs.

- A Mexican news outlet reported a collegiate court will decide in December whether to sustain the provisional precautionary measure that prevents the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food (Sagarpa) and the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (Semarnat) from giving new permits for commercial production of GM maize in Mexico. **See more**
- A New York University science journalism news site is reporting that the Ecuador NGO Federation of Peasant Organizations of the Littoral, which has organized regular regional protests since the May government decision to allow research on GM plants, is planning a nationwide strike - possibly as soon as Dec. 20. According to the article, the seed law garnered criticism from supporters and opponents of biotechnology. **See more**
- Monsanto responded to the lawsuit filed by the Mato Grosso Soybeans and Producers Association attempting to nullify the company's Intacta RR2 soybean patent, arguing it has followed the most stringent examination rules and brings unique and beneficial technology to Brazil growers. **See more**
- On Friday, Italian news outlets reported a court in Italy's Pordenone state ordered an end to the case against Giorgio Fidenato over GM maize cultivation following an EU Court of Justice ruling. The decision prompted Fidenato to voice plans to present an "astonishing" request for damages, and the Luca Coscioni Association today used the occasion to reaffirm its appeal to Italy's agriculture minister to end the ban on Bt corn cultivation and open field trials of other green biotechnologies. **See more**
- Tomorrow morning, a coalition of U.S. NGOs will hold an event at the National Press Club to present two reports on the implications of the Bayer-Monsanto merger. Following the event, a petition of more than 1 million signatures opposing the acquisition will be delivered to the Department of Justice. **See more**

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North America

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project runs piece by popular science author Rebecca Nesbit discussing how GMO camelina could offer sustainable alternative for fish oil, highlighting work at U.K.'s Rothamsted Research to meet needs of fish farming industry using plants, noting positive results from salmon feeding trials

Commentary: Joan Conrow of Cornell Alliance for Science profiles Hawaiian papaya farmer Michael Kamiya, highlights his description of how GM technology saved his family's farm, and of his frustrations about the stigma surrounding GM technology

News: Seafood Source reports AquaBounty acknowledges it may never achieve profitability, despite moving GE salmon to market in Canada, admits incurring significant losses; company seeks to raise \$20

million from selling stock, proceeding with farm sites in Indiana, Prince Edward Island

Commentary: Strategic Trainings and Expansion's Doug Gurian-Sherman writes guest post for author M. Jahi Chappell's blog, continues series criticizing "Food Evolution" documentary, claims it ignores environmental impact of GMOs and herbicides

Commentary: Simran Sethi writes for Forbes, voices concern about Purdue study finding that consumers see organic and non-GMO labels as synonymous, points to University of Kentucky study showing non-GMO chocolate sells for more than certified fair trade

Campaign: Beyond Pesticides asks supporters to tell Department of Justice, FTC to block Monsanto-Bayer merger, claiming it would lead to increase in pesticide use, impact on environment, power of industry, strains on organic

Campaign: Just Label It asks supporters to send form letter to USDA to urge agency to create consumer-friendly GMO labeling standard, calling for clear GMO labels on packages instead of proposed rules to allow food companies to use electronic disclosures such as QR codes

Commentary: Mark Lynas of Cornell Alliance for Science criticizes Jeffrey Smith's recent "peer-reviewed" paper claiming to demonstrate that a non-GMO diet improves health conditions, amplifies geneticist Alison Van Eenennaam's critique of its methodology

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Zayaan Khan of University of the Western Cape's Food Politics and Cultures Project examines history of maize adoption in South Africa and Mexico, describes GM maize as "the height of corporate control"

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Press Trust of India reports Prime Minister Narendra Modi contributes two Indian rice seed varieties to gene bank of International Rice Research Institute in the Philippines, inaugurates "rice field laboratory" named after him at institute, takes part in groundbreaking of new plot for submergence-tolerant rice varieties

News: Filipino news source reports farmer-led NGO MASIPAG warns against PhilRice's renewed push for open field and feed tests of Golden Rice, with more than 100 farmers demonstrating in front of PRRI's gate to protest developments; farmers say they believe Syngenta, Monsanto behind new push

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Detlef Bartsch writes editorial for Journal of Consumer Protection and Food Safety, examines ways in which precautionary principle inhibits innovation, highlights debate on gene editing, blames NGOs for delay in use of beneficial technologies

Event: Inf'OGM to host event commemorating 20 years of citizen mobilization against GMOs in Montreuil (Nov. 23, 2017), speakers will include representatives from Inf'OGM, Volunteer Reapers and the Greens

Commentary: Italy's Associazione Luca Coscioni announces Pordenone Tribunal's decision to end criminal case against its member, Giorgio Fidenato, following EU Court of Justice ruling in his favor on GMOs, renews call on Minister Martina to lift ban on Bt corn

Commentary: University of Vienna's Monika Muhlbock and Heidelberg University's Jale Tosun write for London School of Economics blog, explaining their research on EU member states' failure to reach consensus on GMOs, examining comitology process

News: Armenian news source reports head of NGO charges lobbying by Monsanto prevented adoption of bill on "biosafety of GMOs," alleges government cooperated with agribusiness giant, also notes Monsanto has sold products in Armenia since 2006, but most Armenians unaware of its activities there

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Mexican news outlet reports First Collegiate Court in Civil Matters of the First Circuit will issue decision on whether or not to uphold precautionary measure prohibiting gov't from issuing new permits for commercial sowing of GM maize in Dec. 2017

News: NYU's ScienceLine reports on Ecuadorian scientists' concerns about changes to seed law, some worry lack of guidelines on use of GM technology could lead to accidental ecosystem contamination, others are frustrated that research must remain in the lab

Commentary: Paulina Rivero Weber of Mexico's Milenio amplifies recent debate on GMOs in latest issue of Gaceta UNAM, calls for continuation of the debate and evaluation of GMOs on a case-by-case basis to ensure protection of the environment

News: Brazilian news outlet reports Monsanto reaffirms validity of patent on its Intacta RR2 Pro GM soybean variety, following lawsuit brought by Mato Grosso Soybean and Mushroom Producers Association (Aprosoja), highlighting economic and environmental benefits

News: Peruvian news source reports on meeting of young farmers organized by Slow Food team to discuss sustainable food systems, topics including biotechnology and transgenic, as well as climate change and traditional technologies

Study: Study in Brazilian journal Science & Collective Health links GM crop use since 2003 to increased pesticide use, leading to possible increase in human and environmental exposures and associated negative impacts

News: Chihuahua news outlet reports on new book by beauty pageant contestant Catalina Bustillos Cãirdenas, highlights her goal of educating women about dangers of GMOs, which she began investigating after a loved one was diagnosed with cancer

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Australian news source explains dicamba controversy in U.S., emphasizes development of dicamba-tolerant crops was response to glyphosate-resistant weeds, notes "devastating effects" on non-GMO crops

News release: GE Free New Zealand announces independent scientists are calling for regulation of second generation GE techniques such as CRISPR, amplifying letter from Physicians and Scientists for Global Responsibility on unintended effects of gene editing

News: Australia's Weekly Times examines similarities between Australian and Canadian Agriculture, one difference is Canada's early adoption of GM crops, Canadian Canola Growers Association president Jack Froese highlights improved sustainability

[More Oceania items](#)

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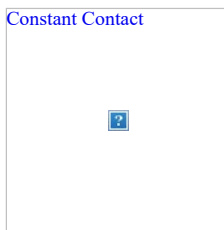
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 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - Nov. 13, 2017
 Date: Monday, November 13, 2017 4:09:26 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

After months of criticism about its assessment of glyphosate, the International Agency for Research on Cancer revealed last week that it is looking for a new leader. This week's Favorable Outcomes newsletter features David Zaruk's "wish list" for whoever replaces Christopher Wild, including the retraction of the assessment claiming glyphosate could cause cancer. The subject is also discussed in a piece by Yale neurologist Steven Novella, who explains that the IARC assessment is an outlier among all other evaluations.

