

From: Jay Byrne
 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - May 31, 2017
 Date: Wednesday, May 31, 2017 9:04:30 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology monitoring included continued commentary and lobbying on GM mustard commercialization in India. There was ongoing commentary on the study in *Nature Methods* that found CRISPR gene editing causes unintended mutations.

- The Indian Council on Medical Research told a parliamentary panel investigating GM mustard that GM crops are "generally safe" but should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The Beej Bachao agriculture group worried the crop would ruin the Himalayan ecology, and South Asia Biotechnology Centre President CD Mayee argued the domestically produced crop would reduce dependence on foreign food. **See more.**
- A Newsweek report quoted CRISPR co-discoverer Jennifer Doudna as saying she doesn't believe conclusions can be drawn from the CRISPR study featured in *Nature Methods* because it used the method much differently than the way in which the vast majority of labs apply CRISPR. However, the article indicated there still are ethical questions surrounding the method and noted the study likely will mean the method will be tightly regulated in the future. **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, criticizing Non-GMO Project's tactics, debunks their claim that there is no scientific consensus on GMO safety, voices disappointment that citrus producers are seeking verification, noting GE technology may be the only way to solve the citrus greening issue plaguing the citrus sector](#)

Commentary: [SciDev.Net regional coordinator Ranjit Devraj says while India's GEAC has approved genetically modified mustard for commercial cultivation, death of nation's environment minister "could stymie the push for the GM crop"; notes leaders are under pressure to ban technology over biosafety concerns](#)

Commentary: [Genetic Literacy Project profiles Union of Concerned Scientists \(UCS\) and its aggressive promotion of agroecology and organic agriculture; group criticized for unscientific views on GM crops, including claims on safety and crop yields; UCS also faulted for partnership with Just Label It](#)

Commentary: [Organic Consumers Association's Ronnie Cummins promotes OCA's Regenerate campaign, argues that rebuilding soil health and avoiding use of GMOs and pesticides can help mitigate climate change, improve public health, and end war and conflict](#)

Commentary: [Contributor to Future Earth publication Anthropocene examines University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign researchers' work on development of GM soybean varieties designed to thrive in high-stress conditions, explains the breeding process, notes it is just one tool for meeting future food needs](#)

Commentary: [Kevin Folta urges science community to abandon use of the term "GMO," explaining many](#)

reasons why it is inadequate, and noting it is mostly used by anti-GMO movements seeking to disparage the technology, provides several suggestions for preferred technology nomenclature, such as "genetic engineering" and "gene editing"

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: ISAAA reports Kenyan delegation praises Malawi's Bt cotton field trials during study tour organized by ISAAA; NEMA chair says he would support Bt cotton use in Kenya

News: Reporting on World Bank open day, Ugandan news source says National Agricultural Research Organization official urged passage of country's biosafety bill to protect Ugandans from biotech products coming in from neighboring nations

Commentary: The Huffington Post South Africa publishes piece by agricultural economist who says while country's maize industry has rebounded, it faces stiff export competition in part because 85 percent of South Africa's maize is genetically modified, possibly restricting penetration into African markets

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Indonesian catering association chairman says government should adopt GM technology to achieve self-sufficiency in food, benefit farmers

News: Vietnam Investment Review reports Vietnamese farmers are getting rich by raising herbicide, insect resistant corn

News: Indo-Asian News Service reports Central Institute for Cotton Research study finds farmer ignorance and non-compliance of refuge planting guidelines led to pink bollworm resistance in Bt cotton; poor germination by refuge seeds also cited

Commentary: Malaysian Biotechnology Information Centre Executive Director Mahaletchumy Arujanan writes for Inter Press Service, criticizing fake news reports on GMOs by economist Jomo Kwame Sundaram and co-author Tan Zhai Gen, dispels claims about negative impact of GMOs and glyphosate, notes 18 million farmers would not choose GMOs if there were no benefits

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: French news site reports anti-GMO groups spill 250 kg of GM soybeans on roadway in front of soy event sponsored by Bayer

News: Tech Times reports researchers plan to release GMO diamondback moths designed to perish before reproduction to prevent destruction of cruciferous crops like broccoli and cabbage; despite criticism, including USDA saying it does not believe method will work, British biotech firm Oxitec thinks the next-gen reproductive female moths' numbers would be lowered, reducing their overall population

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Bolivian Institute of Foreign Trade general manager says activists mislead people to believe organic food is healthier, doesn't use chemicals, and demonize other types of food, claiming they harm health

News: Mexican news site reports Monsanto says it has not planted or marketed GM seeds in Campeche or Yucatan; notes it only sells seeds to producers

News: Ecuadoran news site reports Assembly to discuss objection to seed law draft that would allow GM seeds in country for research purposes, notes Constitution declares Ecuador as being "free of transgenics"

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: News site on potato industry reports Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) called for submissions on application to permit a number of GM potato lines to reduce bruising and blight; FSANZ conducted safety assessment on application, comparing GM with non-GM potatoes, and found no public health or safety issues

News: Australian news site reports senator criticizes Greenpeace for opposing Golden Rice, vandalizing GM crops, Luddite outlook on biotech; also says PETA must be stopped before it destroys livestock industry

[More Oceania items](#)

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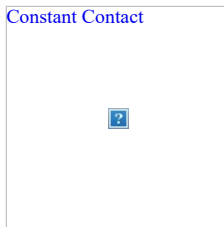
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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - May 29-30, 2017
 Date: Tuesday, May 30, 2017 9:01:42 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Global biotechnology monitoring so far this week featured developments related to U.S. regulation of genetically modified moths and gene editing, a bid to revive a GMO moratorium in Western Australia and ongoing advocacy surrounding GM mustard in India.