There's also a closer look at Stephanie Seneff's research claiming pesticides are linked to autism, a response to the U.K.'s decision to support a ban of neonics and an appeal to participate in a comment period on U.S. biotechnology regulations.

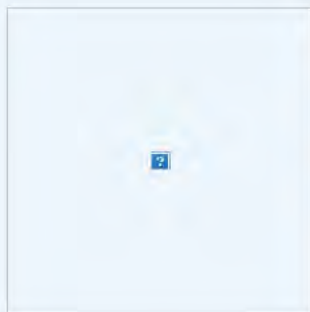
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In This Issue

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

Stakeholder Spotlight: Stephanie Seneff



Discredited researcher Stephanie Seneff, whose work includes claims that exposure to GMOs and glyphosate will cause 100 percent of the population to develop autism, is an icon whose work is heralded by organic

Stories Worth Sharing

[Hank Campbell: Even junk scientists consider Stephanie Seneff unqualified to assess pesticides and GMOs](#)

[David Zaruk: Next leader of IARC should end monograph program, retract glyphosate assessment](#)

[Vivian Fernandes: Agriculture minister's claims that touching Bt cotton causes impotency are false](#)

[Dr. Steven Novella: "Best and largest set of data" show glyphosate does not cause cancer; IARC is an outlier](#)

[Matt Ridley: U.K. decision to support neonic ban based on "threadbare" evidence, will harm insects](#)

[Kevin Folta: Canadian broadcaster spreading fake news about glyphosate based on debunked claims from Thierry Vrain](#)

[Angela Logomasini: New York Times and Washington Post descriptions of chlorpyrifos are "off-the-charts absurd"](#)

[Karl Haro von Mogel: Submit comments to influence U.S. FDA biotech policy before Friday deadline](#)

marketers and anti-GMO activists.

In the news this week, however, Seneff is **facing criticism** from inside her movement for pushing dangerous false claims.

Learn more about Seneff [HERE](#).

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Jeff Stier: Environmental and chemical policy should be based on vigorous debate, not personal attacks

Michelle Miller: Soil health expert spreading misinformation about GMOs perpetuated by the organic food industry

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What's Trending?

U.K. environment secretary announces support for EU neonic ban; Bayer questions decision as "bizarre" and anti-science

Farm groups warn about consequences of glyphosate ban as European reauthorization debate appears headed to appeal committee

MASIPAG launches new campaign against Golden Rice with demonstration in front of Philippines Rice Research Institute

Canadian universities publish study concluding that imidacloprid and chlorpyrifos consumption interferes with migration of sparrows

Calendar highlights

November 14	November 14	November 15
U.S. NGO coalition panel on impacts of agribusiness mega-mergers	U.K. House of Commons debate on bee population	USDA Biotechnology Regulatory Services annual meeting
November 16	November 16	November 17-21
French Society of Genetics CRISPR conference	EDC debate featuring Generations Futures (Chinon, France)	North American Free Trade Agreement negotiations
November 20	November 20	November 22
Royal Society of Medicine workshop: "Pesticides and food: is low dose exposure harmful?"	Chemical Heritage Foundation hosts brown bag lecture: "Atrazine in Corn Production"	India court hearing on genetically modified mustard

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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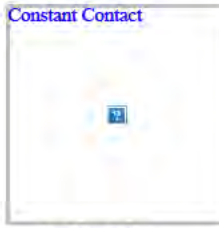
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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's monitoring featured opposition to a Philippine Rice Research Institute application to test Golden Rice, new developments in the GMO discussion in Armenia, anti-Bt cotton comments from an Indian ag minister and a new lawsuit filed by Brazilian farmers against Monsanto.

- MASIPAG issued a news release announcing its campaign against PhilRice for its renewed push to feed and field test Golden Rice. The group organized a demonstration in front of the rice research institute and called on the Department of Agriculture to deny the application for the testing. MASIPAG claims Syngenta and the biotech industry are the force behind the PhilRice initiative. [See more](#)
- The biotech discussion continues in Armenia. Today, the head of the country's State Service for Food Safety told reporters the volume of GM seeds from Monsanto that are imported into the country does not exceed 1 percent, adding he would not like to use GM seeds. Armenian Minister of Agriculture Ignaty Arakelyan also spoke with reporters, alerting them that the ministry is working with the Ministry of Nature Protection to examine the risks of GMOs and affirming the country is not currently working with Monsanto. He added that the ministry would release information as soon as the investigation concludes. [See more](#)
- According to a report from the *Indo-Asian News Service*, the agriculture minister for India's Rajasthan state told reporters covering a Udaipur agri-tech conference that the mere touch of Bt cotton causes impotency, claiming the Bt gene comes from soil bacterium found in Hiroshima and Nagasaki after atomic bombs were dropped. In addition to the criticism of Bt cotton, the minister also pledged to prevent any trials of GM mustard in his province, the biggest producer of mustard in India ([see more](#)). Ag-biotech discussion is likely to continue, if not increase, in India into next week. *The Hindu* reported Bill Gates will attend a Nov. 15-17 agriculture "hackathon" conference scheduled in Visakhapatnam, India. ([see more](#)).
- Soybean growers in Brazil's Mato Grosso state are asking a court to cancel Monsanto's Intacta patent, claiming irregularities and accusing the company of failing to prove it brings de facto technological innovation. *Reuters*, *Russia Today* and a few Brazil-based new sources are covering the suit. [See more](#)

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

North America

Report: Green America report categorizes food labels and purports to separate fact from fiction on what to know about food labels

News: Reuters Special Report claims review of regulatory records, interviews with crop scientists shows Monsanto was repeatedly warned of the dangers of releasing a dicamba-resistant seed without an accompanying herbicide designed to reduce drift; farmers explain why they used product when not legal to yet

Study: Study in PLOS ONE finds golden potatoes have potential to contribute to daily requirements of vitamin A and vitamin E for children and women of childbearing age in developing countries

News: Huffington Post reports The New York Times is launching a monthly section for kids; cover story

for first section on Nov. 19 will focus on CRISPR, the "gene editing technique that is arguably the biggest scientific discovery in a century"

News: Missouri-based ag news radio service interviews Purdue University horticulture professor who says apple industry cautiously watching how consumers react to GM Arctic Apples being released in select U.S. grocery stores, observes many growers waiting to see if product accepted in marketplace before deciding to grow GM apples

Commentary: Alliance for Natural Health - USA urges readers to write congressional members urging them to approve strict regulation on gene-edited food; notes 80 Congress members wrote regulatory agencies telling them to adopt framework that "fosters innovation" and to "remove burdens" from industry

More North America items

Africa

News: Nigerian news site reports agency advises producers to seek authorization, clarification before attempting to import GMOs; agency must approve GM food and GM seed before it is allowed into the country

News: Nigerian science news source reports ag minister endorses Bt cotton project, stakeholders preparing for eventual release of Bollgard II cotton to farmers; product undergoing last stage of field trials in Nigeria's cotton-growing zones, will be commercialized in 2018

Commentary: Member of Nigerian group, Golden Crown Farmers Co-Operative writes for local news outlet, claims pesticides and GMOs in food are poisons that lead to disease and early death, amplifies article by Jibrin Ibrahim of Center for Democracy and Development making similar claims

More Africa items

Asia

News release: MASIPAG announces mobilization in front of PhilRice offices to protest the agency's applied to field and feeding tests for Golden Rice "despite years of vehement public opposition;" says farmers believe Monsanto, Syngenta back the project, claim not enough data to show the product is safe

News: Armenian news site reports country's agriculture minister tells reporters Monsanto's activities in Armenia are being investigated, saying "we must deal with risks not only for agriculture, but overall risks"

Commentary: Indo-Asian News Service posts piece by editor of Smart Indian Agriculture saying Rajasthan's minister for agriculture told reporters "the mere touch of Bt cotton caused impotency;" minister also asserts "he would make a determined effort to ensure that no trials of GM crops took place in the state"

News: Reuters reports China taking longer to approve GM soy imports; delays could impact feed demand, notes China increased checks on imports to prevent GM soy from entering food sector

News: The Hindu Business Line promotes three-day agricultural "hackathon" to be held in Visakhapatnam, India, from Nov. 15 through 17, with Microsoft founder Bill Gates participating in valedictory function, exhibits of agricultural technologies and products, seven panel discussions on ag-related topics

More Asia items

Europe

Event: French anti-GMO group Inf'OGM promotes roundtable on GMOs in food set for Nov. 25-26 in Paris, with panelists including group's president and Gilles-Eric Seralini, part of 15th edition of Festival of Books and Ecology Press

News release: La Via Campesina responds to COP23 climate meetings, promoting agroecology, peasant farmers and their rights as a solution to climate change, criticizing corporate control of the decision-making process

Commentary: Sustainable Pulse amplifies article by Institute for Responsible Technology suggesting health of participants improved after they switched to non-GMO diet or reduced amount of GMO foods eaten, with most participants reporting improvements in digestive problems; article notes possible bias among participants and placebo effect

News: Russia Today reports growers in Brazil's Mato Grosso state have asked a court to cancel Monsanto's Intacta patent, alleging "failure to prove it brings de facto technological innovation"

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Reuters reports Mato Grosso soy growers bring suit against Monsanto, ask court to cancel Intacta RR2 because the company fails to establish technological innovation; notes farmers are leading push to replace GM soy with non-GM soy

News: Paraguayan news outlet reports on Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock's (MAG) authorization for commercial release of new GM corn and cotton varieties by Monsanto, both with pest-resistance and herbicide-tolerance

News: Brazilian news outlet reports on Landless Workers Movement's (MST) denial of participation of recent protest on farms in Correntina, in spite of signing manifesto encouraging protests, and accusation that Power360 published "fake news" about them

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News release: University of Queensland reports professor says gene editing is game-changer for food industry, points out some GE food has health benefits; notes public doesn't understand the process, but they don't object to it as much as transgenic foods

[More Oceania items](#)

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

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Subject: Food and agriculture issues resources
Date: Thursday, November 9, 2017 3:20:31 PM

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You're just a click away from a wealth of knowledge on food and agriculture issues from the Bonus Eventus network. All that's left for you to do is to set up your own personal account* and password.

Register Now

You're already receiving our weekly Favorable Outcomes newsletter featuring articles worth sharing and information on activist campaigns, regulatory developments and upcoming events.

By simply choosing a username and password, you'll be able to use the many tools included in the Bonus Eventus community, including research on noteworthy stakeholders and tracking of key media activity and activist campaigns. Highlights are noted below.

I'm ready to get started

* Your privacy is important to us. Your information is not shared or used for any purpose outside of your access to and use of the Bonus Eventus network and tools

Knowledge is Power

STAKEHOLDER DATABASE

A library of background information on key players influencing food and agriculture issues - and who's funding them

ISSUES MONITORING PORTAL

Daily tracking of current events, news coverage and activist activities on food and agriculture issues

NETWORKING

CALENDAR

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See upcoming events of note - or let the network know of an event you're planning or attending.

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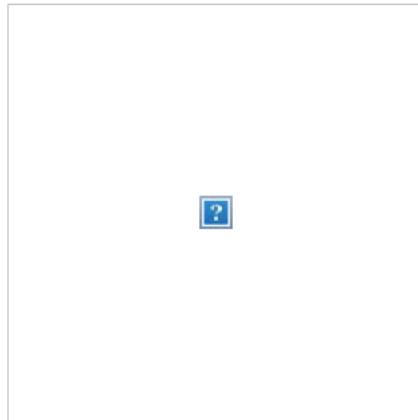
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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Nov. 8, 2017
 Date: Wednesday, November 8, 2017 9:02:48 PM

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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 biotech monitoring featured new activity in the U.S. and Canadian GM labeling debates, and continued stakeholder commentary against Monsanto and GMOs in Armenia.

- Eleven U.S. senators wrote to Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue, calling for a ban on electronic GMO labels until broadband internet access and smartphones are "near universal," and all grocery stores provide QR scanners and Wi-Fi. [See more](#)
- Quebec-based anti-biotech NGO Vigilance OGM submitted a petition signed by 20,000 citizens and 220 organizations to the Quebec government calling for mandatory GM labeling. Coalition Avenir Quebec agriculture spokesperson, Mirabel MP Sylvie D'Amours, and Quebec Solidaire spokesman Gabriel Nadeau-Dubois endorsed the petition, emphasizing the need for transparency in the food system. Vigilance OGM cited concerns about the recent introduction of GE salmon into the region. [See more](#)
- A Nov. 1 U.S. Embassy of Armenia conference on agriculture featuring presentations by Monsanto continues to drum up anti-GMO advocacy. Last week on Facebook, the Armenia-American musician Serj Tankian urged the country to "stay clear of Monsanto," warning the company's chemicals are harmful to the environment. The local March Against Monsanto chapter then sent a letter asking the prime minister and U.S. ambassador to oppose a plan allowing Monsanto to do business in the country, citing opposition to GMOs. Today, the Armenia Tree Project issued a statement urging Armenia to invoke the precautionary principle when considering permitting Monsanto and GM seeds in the country, warning they threaten biodiversity and food sovereignty. [See more](#)

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North America

Campaign: Eleven U.S. senators write to Ag Secretary Perdue, making recommendations for electronic disclosures of GM ingredients in food, they call for clear, on-package labels until broadband internet access and smartphones are "near universal"

News release: USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture announces competitive opportunity "to conduct research on the environmental effects of genetically engineered (GE) organisms, including plants, animals, insects, and microorganisms"; \$3.5 million in grants available for the research

News release: Canada's Coalition Avenir Quebec (CAQ) Agriculture spokesperson, Mirabel MP Sylvie D'Amours, reiterates support for mandatory GMO labeling, following recent petition by Vigilance OGM signed by over 20,000 Quebec citizens supporting labels

Video: The Doctors guests, including widow whose husband died allegedly from Roundup exposure and Jeffrey Smith of The Institute for Responsible Technology, discuss link between glyphosate, cancer

News: Natural News amplifies report from Independent Science News suggesting Indian researchers found genes necessary to produce Golden Rice cause unintended side effects, claim that introducing the GE DNA stunted high-yielding Indian rice variety, delayed flowering and root growth, decreased crop yields

Interview: Cornell Alliance for Science director Sarah Evanega interviews University of Southern California environmentalist Jennifer Bernstein, she argues "lifestyle environmentalism" negatively impacts women in developing nations, highlights need for access to GM crops

Interview: Acres USA interviews Johnathan Latham of Bioscience Resource Project, he describes his disillusionment with biotech, claiming most research is for patented products, criticizes ISAAA and Cornell Alliance for Science as being "malevolent organizations"

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Ghanaian news outlet reports on opposition to Plant Breeders Bill by Food Sovereignty Ghana, and by former Convention People's Party chair Samia Nkrumah, who claimed there is no scientific consensus on GMO safety, promoted organic ag

Commentary: African Agricultural Technology Foundation reports Ugandan minister of science, technology and innovation says at conference that passage of biosafety bill by parliament would help nation develop economy, improve food security; only Sudan and South Africa now growing transgenic crops among Sub-Saharan African nations