- *The Associated Press* reports Cornell University researchers are anticipating USDA approval of open-air tests of its GE moths designed to die before they can reproduce. Trials are expected to begin this summer. The development is receiving push back from the Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York, which voiced concerns about safety and impact on organic certification. [See more](#)
- *Nature Methods* published a study by Columbia University researchers finding CRISPR-Cas9 can introduce unintended mutations into the genome. Science media and blog amplification of the research claims the results draw into question a technology recently touted for its precision. [See more](#) NGO campaigning on U.S. Food and Drug Administration regulation of gene-edited plants and animals also picked up in advance of the June 19 comment period deadline. Center for Food Safety issued an action alert asking supporters to submit comments urging the agency to classify the foods as GMOs. The alert was amplified by Global Justice Ecology Project. Natural News also ran a piece on the comment period. [See more](#)
- The Australian NGO FOODwatch is calling for support of a recent motion by Western Australia Green Party member Diane Evers seeking reinstatement of the Genetically Modified Crops Free Areas Act 2003, which would bring back the state's GM moratorium. [See more](#)
- Amid ongoing debate over the potential for India to permit commercialization of GM mustard, several publications ran an op-ed by Vandana Shiva arguing that "India as a democratic, sovereign country dies" if the crop is approved. [See more](#)

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North America

Review: Albert Einstein College of Medicine's Geoffrey Kabat writes in EMBO Reports claiming scientists need to stop pretending there is scientific consensus on controversial issues like EDCs, GMOs, pesticides to overcome public distrust in science

Commentary: Natural News reports on FDA decision to extend public comment period on its draft revised guidance on regulation of products of plant gene editing intended for use in human and animal food, as well as draft guidance on GE animals, the two comment periods will now close on June 19

Letter to the editor: Researchers from Columbia University, Stanford and University of Iowa submit letter to Nature Methods journal voicing concern about researchers using CRISPR-Cas9 to check for off-target mutations, claiming more work may be needed to increase the fidelity of CRISPR before it can be used without risk

News release: Columbia University professor who co-authored study in Nature Methods worries researchers using CRISPR-Cas9 gene-editing technology and not using whole genome sequencing to

find off-target effects may be missing potentially important mutations

Commentary: Pro-GMO chemist James Cooper explains why Organic Consumers Association is the "worst organization in the world," debunks their claims about health and environmental effects of GMOs, as well as claims that neonics are responsible for bee declines, criticizes GMO labeling campaigns as promoting fear

News: Climate News Network reports on University of Illinois researchers' development of GM sugarcane capable of producing high levels of oil for use in biofuels without sacrificing sugar content, as well as GM soy varieties capable of surviving climate change related stressors

More North America items

Africa

News: Ugandan news source reports Ugandan journalists recognized for excellent biotechnology and biosafety reporting; Director of Crop Resources says journalists play important role guiding policy makers regulating biosciences, and are critical in informing debate that will turn National Biotechnology and Biosafety Bill into law

Commentary: Ugandan news source contributor amplifies University of Bonn study finding hunger will worsen as maize, wheat, rice, soybean production drop due to climate change; warns projection should be worrying for Uganda, other sub-Saharan countries already experiencing serious food crises; recommends improved farming changes including GM crops

Study: Economics of Disasters and Climate Change journal publishes study by German, Nigerian, Ethiopian researchers finding climate change will significantly impact global food supply by 2050, advocates mitigation and adaptation technologies to support global food production

News: Bloomberg reports on extremes in African corn harvest this year, as Southern African corn silos are overflowing while Eastern Africa faces food crisis, South Africa-based analyst Jacques Pienaar of Commodity Insight Africa notes GM grain restriction is one factor hindering trade, South African imports to Kenya are unlikely due to GMO ban

News: Ugandan news site reports farmers optimistic GM cassava engineered to resist Cassava Brown Streak Virus will help save the crop which can suffer up to 100 percent loss from the disease; adds protecting cassava with pesticides usually ineffective, rarely economic

More Africa items

Asia

News: The Tribune reports India's government "faces uphill task" amid ongoing resistance to GMO mustard; notes that apart from activist opposition, top BJP leaders are calling for extra caution "given the health and environmental issues involved"

Report: ICAR-Central Institute for Cotton Research scientists submit correspondence to Current Science, explaining findings that non-Bt seeds provided by Indian seed companies are ineffective as refuge due to non-compliance, authors call for development of proper testing methods to ensure compliance and monitoring of regulatory guidelines regarding GM crops

Report: Abstract submitted to Current Science summarizes research on whether Bt seeds provided by Indian seed companies are suitable as refuge for Bt cotton, authors discovered high levels of non-compliance, including presence of Bt seeds in refuge seed packets, which they note undermines efficacy of refuge areas

News: Vietnamese news outlet reports on recent meeting between U.K.-based Tropic Biosciences and local researchers to discuss potential use of gene editing to produce disease-resistant banana and coffee crops, Truong Hong of Western Highlands Agro-forestry Scientific and Technical Institute (WASI) voiced willingness to explore alternatives via collaborative research

Commentary: Vandana Shiva writes op-ed for Deccan Chronicle, believes approval of GM mustard will lead to death of India as a democratic, sovereign country, claims GM mustard is unnecessary as it does not have yield advantage over non-GM varieties, and that it will force farmers into debt

Commentary: Philippine news source editorial amplifies ISAAA report touting economic benefits of biotech crops, highlights earnings from Bt corn, notes other biotech crops in pipeline, including Golden Rice, cotton, papaya, eggplant

Commentary: Indian business news outlet contributor examines controversy surrounding GM mustard, highlighting activist claims about safety, lack of yield advantage, and Bayer's stake in one of the traits, believes that as the government continues to be secretive, a clear resolution of the dispute seems unlikely

More Asia items

Europe

News: Slovakian news agency reports illegal GM petunias found within Slovakia, cites no environmental risk but government looking into cause of importation

News: Vogue magazine's Portugal edition amplifies study by Cotton Inc. claiming it takes more than twice as much water to create T-shirt from organic cotton versus GM cotton, along with more electricity and carbon dioxide emissions due to larger land mass to get similar yield

Commentary: Italian human rights-focused publication amplifies multiple campaigns against Monsanto, focuses on health issues from glyphosate, decision from NGO tribunal and its "abuse" of farmers in developing countries

News: Swiss news outlet reports Federal Office for Agriculture (FOAG) informs head of the JardinSuisse branch of decision that thousands of GM petunias discovered to be on the market must be destroyed, noting they do not pose risks to humans or the environment, Othmar Ziswiler of JardinSuisse notes the orange petunias were not a best-seller

Commentary: Anti-GMO NGO Inf'OGM amplifies French government's adoption of Nagoya Protocol specifying rules for access to genetic resources and traditional knowledge

News release: No patents on seed! alliance welcomes European Patent Office's (EPO) planned strengthening of existing prohibitions on patents on plants and animals from conventional breeding, but identifies several loopholes, calls for improvements

More Europe items

Latin America

Commentary: Friends of the Earth radio station in Uruguay upset at government for releasing three new GM maize varieties, claims increased use of dicamba herbicide destroys environment, activist groups started petition opposing GM crops