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Times of India reports farmers, farm aid groups report heavy damage from pink bollworm in Yavatmal and Amravati districts despite use of Bt cotton

News: Times of India reports on discovery of illegal cultivation of herbicide-tolerant GM soybeans in Gujarat, Kavitha Kuruganti of Coalition for GM Free India accused regulators of being caught sleeping, called for immediate action to fix the liability on them

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News release: Netherlands National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM) announces launch of public website on biotech, highlights RIVM's monitoring of opportunities for new biotech applications and aspects of health and safety

Commentary: U.K. news site amplifies Guardian claims following Brexit vote of decision to leave EU leading to policies negatively impacting environment, such as potential lifting of neonic ban, suggests Guardian concerns unwarranted, stating Brexit allows U.K. to take pro-environment stance, including approval of GM crops

Commentary: Anti-GM French NGO Inf'OGM reports on dossier of new genetic modification techniques before the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU), says CJEU expected to make decision first half of 2018

Interview: Italian news outlet interviews Polytechnic University of Marche professor Bruno Mezzetti, he explains importance of agricultural research to meet future challenges, notes all forms of ag use pesticides, describes his current biotech research projects

News: Reuters reports European Commission resumes antitrust review of Bayer's planned takeover of Monsanto after companies given time to provide more information; commission sets new deadline of March 5, 2018, to make decision on proposed deal

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: La Jornada reports UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples will meet with representatives in Mexico Nov. 8 to 17 to learn about problems affecting their communities; planting of transgenics in Yucatan among targeted issues

Commentary: Member of Brazil's Small Farmers Movement (MPA) looks at world food industry strategy "based on the triangle of organic food for the rich, transgenics and pesticides for the poor and hunger for the miserable"; concludes food sovereignty, agrarian reform and agroecology are "practical starting point for a new path of development"

News: Mexico's La Jornada reports on recent statement by leader of Mayan village of Hopelchen, Campeche, Aracely Pech, noting cultivated area of GM soy has doubled in spite of Supreme Court's prohibition, argues court-ordered consultations have not been carried out

News: Brazilian news outlet investigates research indicating that new GM sugarcane could lead to spike in cancer rates, highlights negative health effects of herbicides, includes interview with CTNBio President Edivado Domingues Velini

More Latin America items

Oceania

Commentary: Op-ed in New Zealand news site by chairwoman of GE Free Northland argues for right of regions to create enforceable GE-free zones, critiques former central government's "push for risky outdoor GE experiments and releases"

Campaign: Australian NGO MADGE urges supporters to take action to support regulating new breeding techniques as GMOs, claiming new techniques are just as hazardous and unpredictable

News: New Zealand's Farmers Weekly reports Federated Farmers drop fight against regional council's policy of precautionary approach to release of GMOs into environment after appeals court opinion says NGO would lose in court; chair of GE-Free Northland notes courts twice upheld right of regions to create enforceable GE-free zones

News: Australian newspaper reports scientists question why genetic modification unpopular with public, point out it saved Australia's cotton industry, could help make farming more sustainable, lower cost of production, also note about 40 percent of nation's canola crop GM, German study found GM crops could reduce pesticide use

More Oceania items

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Nov. 7, 2017
 Date: Tuesday, November 7, 2017 9:35:37 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 biotech monitoring featured industry and stakeholder response to the USDA withdrawal of its proposed biotech policy revisions, heavy coverage of the U.S. release of Arctic apples, NGO campaigning against illegal GM soy cultivation in India and a newly published journal article from Jeffrey Smith.

- U.S. agriculture industry groups endorsed USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue's decision to withdraw proposed revisions to regulations governing ag biotech. A statement from BIO supported the agency's course correction as an appropriate next step in considering improvements to its regulatory system. The National Association of Wheat Growers also applauded the decision, arguing regulatory requirements must be transparent and open to stakeholder engagement. Conversely, the Center for Food Safety voiced its disappointment, accusing the USDA and the Trump administration of doing the bidding for "Big Ag lobbyists." [See more](#)
- The release of Okanagan Specialty Fruits' Arctic Apple in U.S. supermarkets received noticeable attention from international news outlets. *Nature* published a feature looking back on the road leading up to the apple's release and how its sets the stage for GM products to follow. Organic Consumers Association argued the lack of clear GMO labels makes the apples hard to find, and it launched a scavenger hunt running through Dec. 1 for supporters to help locate stores selling GM apples. [See more](#)
- One of India's farmer organizations lodged a complaint with the Gujarat government and the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee claiming GM soy has been illegally cultivated in the Aravalli district. Responding, the Coalition for a GM-Free India is calling for urgent action against regulators and seed suppliers, and it claims the release of illegal GM seeds is part of biotech industry strategy. [See more](#)
- The International College of Human Nutrition and Functional Medicine today published a survey by Jeffrey Smith finding health improvements in individuals who reduced or stopped consumption of genetically modified foods. Smith tested people within the network of supporters of his NGO, the Institute for Responsible Technology, which speaks out about the health dangers of GMOs. An article in GMWatch promotes the findings but notes that as supporters of Smith, participants may have experienced improved health under the placebo effect. Smith promoted the study on the website for the Institute for Responsible Technology and alerted the NGO's email followers. He is set to appear on the television program "The Doctors" on Wednesday. [See more](#)

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

North America

Study: International College of Human Nutrition and Functional Medicine publishes survey by Jeffrey Smith finding improvements in respondents' health systems upon reduced consumption of GM foods

News release: Whole Foods Market's "Newsroom" posts news release about retailer's top 10 food trends for 2018, including more transparency in labeling, promises labels on all items in its stores will provide GMO transparency by September 2018

Campaign: Quebec anti-GMO NGO submits new petition with more than 20,000 signatures calling for mandatory labeling of GMOs by provincial government, claims petition also supported by more than 200 groups, farms and businesses that want more transparency in food system, cites approval of unlabeled

GM salmon in Canada

News release: Pipeline Foods LLC of Minneapolis, first U.S.-based supply chain solutions company focused exclusively on non-GMO and organic food and feed, announces it will open regional office in St. Louis, expand Malden Specialty Soy processing facility in southeastern Missouri

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project editor discusses USDA's announcement it's withdrawing proposed rule to revise agency's regulations of GE crops, notes biotech advocates had viewed approach as "unscientific," expressed concern it could hinder research and development of crops modified with CRISPR

Commentary: Ag Daily runs column by "Farm Babe" Michelle Miller calling for common ground in debate over ag issues, noting speaker on water quality in Iowa spreads misinformation about GMOs, warning myths about GMOs perpetuated by organic food companies, "Non-GMO" branded labels

News: AgriNews reports "Food Evolution" documentary having success in changing viewers' opinions about GMOs; filmmaker Scott Hamilton Kennedy says he has attended 25 screenings of film, with 80 percent to 90 percent of audience members indicating afterward it had eased their concerns about safety of GMOs

Commentary: Bloomberg View columnist Noah Smith examines ways of thinking about new technology, calling for good technology management to assess potential benefits and dangers, points to emerging technologies such as GE and artificial intelligence

[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: Indian news service reports Rajasthan Agriculture Minister says GM crops are not needed to increase farmers' income, adding the state government had already achieved this through innovations in traditional farming and by encouraging cash crops

News: Indian news outlet reports on Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh affiliate Bharatiya Kisan Sangh's (BKS) accusations that Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) collaborated with multinationals to secretly allow GM crops in the country

News release: Indonesia's Universitas Gadjah Mada recaps Plant Genetic Engineering workshop held to disseminate results of research, particularly genetic engineering for plant breeding using CRISPR/Cas9, with researchers saying they have produced plants with quick bloom, resistance to disease

News release: Environmental groups call on government of Davao City, Philippines to fast track declaration of Barangay Sibulan in Toril District as an organic agriculture zone free of pesticides and GMOs