Interview: Mexican news outlet shares AgroBIO CEO's opinion that biotechnology could help Mexico's agricultural needs given changing climate, uses success and profitability of GM cotton as proof GM corn can succeed

Commentary: Brazilian news outlet contributor reports on model Gisele Bündchen's recent Tweet sharing Brazilian Institute of Consumer Protection's (Idec) petition against proposal to end GMO labeling, claims GMOs are harmful to the environment and put health of farmers and consumers at risk

Commentary: Yucatan news outlet contributor summarizes ongoing struggle to maintain the region as

GMO-free, claims GM soybeans and glyphosate damage the environment and threaten bee populations, highlights IARC's review of glyphosate's carcinogenicity, emphasizes importance of consultation process on transgenic soy

Commentary: Brazilian nutritionist writes for local news outlet, advising readers to look out for foods labeled as transgenic, claims GMOs and their associated pesticides are harmful to human health and damaging to the environment

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Commentary: Western Australian anti-GM group amplifies parliamentary motion to reinstate the GM Crops Free Areas Act 2003, group asks members to contact MPs to show support for GM-Free WA

Announcement: Western Australia Parliament announces motion seeking reinstatement of Genetically Modified Crops Free Areas Act 2003 after government spoke vigorously against the Genetically Modified Crops Free Areas Repeal Bill 2015

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - May 30, 2017
 Date: Tuesday, May 30, 2017 3:19 58 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

A shipment of 36 million pounds of soybeans arrived in California in December labeled as organic. Except the beans weren't actually organic, as an investigation by [The Washington Post revealed](#). The issue is explored in this week's Favorable Outcomes newsletter as Julie Kelly writes for *National Review* on the questions raised about organic labeling. In another piece, a Colorado weekly deems it "Big Organic Behaving Badly" and calls the actions "much worse than Monsanto," a frequent target of organic industry claims.

Other articles offer support for the commercialization of GM mustard in India, outline "substantial flaws" in highly publicized claims that endocrine-disrupting chemicals result in billions of dollars in health-care costs and examine newly released statistics showing bee colony survival rates improved in the United States last year.

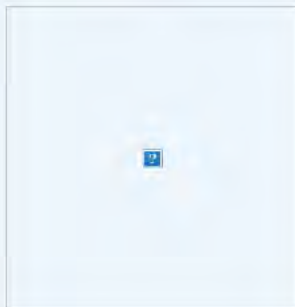
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[Calendar highlights](#)

Stakeholder Spotlight: David Bronner



David Bronner is leading donor and key facilitator of aggressive anti-GMO advocacy.

Stories Worth Sharing

[Julie Kelly: Washington Post investigation spurs new questions about authenticity of organic labels - and the practices behind them](#)

[Vivian Fernandes: Modi government should approve GM mustard, allow farmers to decide whether to plant it](#)

[Alex Berezow: Real scientists don't trust Environmental Working Group due to its "half-truths and complete fabrications" about chemicals](#)

[U.S., German researchers find "substantial flaws" in recent studies estimating high health cost from endocrine-disrupting chemicals](#)

[Kenyan columnist: Those who think 40 million Kenyans will be fed by organic farming are "daydreaming," GM technology needed](#)

[William Dar: Criticisms of GM crops are "all unfounded," science and technology key to increasing crop production](#)

[Southwest Farm Press: Improved U.S. bee colony survival encouraging, but more work to be done](#)

[Hidde Boersma: I used to think Greenpeace was great but now I know](#)

Bronner is president of Dr. Bronner's Magic Soaps - a leading organic and natural product company with estimated annual sales of US\$100 million. Bronner's campaigns have included launching the "Fishy Fleet," and he is a leading donor to Food & Water Watch and U.S. Right to Know.

Learn more about David Bronner [HERE](#).

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the science

Paul Danish: Buyers should beware organic and GMO-free labels after Washington Post findings about Aurora Dairy [?](#)

Hank Campbell: Kremlin manipulating U.S. Right to Know's Gary Ruskin, other environmentalists [?](#)

Shivendra Bajaj: GM crops offer potential solution to "improve water use efficiency and battle climate change" [?](#)

Mary-Dell Chilton: Development of first transgenic plant "paved the way" for today's advanced crop improvement technologies [?](#)

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What's Trending?

South Asia Biotechnology Center petition seeks approval of GM mustard in India as Vandana Shiva, other activists try to block it

European Commission again delays vote on proposed EDC criteria; could be rescheduled for mid-June

U.S. bee colony loss survey shows improved survival rates, best winter loss rate in survey's history

More than 200 experts ask next World Health Organization director-general to address factory farms, antibiotic resistance

U.S. House passes Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act that would allow pesticide usage near navigable waterways

Calendar highlights

May 30	June 1-2	June 4-8
EU EDC criteria vote	Sustainable Foods Summit in Amsterdam	14th International Symposium on the Biosafety of Genetically Modified Organisms (Guadalajara, Mexico)
June 5	June 6-7	June 6-13
United Nations World Environment Day	AgChem Summit 2017: Regulations for Biologicals	International Agency for Research on Cancer monograph meeting

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 - May 26-28, 2017
 Date: Sunday, May 28, 2017 11:56:44 PM

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Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Weekend monitoring featured GMO-related response to President Donald Trump's fiscal year 2018 budget proposal, new discussion of the U.S. GMO labeling rule and an announced Swiss Federal Assembly meeting on GMO policy.

- The American Society of Plant Biologists' response to Trump's proposed budget voiced concern about proposed cuts to USDA's intramural research program as well as other ag research programs, emphasizing the importance of plant science research for the economy. [See more](#)
- Multiple media reports suggested industry efforts to time the Nutrition Facts update with GMO labeling requirements may be part of FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb's decision to have the agency reevaluate the Nutrition Facts timeline. Meanwhile, *Food Navigator's* coverage of the recent American Conference Institute food law and regulation forum featured comments from USDA's Andrea Huberty noting the agency is aware of concerns that products of gene editing may be exempt from the new GMO labeling law and emphasizing that USDA is not planning to define "non-GMO" and natural claims. [See more](#)
- A Swiss news site reported the Federal Assembly is set to review GMO policy early next week, which may include finalizing a new four-year extension to the moratorium banning the use of GMOs in agriculture. [See more](#)

Due to the Memorial Day holiday, your next Global Biotech Snapshot will be sent on Tuesday, May. 30. Please check the monitoring portal for updates in the meantime.

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North America

News: Canadian science news outlet investigates rumors circulating online about widespread presence of GMOs in Quebec grocery stores, Thibault Rehn of NGO Vigilance OGM clears up misconceptions about GM soy in tofu, concludes that there are currently no GM fresh foods for sale in Quebec, and that genetic content in most processed foods is undetectable

News release: USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) today announces 54 grants totaling more than \$17.7 million for plant research, with goal of optimizing crop production, mitigating disease, and increasing yield, funding is made possible through NIFA's Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) program

News: Canadian farming news outlet reports on University of Alberta dean of agriculture Stan Blade's optimism that bananas will survive in some form or another, highlights his research developing varieties that are resistant to bacterial wilt

Commentary: "Science Moms" documentary director Natalie Newell writes for Genetic Literacy Project, recounts her email exchange with Blue Apron as she questioned the meal delivery service's non-GMO food policy, discredits Blue Apron's assertion that the long-term health and environmental impacts of GMOs are undetermined

News: Canadian ag news outlet reports on reactions to Bayer's announcement that it will sell its Liberty

product line to assuage antitrust concerns, Janice Tranberg of Saskatchewan Canola Development Commission voiced relief, as Bayer would have owned 95 percent of canola traits, but independent dealers worry about disruption of access

Commentary: Middle school teacher and science blogger Stephan Neidenbach writes in Medium that Consumer Reports deceives consumers by calling non-GMO labels "highly meaningful"; cites FDA position and disputes claims Non-GMO Project and Consumer Reports are free from conflict of interest

Commentary: GMO Pundit blog posts abstract from Journal of Medical Ethics by post doctoral fellow at Columbia University on how vaccine controversies provide lessons "to strike a balance with CRISPR"; says history of vaccines "serves as a pertinent example of what could go wrong if a technology's reach is shortened due to inflated fear"

Audio: Kevin Folta's Talking Biotech podcast examines history of GE in crops, featuring Dr. Maurice Moloney in discussion of his work at Calgene and with early issues in transgenic crops, as well as future outlook for the science

More North America items

Africa

News: Nigerian environmental news outlet reports on recent meeting with Minister of State, Environment, Ibrahim Usman Jibril, where anti-GMO activists demanded increased funding for research in home-grown technology, Nnimmo Bassey of Health of Mother Earth Foundation points to Burkina Faso's rejection of Bt cotton as an example

News: Ugandan news outlet reports on joint showcase for journalists organized by National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO) and National Crops Resources Research Institute (NaCRRI), where Dr. Titus Alicai explained current research in GM disease-resistant cassava varieties, as well as conservation research

More Africa items

Asia

Commentary: Op-ed on Indian news site by freelance journalist/social activist warns of threat from GM mustard, claims GM crops resisted around world because of "widely acknowledged health and safety hazards"

Commentary: Dr. Truong Hong Son of Institute of Applied Medical Sciences Vietnam writes for local news outlet, explains what GMOs are and examines debate over their safety, notes GMOs are strictly regulated, and have been deemed safe by regulatory agencies and scientific studies throughout the world

News: Indonesian news outlet reports on US FDA's approval of Del Monte Fresh Produce's GM pink pineapple variety, producing lower enzyme levels, which convert pink lycopene pigments from yellow beta carotene, FDA notes lycopene is usually safe for consumption

News: Times of India reports on Indian Institute of Millets Research's (IIMR) successful development of a Bt sorghum variety, Southern Action on Genetic Engineering (SAGE) wrote a letter demanding Central Government reject it, claiming it will disrupt biodiversity and alleging its development results from Global Food Security Act

Commentary: Vietnamese news outlet reports on several misconceptions about sweet corn, notes that while many people are concerned about eating GM sweet corn, the only GM corn grown in Vietnam is for animal feed

More Asia items

Europe

News: French TV news site reports on images of GM pink pineapples trending on Instagram and Twitter, say there is "little chance" they will flood local markets soon given Europe's stricter standards for GM foods

News: French news outlet reports on anti-GMO activists from Confédération Paysanne's protest, in which they re-labeled seed packets for sale to inform consumers that the products contain GMOs, activist Mélanie Van De Casteel argued seed growers want to appropriate nature and evade regulation

Commentary: Organic & Non-GMO Report's Ken Roseboro examines increasing number of non-GMO labeling programs in Europe as consumer demand for non-GMO products rises, highlights efforts by Austria-based Danube Soya to create a harmonized Non-GMO labeling program across Europe to prevent trade barriers caused by different standards

Video: Bjorn Lomborg of Copenhagen Consensus Center examines reasons why organic foods are no safer, healthier or better for the environment than conventional foods, pointing to recent study which found that economic cost if the US went completely organic would be \$200 billion annually, concludes that organic claims are only a marketing tactic

Commentary: French ag blog examines history of farmers' practices of regulating seeds, noting peasants began the seed trade back in the 16th century, argues the reality is more nuanced than blaming multinationals

Commentary: Opinion piece on Dutch news site argues complex problem of hunger is not solved by GM technology, saying GMO seeds push farmers into dependency and resulting monocultures are "detrimental to soil life and overall biodiversity"

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: General manager of Bolivian Institute of Foreign Trade writes op-ed in Bolivian newspaper amplifying Nobel laureates letter in favor of Golden Rice and agricultural biotechnology; concludes "opposition based on emotions and dogma that contradict facts must be stopped"

News: Argentine news site reports Kumagro plans to double plantings of non-GM soybeans in country due to strong demand, particularly from EU; company will also expand non-GM soy regionally and says non-contamination with GM soy essential

News: Mexican news site reports NGO coalition claims government has failed to enforce Supreme Court ruling prohibiting planting of GM soy in Campeche state, calls on authorities to comply and guarantee rights of Mayan communities

News: Ecuadorian news site reports NGO Accion Ecologica is fighting partial veto by outgoing president Rafael Correa to country's seed law to allow GM research, saying experimentation is "open door to legalization"

Commentary: Law professor on Brazilian news site claims country's consumer protection code not followed for GMOs or foods with high amounts of pesticides, says information on health and environmental risks lacking, argues for banning "foods which endanger health of consumers"

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: New Zealand news outlet reports GM ryegrass developed in New Zealand which reduces methane emissions in livestock and improves nutritional value and drought tolerance is being tested in US in five-year field and animal nutrition trial program

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From: Jay Byrne
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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - May 25, 2017
 Date: Thursday, May 25, 2017 9:03:19 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 monitoring highlights included commentaries on the *Washington Post's* recent series on organic food certification. Activists continued to campaign against GM mustard, and an Indian Parliamentarian is leading a panel discussion on the crop.