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Science reports GM Arctic apples to be on U.S. grocery store shelves in November, quotes experts saying that if product succeeds with consumers, new wave of GE and lab-grown foods could follow, also quotes Center for Food Safety analyst complaining about Arctic apple's lack of GMO labeling, use of QR codes instead

News release: NGOs No - REDD Africa, NoVox Togo and GRAIN issue statement against "false solutions" to climate change being presented at COP23, they claim industrial agriculture destroys biodiversity and

exacerbates the problem, promote agroecology

News: The Telegraph, other U.K. news sources report U.S. Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross says Britain shouldn't let EU dictate terms of Brexit if it wants speedy free trade agreement with United States; Ross says there would be problems if United Kingdom retained current EU bans on chlorinated chicken, GM food

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Paraguayan news site reports Institute of Agricultural Biotechnology (Inbio) says GM corn had 49 percent greater yield compared to conventional corn in 2016/17; Inbio manager points out environmental benefits of biotech crops, helping to maintain more arable land without agricultural activity

Commentary: Op-ed by agricultural engineer in Bolivian newspaper highlights "great potential" for agricultural export products to change country's economic dependence on mining and hydrocarbons, but cautions Bolivia continues to be ambiguous on biotechnology, while encouraging "populist demagoguery of misunderstood organic agriculture"

News release: Brazil's Regional Council of Engineering and Agronomy of Goias (CREA-GO) recaps workshop held with Embrapa on "Transgenics and Integrated Pest Management," aimed at disseminating technologies of IPM and transgenic in agriculture; one speaker notes Brazil world's largest producer of transgenic crops

News: Mexican news site reports Campeche district judge issued two agreements that favor Monsanto in Yucatan GM soy court case; agreements limit number of communities consulted and time frame to complete first stage of consultations; judge's decision appealed

News: Mexican news site reports on study published last September by two universities showing 82 percent of corn products available in country's supermarkets contain GMOs, adding consumers unaware because of lack of GM labeling laws; GM labeling bill in Congress frozen and "ignored to date"

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News release: AusBiotech welcomes interim outcome of 2016 Technical Review of the Gene Technology Regulations, and its guidance for regulating new breeding technologies and gene drives, highlights its submissions regarding such regulations

Commentary: Op-ed by New Zealand Federated Farmers president says Federation "remains strongly of the view," despite withdrawing related legal appeals, that central government's Environmental Protection Agency is best placed to assess science and safety of GMOs in Northland region, adding "There is an overwhelming case for the economic, health or environmental benefits of GMOs"

News: New Zealand news site reports GE-Free Northland has successfully defended right of local authorities to manage outdoor GMOs in region following withdrawal of two legal appeals by Federated Farmers of NZ

News: Radio New Zealand reports U.S. GMO-free marketer Gary Hirshberg helping push NZ to "cash in" on growing market with unified national organic standards

[More Oceania items](#)

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 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Nov. 6, 2017
 Date: Monday, November 6, 2017 9:01:50 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 the U.S. Department of Agriculture was withdrawing proposed changes to biotechnology regulations. In Europe, the launch of a United Nations climate conference prompted activist promotion of alternative agricultural models. U.S. science communicators released a new documentary countering "fear-based" parenting messages.

- U.S. Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue announced that the agency would be withdrawing proposals for streamlining biotechnology regulations across USDA, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Food and Drug Administration. He added that the agency would "re-engage" with stakeholders and highlighted the need for flexible regulations that support innovation. **See more**
- Advocacy groups and media outlets, responding to the start of a climate change conference in Bonn, Germany, discussed the role of agriculture in climate change. The European wing of La Via Campesina issued a statement on the earlier "People's Climate Conference" and highlighted the need for peasant agroecology in meeting climate needs. Civil Eats, in launching a week of articles on the issue, highlighted author David Montgomery's recommendation for soil-regenerative agriculture. **See more**
- Science communicators announced the release of the crowdfunded "Science Moms" documentary, highlighting the importance of countering fear-based marketing targeting mothers. Writing in *Forbes*, Kavin Senapathy quoted the film's director on the effort to promote "fact-based parenting." The video is available for download at the movie's website. **See more**

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

North America

Announcement: USDA announces withdrawal of proposed rule to revise biotechnology regulations and will re-engage stakeholders to determine "science-based approach" for regulating biotechnology products; USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue called for regulations that "foster public confidence and protect American agriculture"

News: Politico reports USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue announces withdrawal of Obama-era proposal to streamline biotech reviews; Perdue calls for "efficient and transparent review process that doesn't restrict innovation"

Commentary: John J. Cahrssen and Henry I. Miller write for The Hill, pointing out flaws in FDA's approach to GE animals, criticizing unreasonable delays in approvals of GE salmon and mosquitoes

Commentary: Kavin Senapathy writes for Forbes, promoting "Science Moms" documentary, in which she is featured, highlighting goal of shifting parenting narrative away from fear on issues like GMOs and vaccines, and towards science

Commentary: Op-ed in The New York Times by Indiana University pediatrics professor says closer look at research behind food fears shows "many of our most demonized foods are actually fine for us"; cites

GMOs as perhaps best example of failing to "think critically about science"

News release: Whole Foods Market announces forecast for top food trends in 2018, including transparency, asserts labels on all products in its store will be transparent about any GMO ingredients by September 2018, also notes use of science to manipulate plant-based products, such as "bleeding" vegan burgers

Campaign: Green America's GMO Inside calls on supporters to submit comments to FDA in opposition of use of taxpayer money to fund Agricultural Biotechnology Education and Outreach Initiative, points to negative impact of GMOs on humans and environment

More North America items

Africa

Commentary: Nigerian news outlet posts commentary from NGO director describing Ag Minister Chief Audu Ogbe's recent visit to a Bt Cotton Multi-locational Field Trial (MFT) farm, where he endorsed use of safe biotech in the country, noting "there is no substitute to scientific research"

More Africa items

Asia

News release: Syngenta announces it enters binding agreement to acquire Nidera Seeds from COFCO International, with completion of transaction subject to clearance by relevant merger-control authorities

News: Vietnamese news site reports more than 34 percent of 323 samples of rice, tubers and fruits at supermarkets in Ho Chi Minh City contained GMOs; survey also shows most animal feed samples also contained GMOs

More Asia items

Europe

News release: La Via Campesina announces People's Climate Summit in Bonn, Germany; NGO calls on peasant agroecology to "feed the world and cool the planet"

Commentary: GMWatch highlights University of Nottingham report studying NGO skepticism about gene editing technology, says report refutes claims NGO opposition "emotional or dogmatic" but instead is based on skepticism of "inflated claims being made for the technology"

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project posts piece by Estonian professor of molecular plant biology about recent EU high-level conference on "Modern Biotechnologies in Agriculture," in which author warns much time was spent discussing scientifically unproven myths about GM plants and NBTs

News: Ouest-France reports 70 people demonstrate in front of Quimper police station in support of "volunteer GMO mower" who wants a trial for her part in blocking cooperative accused of incorporating GM soy from South America into manufacture of its livestock feed

Event: French groups Biocoop Mantois, Biocoopans and Attac 78 North to organize screening of investigative report "Bientôt dans vos assiettes de gré ou de force" as part of Alimenterre Festival (Nov. 30, 2017), followed by discussion with anti-GMO Volunteer Reapers

Event: Slow Food Val Nervia and Otto Luoghi to host four nights of public interest, two this month (Nov. 9 and 23) and two in January, Nov. 9 event will feature screening of documentary "OGM l'invasione transgenica"

News: French news outlet reports on release of GM non-browning Arctic apples in U.S. market, highlights developer Neal Carter's hope that the service provided by the non-browning trait will help

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Mexican news outlet reports on Mexican Institute for Competitiveness (Imco) report on advantages of planting GM corn, highlighting argument that biotech is the best alternative for boosting Mexico's corn productivity in small and large operations

News: Argentina's El Pais reports on benefits of high-tech ag techniques for the country's soybean production, highlights its beginning with Direct Sowing systems in conjunction with Roundup Ready soybeans, and new developments such as drought tolerance

News: Brazilian news outlet reports on Monsanto plant research and development global leader, John Purcell's assessment that consumers are demanding a new food experience with on distinct taste and convenience, he highlights Monsanto's efforts to reduce food waste

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

<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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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - Nov. 6, 2017
 Date: Monday, November 6, 2017 4 03:53 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

A U.S. Congressional committee last week [sent letters](#) to the International Agency for Research on Cancer and the Department of Health and Human Services to demand a response by Wednesday (Nov. 8) in its investigation into "troubling evidence of data deletion, manipulation, and potential conflicts of interest" in the agency's review of glyphosate. The controversial, frequently questioned ruling that glyphosate could cause cancer is explored in this week's newsletter by Hank Campbell, Robert Arnason and Ronald Bailey.