- Two reports, one by Julie Kelly in the *National Review* and another in the *Boulder Weekly*, amplified the series in *The Washington Post* on fraudulent organic labeling. Kelly noted that importing organic food defeats the organic industry's claims of environmental sustainability. ([see more](#)) *Boulder Weekly* columnist Paul Danish suggested organic inspectors may overlook fraud because they're paid by those they inspect ([see more](#)).
- Indian congressional leader Renuka Chowhurdy is meeting with industry, science and activist stakeholders to discuss GM mustard and review the crop's impact on the environment and health. Meanwhile, a former cabinet member and professor wrote opinion pieces opposing the crop, claiming it would cause health problems. [See more.](#)

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

North America

Commentary: Julie Kelly writes for National Review, amplifies Washington Post investigation of fraudulent organic labeling on imported grains, argues that heavily relying on imports defeats organic industry's appeal of environmental sustainability, believes Ag Secretary Perdue should take a close look at the organic system

Commentary: Katherine Paul of Organic Consumers Association examines necessary steps to put momentum of March Against Monsanto protests into meaningful action, highlights need to end corporate influence over politicians, calls on supporters to start or join a #Resist and Regenerate Meetup group

Commentary: Natural Blaze contributor reports on USDA's investigation of unapproved GM petunias in the market, believes that if consumers refuse to buy them and complain to retailers, it will have an impact on GMO takeover of the food supply and other plant species

Commentary: Science mom and former organic supporter writing in Canadian news outlet recalls being shunned by anti-GM groups when she began seeking facts about GM crops; frustrated by the groupthink, she now runs several fact-based Facebook sites to educate others

Commentary: Washington Post contributor examines several reasons why it is difficult to verify authenticity of organic foods, in light of recent investigation of fraudulently labeled grain imports, notes the problem stems beyond USDA, argues that increasing regulatory oversight in the US will boost foreign trade relationships by reassuring consumers

News: Quartz reports on recent study led by geneticist Zachary Lippman of Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory using CRISPR to make several improvements to tomato crops, University of Arizona in

Tucson geneticist Rod Wing, unaffiliated with the study, noted the approach has potential form improving all crops

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Africa Enterprise Challenge Fund chair Paul Boateng writes for Science and Development Network, emphasizing importance of investing in science and technology for sustainable development in Africa, highlights development of drought-tolerant maize varieties and biofortified sweet potatoes

Announcement: Africa Centre for Biodiversity promotes new document criticizing Dow's 2,4-D-resistant GM maize on field trial in South Africa; claims crop does not control weeds or pests, reduce pesticide use, nor reduce farmers' costs

Commentary: Nigerian news outlet contributor criticizes Nigeria's biosafety agencies for promoting GM technology while relying on Western industry studies, claims GMOs have not been proven safe for humans and the environment, also claims GMOs do not sufficiently boost yields

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: South China Morning Post reports Chinese farmers see successful yields and decreased pesticide use from using illegal hybrid Bt cotton seeds; potential for India cotton farmers fighting worm resistance, scientists urging Chinese government to amend regulations and approve hybrid seeds

Commentary: Dr. William Dar writes for Manila Times, reflecting on his recent speech at Philippine Association of Research Managers' (PhilArm) awarding ceremonies, promotes use of biotech crops as a great tool to boost smallholder farmers' productivity, emphasizes GMO safety to human health and the environment

News: Indonesian news site reports Yogyakarta governor says country needs to use biotechnology to increase crop yields, noting decreasing amount of arable land due to population growth

Commentary: Indian news outlet contributor amplifies Swadeshi Jagran Manch's (SJM) letter to Prime Minister Modi in opposition to commercialization of GM mustard, believes many of their concerns are valid and that it should be approached with caution, highlights claims about health and environmental risks, and that Bayer owns the technology

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Dutch food ingredients news site reports on food ingredient supplier Archer Daniels Midland Company's investment in non-GMO options due to increased demand, ADM's Gerd Mueller noted they have secured a new supply chain, creating a sustainable supply of non-GMO material

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Brazilian news site reports House approves changes to GM labeling, Senate committee to vote on bill next; says most of public does not want the changes, which includes removing transgenic symbol recognizable even among illiterate, allows lab tests only on finished product

Commentary: Mexican news site reporter notes UNAM professor says agribusinesses attempt to control food in Mexico, rest of world by using GMOs, pesticides that harm environment, health

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

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 Date: Wednesday, May 24, 2017 6:18:20 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Today's global biotechnology monitoring highlights included a media report that the Indian government is leaning toward approving GM mustard commercialization.

- Indian news site *Financial Express* reported the Indian government is indicating it may approve GM mustard commercialization under new Environment Minister Harsh Vardhan after the ministry released a FAQ affirming the crop's safety. Meanwhile, the South Asia Biotechnology Centre began a petition urging the government to stand up to aggressive anti-biotech activists and approve GM mustard. **See more.**
- *Capital Press* reported opponents of an Oregon bill that would establish liability for GM contamination argue the proposal would be a de facto GMO ban because it would triple the economic damage caused by unwanted GMOs. **See more.**

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North America

Commentary: Biology professor blogs on logical inconsistencies of numerous anti-GMO activists defending ideology when confronted with science, claims most ignore large bodies of evidence while focusing on low-quality studies while inventing baseless conspiracy theories

News: CBC reports Innate GM potatoes with potential to use 50 percent less herbicides will not be commercially grown in Canada this year; company says it is not yet a proven market

Report: ETC Group proposes approach to sustainable sci-tech governance to United Nations STI Forum; includes promotion of organic and agroecology while noting concerns over uses of gene and other technologies as "false solutions"

News: New York Times reports on proposed merger between Swiss mining and energy giant Glencore and commodity company Bunge, which would make Glencore a major player in US ag commodity markets, especially grain, and adds to current industry consolidation amid pending biotech/chemical company mergers

Commentary: Jeffrey Smith of Institute for Responsible Technology voices opposition to commercialization of GM mustard in India, claiming that the science is corrupt, that it will not boost yields, and that it will threaten human health and the environment, hopes Environment Ministry will reject it

News release: Duke research blogger reports Duke University, Chinese researchers developed disease-resistant rice that doesn't sacrifice yield

More North America items

Africa

News: Nigerian newspaper reports Health of Mother Earth Foundation, some scientists call for repeal of the National Biosafety Act; claim conflict of interest was built into the National Biosafety Management Agency Act, raising acute red flags about the administration of biosafety in Nigeria

Commentary: Nigerian news source contributor amplifies Environmental Working Group's latest Clean 15, Dirty Dozen lists, claiming it helps consumers control amounts of pesticides entering body

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: European Commission magazine focused on research and innovation claims CRISPR technology can help meet world's growing demand for food, highlights ability to improve the quality and nutritional value of food, potentially allergens; notes potential use on potatoes in Europe, wheat in Bangladesh

News: The Hindu reports Vandana Shiva and anti-GM activist groups in India questioning increased yield claims for GM mustard, argue there's "no reason to jeopardise the security of India's farming, food, human health"

News: Global Times reports new trade deal may expedite Chinese imports of modified American seeds as Chinese government engages in publicity campaign to ease public concerns over GMO technology; notes Mark Lynas' visits to Chinese universities

News: Financial Express reports India's ag ministry "not reconciled" with Monsanto's dominance of the nation's cottonseed industry; Additional Solicitor General believes GM traits protected under the Patents Act can "threaten the country's food security"

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News release: Germany's Social Democratic Party criticizes CDU / CSU parties for failing to ban GM cultivation, attempting to replace "tried-and-tested" precautionary principle with new "innovation principle"

Commentary: European Commission magazine focused on research and innovation claims CRISPR technology can help meet world's growing demand for food, highlights ability to improve the quality and nutritional value of food, potentially allergens; notes potential use on potatoes in Europe, wheat in Bangladesh

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project contributor notes Russian genomic engineer says banning GMOs is big risk for Russia, which could otherwise use CRISPr to reach higher production rates; notes Russia allows import and research on GMOs, which may hold key to country's agricultural future

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Ecuadoran NGO Accion Ecologica criticizes outgoing President Rafael Correa for allowing entry of GM seeds and crops for research purposes, says it goes against law protecting biodiversity, says research facilities can spread GM contamination through wind, pollinators

News release: Brazilian research agency announces country developed country's first long-fiber, GM cotton; product meets need for high quality fiber

News: Brazilian news site reports Senate commission to vote on GM labeling bill May 25; bill would remove yellow "T" used to denote "transgenic," will label only products 1% or more GM ingredients; consumer groups oppose bill

More Latin America items

Oceania

News release: GE Free NZ claims GM cotton seed oil containing "toxic chemical" 2,4-D is being used in area restaurants; says pesticide harms health, embryo development, and disrupts endocrine function

More Oceania items

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 Date: Tuesday, May 23, 2017 9:03:13 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

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Today's global biotechnology monitoring highlights included ongoing coverage of the GM mustard debate in India and plans for Brazilian lawmakers to consider changing GMO labeling policies.

- At an event marking the launch of her book, Vandana Shiva claimed India's late environment minister did not support the commercial use of GM mustard. News sites reported that RSS-affiliated Swadeshi Jagran Manch announced at the same news conference that it wrote a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi opposing GM mustard. The new environment minister stated that he will not comment on GM mustard until he goes through the files and speaks with scientists. **See more.**
- The Brazilian Federal Senate Committee on Agriculture and Agrarian Reform will vote Wednesday (May 24) on a proposal to limit GM food labeling to products containing greater than 1 percent of GM material. The bill would also remove current letter T label for foods with GM material. **See more.**
- March Against Monsanto announced that 11 protestors were arrested after blocking the entrance to a Monsanto facility in Woodland, California. The demonstrations continue to generate only local media coverage. **See more**
- A French court set a June 16 hearing for activists with the Volunteer Reapers who destroyed glyphosate products at two French retailers last September. The group hopes to use the trial as an opportunity to raise awareness of the harmful effects of glyphosate and GMOs, noting it has five key witnesses prepared to testify. **See more**

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North America

News: Food/agriculture industry news sites report conflicting reactions to defeat of GM food labeling bill in Canadian parliament; Food and Consumer Products of Canada argues rigorous testing shows GM foods to be safe, so labels are unnecessary

Commentary: In The Hill, executive director of Global Harvest Initiative argues current regulatory systems need to be "unshackled" to allow innovation in ag biotech and gene edited-crops, representatives for farmers and USDA officials gathering May 24 to discuss achieving smart regulatory systems

News release: Friends of the Earth Canada claims Canadian legislators have let consumers down by defeating Bill C-291 to require mandatory labeling of GM foods

Video: GMO skeptic Nick Saik and his father Robert debate benefits of GMOs, Saik highlights Mark Sheehan of Hawaii's SHAKA movement's statements on dangers of pesticides, as well as papaya grower Ken Kamiya's support of GM technology, as it saved Hawaii's papaya industry

Commentary: EcoWatch columnist concerned about open-air field trials of GM moths in New York, dismayed USDA did not extend comment period to allow more time to assess the decision

News: Politico Pro reports biotech crop producers would be subject to user fees under Trump administration's USDA funding proposal

Commentary: Natural News warns "cheap" vitamins are made with GMO glucose syrup fed to bacteria; tells readers to look for organic foods naturally rich in vitamins

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Nigerian news outlet reports on actor Joseph Okechukwu's recent statement against GMOs, in which he claims that most fruits on the market are GMOs, claims organizations such as Gates Foundation seek to push GM technology on Africa with goal of reducing the population

News: Kenyan news source reports crop experts says multifaceted approaches, such as strategic intercropping, biological controls, and genetic engineering, should be considered as counters against armyworms

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Press Trust of India reports on RSS-affiliated Swadeshi Jagran Manch's (SJM) letter to Prime Minister Modi in opposition to commercialization of GM mustard as recommended by Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC), claiming that it is patented by Bayer, toxic, and will not boost yields

News: Press Trust of India reports on Vandana Shiva's claims that late Environment Minister Anil Madhav Dave did not support commercial use of GM mustard, she believes he was not ready to sign the proposal, and reiterated claims about the Bayer-Monsanto cartel and GM crops leading to increase in farmer suicides

Commentary: Church of South India ecology department issues press statement objecting to introduction of GM mustard on multiple grounds; pleads with government to reject GEAC's recommendations and declare India GM free

Commentary: Indian news outlet contributor lists 10 reasons to be concerned about GM mustard, claims it does not have a yield advantage over non-GM varieties, points to health risks associated with glufosinate, claiming it is similar to glyphosate, highlights recent controversy surrounding glyphosate's carcinogenicity