Other pieces focus on potential solutions to food security and malnutrition presented by various biotechnology applications, plus a critique of misleading non-GMO labeling.

To view items on this newsletter, log in on the [Bonus Eventus Community](#) page. If you still need 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: African Centre for Biodiversity



The African Center for Biodiversity (formerly the Africa Centre for Biosafety) is a coordinating point for anti-GMO U.S. and EU advocacy groups' influence in Africa.

Receiving training,

Stories Worth Sharing

[Hank Campbell: Conflicts of interest on glyphosate review could cause U.S. Congress to pull IARC funding](#)

[Lila Abassi: Study claiming link between pesticides and reduced pregnancies in women undergoing fertility treatments "unreliable"](#)

[Robert Arnason: Repetition made falsehoods that "glyphosate probably causes cancer" and neonics are "bee-killing pesticides" seem true](#)

[Ronald Bailey: Deceptive "science," conflicts of interests at play in effort to ban glyphosate](#)

[Amanda Zaluckyj: Non-GMO labeling vilifies good food while harming low-income consumers and the environment](#)

[Science 2.0: Genetically modified wheat can help fight food insecurity by boosting flour production](#)

[Ousmane Badiane and Joachim von Braun: Lessons for ending hunger in Africa](#)

[Arjen van Tunen: European opposition to gene editing will hinder innovation and development of better crops](#)

[Julie Mollins: CRISPR technology could reduce pesticide use, boost](#)

collaboration and funding from groups including Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth and the Center for Food Safety, ACB is fighting the enactment of biosafety legislation, promoting lawsuits and organizing local political opposition to GMOs and pesticides across the continent.

Learn more about ACB [HERE](#).

CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES

[nutrition and help address food security](#)

[Joan Conrow: Aflatoxin-resistant peanut solves issue that drives food waste, field trials planned in India](#)

[KNOW GMO video: Genetic engineering is most direct path to solving banana wilt in Uganda](#)

CLICK FOR BONUS EVENTUS MONITORING

What's Trending?

[Vote possible Thursday on European glyphosate renewal](#)

[Nigerian lawmakers probe import of unapproved GM maize as activist groups file lawsuit to block adoption of GM technology](#)

[Task Force on Systemic Pesticides publishes first paper in update to research vilifying neonics and fipronil](#)

[Indian state seeks investigation of whether unauthorized Bt cotton is linked to farmer deaths](#)

Calendar highlights

November 6 - December 14	November 7-8	November 7
Australia Review of the National Gene Technology Scheme - Phase 2	Josip Juraj Strossmayer University conference - "Bioethics and the Environment - Opens the CETA Gate for GMOs"	Society for Endocrinology annual general meeting
November 7	November 8-9	November 9-11
Presentation of the Findings of the Lancet Commission on Pollution and Health (Qatar)	International Conference on Genetic and Protein Engineering	Organic World Congress (New Delhi, India)
November 9-10	November 13-14	November 13
International Congress on Synthetic Biology and Genetic Engineering	World Congress on Biotechnology (Osaka, Japan)	Tyrone Hayes lecture at Brandeis University

CLICK HERE TO ACCESS FULL EVENTS CALENDAR

Stakeholder database

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

Monitoring portal

Catch up on the latest news and other developments impacting regulations on agriculture.

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Nov. 3-5, 2017
 Date: Sunday, November 5, 2017 9:01:51 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 the French High Council on Biotechnology releasing its opinion on new breeding techniques and the Swiss Federal Council announcing its new agricultural strategy. Reporting continued on the Indian state of Maharashtra's investigation into sales of illegal Bt cotton.

- The French High Council of Biotechnology recommended evaluation of gene-edited products and potential risks on a case-by-case basis. [See more](#)
- The Swiss Federal Council's new agricultural strategy addresses progress made in biotechnology. The strategy would create a framework to strengthen agricultural markets, farmers' personal responsibility and increase commercial competitiveness. A public comment period will run through January. [See more](#)
- Indian news sites reported the Maharashtra government will ask the Central Bureau of Investigation to look into whether the illegal sale of herbicide-tolerant Bt cotton seeds is connected to the pesticide poisoning deaths of farmers in the area. [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: Bloomberg reports first commercial harvest of GM Arctic golden delicious apples will be sold in 400 stores across the Midwest, Washington State University horticulturist Jim McFerson noted some regional growers worry about damage to apples' positive image

Commentary: The Western Producer runs op-ed by ag journalist warning anti-science activism puts long-term profitability of farming at risk, pointing to Europe's potential glyphosate ban and "onslaught" of public opinion against GM crops, adding public may not accept new technologies, such as gene editing

Campaign: Organic Consumers Association updates "organic transitions" initiative lobbying efforts to survive the "approaching storm" beyond farming to include transportation, health, housing and education

Commentary: Writing for Genetic Literacy Project, Farm Babe refutes anti-GMO activist claims that ag company seed policies prevent farmers from saving seeds, arguing saving seeds is expensive, time consuming and doesn't provide ROI

Commentary: University of Florida's Kevin Folta notes organic industry-funded USRTK received 2,000 pages of his emails, says he is preparing for another smear campaign on supposed "collusion" with "Big Ag"

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science promotes discovery of GM process to suppress aflatoxin-producing fungus as breakthrough that will improve health of population reliant on nut-based proteins; ICRISAT scientist says transgenics is only way to address fungus

More North America items

Africa

Commentary: Science writer notes AFSA activist group's disinformation campaign is effective in preventing South African from adopting new GM crops despite demonstrated benefits in boosting yields, resisting disease

News: Ghana news site reports CSIR director calls for immediate passage of Plant Breeders Bill, notes Parliament put bill on hold after Food Sovereignty Ghana said bill meant imminent release of GMOs into food market

News: Nigerian news site reports 17 NGOs file lawsuit to prevent GMO adoption, also requests revocation of NABDA's approval of GM crop field trials; seed company director says agribusinesses target Africa to gain bigger market slice

News: Rwanda news outlet reports ag minister, director of ag-enviro commission warn against permitting GMOs in the country, warning it could pollute food

News: Intellectual Property Watch reports Uganda Parliament passes National Biosafety Bill 2017, intended to enhance development of modern biotechnology, allows farmers and plant breeders to access GM plant materials, other tools of genetic engineering; letter from opponents warns bill would allow "unfettered" introduction of GMOs

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: The Hindu reports on recent farm sector-related talks between India and the U.S., which avoided contentious issues such as tariffs, subsidies and intellectual property rights, but USDA Under Secretary McKinney did emphasize importance of mutual respect for IPR

News: Indian news site reports herbicide-tolerant Bt cotton responsible for pesticide-related farmer deaths, notes Monsanto developed the technology; biotech group notes most of the illegal sales are spurious and do not have Bt traits, necessitating the heavy pesticide spraying; Monsanto notes it kept government apprised of black market sales of Bt cotton

News: Indian news site reports Central Institute of Cotton Research study shows unapproved, herbicide-tolerant genes found in companies' Bt cotton seed, Maharashtra calls for Central Bureau of Investigation probe

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: EU Parliament announces it passed two resolutions requesting the EU Commission to block GM corn and GM cotton imports into the EU, expresses concern regarding herbicide residues in products

Study: PLOS ONE study examines reasons behind lack of resistance development to Bt maize in Spain over past 16 years, authors attribute delay in resistance evolution to low initial adoption rates and EU policy decision to replace Event 176 with MON 810 Bt maize

Video: Int'l Seed Federation VP tells European Seed that public should weigh benefits vs risks of NBTs in policy decision-making, arguing NBTs carry no more risk than conventional techniques

Interview: Italian environmental news site questions university researcher, who says gene editing techniques are unpredictable, therefore risk assessment is impossible, and the techniques cannot solve issues such as drought

Commentary: Friends of the Earth Europe promotes new research from authors of Agrifood Atlas that suggests large agribusiness companies monopolizing global food system, posing risk to future consumer

choice, jobs, food production; report comes as European Commission considers whether to authorize Bayer-Monsanto merger

More Europe items

Latin America

Commentary: Antonio Turrent Fernández of Union of Scientists Committed to Society writes for Mexican news outlet, examines upcoming court decision on GM corn permits, notes suspending the precautionary measure would be a victory for multinational corporations.

Audio: Kevin Folta's Talking Biotech podcast, hosted by Paul Vincelli, features Bolivian biotech supporter/educator Cecilia Gonzalez, who expresses frustration at farmers' inability to compete with neighboring countries that do produce GM crops

Report: USDA Foreign Agricultural Service issues GAIN Report about Mexican federal biotechnology regulators taking custody of GE cotton fields as precautionary measure after finding events not explicitly mentioned on permits granted in Chihuahua, La Laguna

News: Mexican business news site reports tests in Mexico and Spain with GM wheat suitable for people with celiac disease "are very encouraging"; the CRISPR gene edited wheat would open "a huge door" for those affected by the disease

More Latin America items

Oceania

Commentary: Resource Management Law Association of New Zealand reports Federated Farmers has withdrawn its appeal against the right of councils to control use of GMOs in their areas, but farmers lobby stands by its position that government should regulate GMO technology, not councils

News: New Zealand news outlet reports Northland Regional Council may now include GMOs in its policy after Federated Farmers withdrew legal challenge of its jurisdiction, following amendment to Resource Management Act that reduced chance of success in court

More Oceania items

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

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 To: [Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS](#)
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Nov. 2, 2017
 Date: Thursday, November 2, 2017 9:04:19 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 an announcement from officials in India's Maharashtra district calling for a federal probe into the sale of illegal cotton varieties. Nigerian lawmakers investigated the alleged importation of unapproved varieties of GM maize.

- Maharashtra officials called for India's Central Bureau of Investigation to probe the illegal sale of herbicide-tolerant cotton varieties, targeting five seed companies whose cotton seeds carried the tolerance trait. Police in Nagpur reportedly were also investigating the companies. [See more](#)
- *News Agency of Nigeria* reported that the country's House of Representatives questioned National Biosafety Management Agency representatives over Olam Group's alleged importation of 70,000 tons of unapproved GM maize. In the meeting of an ad hoc food investigatory committee, legislators asked the agency for list of companies importing GMOs. [See more](#)
- A Filipino news outlet reported that Australian researchers with Queensland University of Technology were planning to launch field trials of a wilt-resistant banana. Researchers highlighted the success of Australian trials and emphasized the need for technological intervention to prevent the disease's spread. [See more](#)

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North America

News: Politico reports USDA funding undercuts agricultural research projects, says U.S. lacks commitment to ag research for food safety, nutrition

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science profiles young female farmer from Zimbabwe who promotes biofortification to help tackle country's problems with micronutrient deficiencies, including vitamin A deficiency, sells her own brand of nutritious whole grains, says she's encouraged by development of new technologies

Commentary: Scientific American's Annie Sneed recounts her personal experience with a CRISPR DIY kit as part of investigation of debate over potential dangers of the technology, highlights her visits to an amateur and a professional CRISPR lab

Commentary: Organic Consumers Association says mayors of 100 Filipino cities at Regeneration International sign on to League of Organic Agriculture Municipalities and Cities to rid cities of GMOs, pesticides

Commentary: Independent Science News examines Cornell Alliance for Science's announcement that it has received renewed contribution of \$6.4 million from Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, amplifies claims that the Alliance is a biotech "propaganda machine"

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News release: ISAAA Crop Biotech Update recaps workshop held in Kenya to prepare Ag Ministry officials for introduction of Bt cotton, aimed at developing capacity for effective management of GM crop; KALRO researcher says trials for Bollgard I and II cotton varieties completed successfully 10 years ago

Report: Malabo Montpellier Panel issues report, "Nourished: How Africa Can Build a Future Free from Hunger and Malnutrition," that asserts African countries have started to reverse trends in hunger, malnutrition, notes panel aims to enhance use of evidence to support dialogue, guide policy choices by African governments

Commentary: IFPRI posts blog co-written by its Africa director discussing how Africa can end hunger and malnutrition, promoting work of Malabo Montpellier Panel to provide African leaders space to discuss what works, pointing out African countries that have reduced malnutrition and hunger use long-term nutrition action plans

News: News Agency of Nigeria reports House of Representatives questions National Biosafety Management Agency over Olam Group's alleged importation of 70,000 tons of unapproved GM maize, asking the agency for list of companies importing GMOs

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Press Trust of India reports on Crop Care Federation of India's criticism of Maharashtra government special investigation team investigations of Yavatmal farmer deaths, arguing they narrowly focus on pesticides, fail to cover all possible etiological factors

News release: ISAAA Crop Biotech Update recaps public briefing on latest biosafety regulatory guidelines in the Philippines presented to key stakeholders, with experts also discussing science, food and environmental safety, current and upcoming products of crop biotech in country

Interview: India's The Wire interviews Bioersity International Asia Pacific regional head N.K. Krishna Kumar, Kumar highlights goal of preserving agricultural biodiversity with seed banks and encouraging farmers to grow crops suited to their region

News: India business news site reports Maharashtra govt urges Central Bureau of Investigation probe into incident of farmer deaths due to pesticide poisoning in Yavatmal district after cotton research report finds herbicide tolerant genes found in seeds of five branded companies, which is not permissible under Environment Protection Act 1986

News: Times of India reports Vidarbha govt decides against giving our licenses to Bt seeds, pesticides sold in Maharashtra under different brand names (i.e., co-marketing), state ag officials says this practice makes it difficult to take legal action against companies

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Delft University of Technology Science Communication master's student Kimberly Barentsen describes her hopes and frustrations in seeking to use biotech to improve sustainability and restore coral reefs, committing to fight perception that GE is unethical

Commentary: Biodiversity International official recaps G7's work under Italian Presidency, what outcomes mean for mainstreaming agricultural biodiversity, highlights NGO's "Seeds for Needs" initiative implemented in 14 countries to help farmers access wider range of crop varieties

News: Belgian news site reports federal government to organize public inquiry into Flemish Institute of Biotechnology's GM maize field trial

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Global Justice Ecology Project promotes Nov. 21 ceremony for members of Brazil's Landless Worker's Movement (MST) to be awarded Juliana Santilli prize for conservation, sustainable use of agro-biodiversity, notes proposal to expand paper and cellulose factory in Brazil seeks to use transgenic eucalyptus