News: Indian business news outlet reports Union Science of Technology Minister Harsh Vardhan takes charge of Environment Ministry following Anil Dave's death, Vardhan notes he will not make a call on GM mustard until he has gone over all the details, activists call on him to reject it

Campaign: Seed Freedom urges supporters to sign Pact for Diversity in honor of World Biodiversity Day on May 22, speaking out against patents on seeds and "corporate takeover of our food and health," promotes agroecology

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Slovakian news outlet reports on critical acclaim surrounding "Okja" at Cannes Film Festival, claiming the film about a GM pig bred for slaughter and a critique of Western society could win the Palme d'Or award

News: French environment-focused news site reports Germany struggling enact European Union's opt-out for GMO cultivation into national legislation

News: Dutch ag news outlet reports on Commission on Genetic Modification's (COGEM) continued belief that expansion of monitoring, with focus on locations where presence of wild GM oilseed rape populations is most likely, is necessary prior to granting Monsanto's request for GM canola import license

News: French news outlet reports on upcoming June 16 trial of 10 Volunteer Reapers for actions against sale of glyphosate-based herbicide products in two Ariège stores, defendant Dominique Masset wants to use the trial to put Monsanto on the defense, Volunteer Reapers have called expert witnesses to speak on negative impact of GMOs

Commentary: Candidate for legislative elections in Lorient, France proudly notes French city has served as model for fighting against GMOs and their multinational corporations; says local population must continue to resist, calls for utopian agricultural model that "keeps farmers alive and does not destroy soils and water"

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Ecuador news outlet reports legislature to analyze partial objection of the draft Law on Agrobiodiversity, Seeds and Promotion of Sustainable Agriculture; outgoing president wants to amend law to allow entry of GM crops for investigative purposes

News: El Salvador news outlet reports agricultural entrepreneurs believe biotechnology is key to providing higher yields and meeting needs of future population, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock disagrees

News: Argentine news outlet reports Argentine Agrarian Federation claims Monsanto should be sanctioned for harming small farmers by not adhering to country's Patent Law that allows for seeds to be reproduced

Announcement: Brazilian Federal Senate indicates Committee on Agriculture and Agrarian Reform will vote (May 24) on labeling of foods with greater than 1 percent GM material in finished product, would also remove current letter T label for foods with GM material; opponents feel it goes against citizens' rights

More Latin America items

Oceania

Audio: New Zealand podcast site features head of GE Free New Zealand, she says country's role in developing GE trees could have devastating effects overseas; adds her group is concerned private company developing the GE trees for export doesn't share research results

More Oceania items

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 Date: Monday, May 22, 2017 9:03 09 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 monitoring featured a report on China's plans to conduct a survey on its citizens' attitudes toward GMOs, ongoing coverage of whether the Indian government will approve GM mustard commercialization and news that an Oregon House committee will hold a hearing on a bill to establish liability for contamination from GM crops.

- *Bloomberg* reported that the Chinese government plans a nationwide poll next month to determine the public's acceptance of GMOs. The survey will be conducted in tandem with a social media campaign with basic knowledge on biotechnology. **See more.**
- Upon the announcement that India's minister of science and technology, Harsh Vardhan, will also oversee the environment ministry, activists including the Coalition for a GM-free India complained that the arrangement presents a conflict of interest in the government's decision whether to commercialize GM mustard. Although reports have not speculated on what Vardhan will decide, the environment ministry published an FAQ document to address concerns about the crop, and the agriculture ministry issued a statement indicating it has no reservations about GM mustard. **See more.**
- An Oregon House committee scheduled a hearing Tuesday (May 23) to consider a bill that would assign damages for GMO contamination of non-GM crops to the crop's patent-holder. The NGO Our Family Farmers issued an action alert calling on state lawmakers to approve the bill. **See more**
- Coverage of this weekend's March Against Monsanto protests remains limited to local news outlets with little high-impact coverage. *Russia Today* and *Agencia EFE* are among the few major outlets to recap the demonstrations. Switzerland-based March Against Monsanto and Syngenta issued a release claiming there were 2,000 protestors at its event. **See more**

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North America

[Commentary: Science magazine brief notes plant geneticists discover, tweak genes responsible for how tomatoes branch to double production; research article published in Cell](#)

[News release: Quebec Grain Producers speak out on inaccurate information falsely claiming use of GM crops increased risk index linked to pesticides by the Quebec Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, urges government to rectify error immediately](#)

[Commentary: Mary-Dell Chilton writes for Medium as part of GMO Answers' series on revolutionary female leaders in science and agriculture, she describes her involvement in development of the first transgenic plant, which opened the door to creating crops that are resistant to disease, pests and drought, and that are more nutritious](#)

[Commentary: Food Babe warns about dangers of ice creams made with "Monsanto milk" from cows fed GMO grains; warns about glyphosate, antibiotics, hormones in milk; promotes organic, non-GMO](#)

ingredients; alleges ingredient cottonseed oil is made from GMO cotton crops given intense application of pesticides

Commentary: Cleveland Clinic Center for Functional Medicine medical director Mark Hyman warns about risks of GMOs, claims GM crops don't fulfill promises, create need for additional use of cancer-causing pesticides; claims no long-term studies on health safety; alleges GMOs bad for environment

Event: Oregon House Rules Committee will hold public hearing (May 23) on House Bill 2739 establishing liability for GM crops growing on land without consent of owner

More North America items

Africa

Commentary: Kenyan columnist argues GM crops key to feeding growing population, don't cause cancer; blasts NGOs who demonize GM food, ignore scientists

Interview: Nigerian news site talks with country representative to FAO, who notes FAO will not force countries to adopt GMOs and Nigeria has not requested help to develop biotechnology; states GM crops can foster agricultural development, food security, nutrition

News: Tanzanian news outlet reports on University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) researchers' development of improved yam and taro varieties for farmers, designed to withstand drought and pests, and that can thrive without use of fertilizers, no genes are modified

More Africa items

Asia

News: Bloomberg reports China will conduct June national survey on GMOs ahead of campaign to promote GM crops; notes ChemChina takeover of Syngenta means growth in China, national plan to grow GM crops by 2020; mentions Chinese review of imports for U.S. GMO strains

News: Press Trust of India reports on Ag Ministry's statement that it has no reservations about GM mustard, and will promote GM crops if approved by Environment Ministry, Ag Minister Radha Mohan Singh pointed to ministry mandate to increase production, productivity, bring down production costs and ensure right prices to farmers