News: Nicaraguan news outlet reports on recent meeting of producers' groups in Estelí to speak out against introduction of GMOs, highlighting damage to grain production and impact on land and health, National Council of Cooperatives plans to make national pronouncement

News: Brazilian news outlet reports on translation of Gregor Mendel's article on transmission of characteristics between generations into Portuguese for the first time, released by Embrapa, the book also includes information on new biotech developments such as CRISPR

News: Brazilian news outlet reports on GMO labeling debate at recent public Federal Chamber hearing, Marijane Lisboa of Brazilian Institute of Consumer Protection (Idec) argued it misleads consumers to not provide information about what they are buying

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Radio New Zealand reports Federated Farmers withdrew lawsuit appeal that opposed Northland Regional Council's control of GE crops

[More Oceania items](#)

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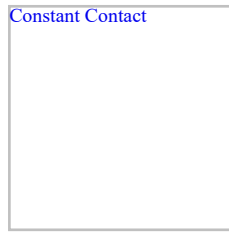
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 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Nov. 1, 2017
 Date: Wednesday, November 1, 2017 9:04:15 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology developments included news that Australian trade organization Federated Farmers had dropped an appeal to stop regional GM cultivation bans. Reports on a U.S. Chamber of Commerce meeting highlighted agricultural industry concerns over the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) talks. A Brazilian Senate committee held a discussion on the role of GM crops in the country.

- *The New Zealand Herald* reported that Federated Farmers dropped its appeal protesting regional GM crop cultivation bans in Whangarei and Northland. A spokesperson said the decision came in response to changes in the Resource Management Act, which would make it unlikely that the group would succeed in its appeal. The Soil & Health Association and GE-Free Northland issued statements applauding the "victory" for district constituents and the environment. **See more**
- U.S. agricultural trade groups highlighted the importance of NAFTA for food producers during a Chamber of Commerce event on the trade deal. U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts (R-Kansas) called on business leaders to "educate" legislators and consumers about how the country has benefited from the deal. The National Association of Wheat Growers noted that farmers already face economic difficulties and rely on open markets with Mexico and Canada. **See more**
- Brazil's Commission for the Environment and Sustainable Development held a hearing to review the social and environmental impacts of GM crop cultivation in the country. Landless movement representatives, academics and the regulatory body CTNBio participated in the debate. **See more**

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North America

News release: U.S. Senate Ag Committee Chairman Pat Roberts called on U.S. Chamber of Commerce to help set record straight on benefits of NAFTA for U.S. agriculture, noting fight against pervasive view that NAFTA does not benefit U.S. economy

News: Ag Daily reports Midwest becoming hub for agricultural technology development, noting Monsanto and Donald Danforth Plant Science Center in St. Louis, state universities in Missouri, Illinois, biotech companies opening facilities in region

News: Utah Public Radio talks to Scott Hamilton Kennedy, director of "Food Evolution" documentary, who says he worked with Institute of Food Technologists to give public fact-based dialogue about GMOs in U.S. food system; Kennedy notes IFT doesn't represent industry, many of its members work for organic and natural food companies

News release: Donald Danforth Plant Science Center announces scientists develop groundnut resistant to poisonous carcinogen aflatoxin, major risk to human and animal health worldwide, by suppressing aflatoxin-producing fungus in groundnut; collaborators plan field trials in India in upcoming years for further development

Commentary: Beyond Pesticides amplifies UC San Diego study demonstrating significant increase in human glyphosate exposure over past 23 years, links its use on GE crops to negative environmental effects as well as health problems, promotes organic ag

More North America items

Africa

Commentary: Julie Mollins of International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) writes for Thomson Reuters Foundation, recounts recent Borlaug Dialogue conference in Iowa where panelists discussed benefits of CRISPR-Cas9 for smallholders

Video: Video by 2015 Cornell Alliance for Science Global Leadership Fellow and Open Forum on African Biotechnology (OFAB) coordinator for Tanzania, Philbert Nyinondi, shows farmers from various regions voicing concerns and calling for access to GM seeds

Video: KNOW GMO VLOG features Ugandan researcher Jerome Kubiriba in discussion about using biotech to develop bacterial wilt-resistant banana varieties, he notes resistance is not possible via conventional breeding, and that the GM banana is still a banana

More Africa items

Asia

News: Xinhua reports remarks by participants during session of ITPGRFA Governing Body in Rwanda, with experts calling development of drought-, disease-resistant crops vital to counter effects of climate change on Africa's food security; climate-resilient crops needed for drought-affected regions

News: Pakistani news outlet reports on gov't approval for cultivation of Monsanto high-yielding GM corn seed variety, Monsanto Pakistan's Aamir Mirza noted it is insect-resistant and herbicide-tolerant to boost productivity, reduce costs and improve grain quality

News: Pakistan's The Nation reports GM maize seed to be available in Punjab in 2018, Punjab Seed Corporation in final process to approve technology; GM maize seed not currently available in Pakistan

Commentary: Vietnamese news source runs article by director of Institute of Applied Medicine of Vietnam pointing out why GM plants needed, illustrating how science doesn't back up claims that GMOs hurt human health, explaining country's regulations on GM food

More Asia items

Europe

News: Ukrainian news source reports government considering bill to require labeling of food, feed and veterinary products containing at least 0.9 percent GMO ingredients, would bring Ukraine's law on GMO labeling in line with European Parliament and Council of EU

News: Zurich-based news outlet reports on recent "Sowing the Future!" campaign event in Feldbach, where about 50 people gathered to sow organic wheat as part of GM-free ag campaign launched by organic grain breeder Peter Kunz 10 years ago

Commentary: Germany's Heinrich Boell Foundation examines how Monsanto, other agribusiness companies positioning themselves to market crops produced through genome editing without having to call them GM, warning biotech firms could use distinction to get around precautionary principle, public and political opposition

News: Spanish news outlet reports on Valencian Institute of Agrarian Research's work to combat citrus greening, highlights University of Alicante researcher Francisco Mojica's work on potential biotech solutions such as CRISPR

More Europe items

Latin America

News release: Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation reports economic situation of transgenics discussed at public hearing of Environment Committee in Chamber of Deputies, with company researcher asserting necessity of demystifying genetic engineering, pointing out country is second-largest producer of transgenic crops

News release: Brazilian Chamber of Deputies reports researcher from state-owned Agricultural Research Corporation says at public hearing transgenics can help crops adapt to climate change, drought, used successfully around world, but speaker from Permanent Campaign Against Agrochemicals and for Life calls technology risky

Commentary: News site for Brazil's Worker's Party (PT) highlights Deputy Nilto Tatto's recent statement at Commission for the Environment and Sustainable Development (CMADS) hearing, arguing that GM crops have increased production costs for small and medium producers

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Campaign: Friends of the Earth Australia provides email template to contact Assistant Minister for Health, David Gillespie, asking him to intervene to ensure products of new breeding techniques are regulated as GMOs, following Office of the Gene Technology Regulator's proposed deregulation

Campaign: Friends of the Earth Australia calls on supporters to take action in opposition to Office of the Gene Technology Regulator's (OGTR) proposal to deregulate new breeding techniques such as CRISPR, pointing to unintended effects

News: Australian news outlet reports on Office of the Gene Technology Regulator's recommendation that products developed using site-directed nucleases should not be defined as GM, speeding up the commercialization process

News release: New Zealand's GE-Free Northland celebrates victory as Federated Farmers decides to withdraw two appeals on ruling allowing regional councils to restrict GMOs, calls for Federated Farmers to withdraw its other outstanding "vexatious" appeals

News: New Zealand Herald reports on Federated Farmers' decision to drop appeal against High Court ruling allowing regional councils to ban GMOs in their areas, although they still maintain position that GMOs should be regulated by federal government

[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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