Report: Indian Environment Ministry issues FAQ document on GM mustard, the document emphasizes safety of GM mustard for human and animal consumption, and includes a table detailing which environmental and food safety tests were conducted

Commentary: Coalition for a GM-Free India letter to new environment minister calls for rejection of GM mustard; claims holding position while also serving as minister of science and technology is conflict of interest due to promotion and funding of GMO research; alleges health, environmental risks of GM crops

News: Indonesian news outlet reports biotech oil palm seeds approved by ministry of agriculture have potential to increase productivity of palm oil by 10 tons per hectare per year

News: Indonesian news outlet reports Professor of Agricultural Economics claims country's ag production capacity has declined below others in region, advises more attention to ideas like biotech crops to help reach food self-sufficiency

Interview: Vietnamese news site talks with Vietnam Academy of Agricultural Sciences vice director, professor about fear-based public perception of GMOs; praises GM crops as high-yielding, good quality, adaptable to climate change

More Asia items

Europe

News: Farmers Guardian reports Defra figures reveal that organic crops have shown an overall decline in the U.K. since the late 2000s, mirroring the fall in land area farmed organically since 2008

News: Dutch news outlet reports Dutch Food Safety Authority seized property and bank accounts of unnamed company suspected of grant fraud; company received several million Euros for GMO research since 2010

Commentary: Daily Mail writer warns of danger of illegal "franken flowers" to crops, bees; claims petunias have maize DNA to produce orange flowers; Defra now requires retailers of suspected GM petunias to destroy them; notes Canadian GM oilseed plants led to overweight butterflies, deformed wings

Commentary: Bulgarian news site opinion piece by business attorney discusses European, Bulgarian GMO production, label laws; calls for legislation requiring labels on meat from animals given GMO feed; questions honesty of producers, enforcement authorities to ensure correct labels

News release: Switzerland's March against Monsanto & Syngenta on May 20 drew 2,000 demonstrators against pesticides, GMOs and industry mega-mergers, 1,300 people demonstrated in front of Monsanto's headquarters, Zoë Roth of the Organizing Committee noted high participation demonstrates demand for shift to ecological ag

Commentary: French anti-GMO NGO Inf'OGM presents updates on Germany's 2016 efforts to pass a bill on banning GM crop cultivation, highlighting SPD member Elvira Drobinski-Weiß's recent announcement that the bill was buried, due to CDU/CSU parliamentary group's refusal to take into account proposed changes to allow prohibition at federal level

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Spanish news agency reports March Against Monsanto protest in Puerto Rico denounces Fiscal Supervision Board (JSF) for supporting interests of agricultural biotechnology; protests also focus on health and environmental damages to island; Monsanto responds safety is top priority

News: Ecuadorian news outlet reports outgoing president proposes allowing GM research, anti-GM group Acción Ecológica says change would violate seed law condition of keeping country free of GM seeds and crops

Commentary: Economics professor in Mexican news outlet questions why country opposes GM maize when 14 million tons were imported from US in 2016, says financial opportunities wasted by not allowing cultivation

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

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

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From: Jay Byrne
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 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - May 22, 2017
 Date: Monday, May 22, 2017 4 01:04 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

This week's newsletter opens with a series of articles pointing out the science behind controversial crop protection and biotechnology issues. In *Forbes*, Kavin Senapathy offers a comparison of the anti-GMO movement to claims that vaccines cause autism. "These movements are based in conspiracy theories, plain and simple," she writes. Henry Miller, in *Project Syndicate*, offers a rebuttal to a United Nations special rapporteur report by suggesting that denying access to sustainable food production is a human rights violation. And in *New York Magazine*, Jenny Splitter raises the question of what Whole Foods would look like if it had science-based labels with factual information about GMOs, pesticides and antibiotics.

Additionally, several pieces examine the potential for genetically modified mustard in India, urging the federal government to grant final permission for the crop to be commercialized. Voices supporting the crop's commercialization included the International Food Policy Research Institute, the Association of Biotech-Led Enterprises-Agriculture Group and *The Hindu* newspaper.

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In This Issue

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

Stakeholder Spotlight: Generations Futures



As the European Commission again considers seeking a vote to approve criteria to define endocrine-disrupting chemicals, Generations

■ Stories Worth Sharing

[Kavin Senapathy: Like anti-vaccine campaigns, anti-GMO movement causes "unconscionable suffering" and should be shelved](#)

[Henry Miller: UN special rapporteur wrong on biotech and pesticides; denying sustainable ag approaches is real human rights violation](#)

[Jenny Splitter: Whole Foods should start "science-based labeling" instead of peddling false claims about GMOs, pesticides, antibiotics](#)

[Greg Jaffe: USDA needs science-based system to regulate gene-edited crops](#)

[IFPRI's Avinash Kishore: India should approve GM mustard as "overwhelming scientific evidence for net benefit and minimal risks of GMOs"](#)

[MEP Daniel Dalton: Evidence for European neonic ban is "woefully lacking," consequences would be severe](#)

[The Hindu: Indian government must base GM mustard decision on science, place "reason over politics"](#)

[Washington Policy Center: Commercial beekeepers see Varroa mites,](#)

Futures and other NGOs are pushing for standards that would take pesticides off the market. A vote could reportedly take place May 30, although there are indications a qualified majority still does not exist.

The French NGO has long been active in pushing for restrictions on pesticides, releasing a series of nine so-called **EXPERT** reports that tested for the presence of EDCs in hair samples in prominent public figures and EDC residues on cereals, among other things. Generations Futures last week **asked for a meeting** with new Ecology Minister Nicolas Hulot to discuss endocrine disruptors.

CLICK HERE to learn more about Generations Futures.

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not pesticides, as primary cause of hive losses

Amanda Zaluckyj: Obama's comments on looking at science on GMOs a "balanced approach" that would allow agriculture to progress

Mark Lynas: Divided Communist Party, conspiracy theories create "deadlock" for GM crop approvals in China

Nigerian researchers: Benefits of biotechnology outweigh downsides, more funding should be encouraged

ABLE-AG executive director: 10 compelling reasons why India should incorporate biotechnology into agriculture

Genetic Literacy Project infographic identifies top "fear profiteers" who make the most off alarmist claims about GMOs

CLICK FOR BONUS EVENTUS MONITORING

What's Trending?

India's environment minister considers whether to approve commercialization of domestically developed GM mustard

European Commission plans May 30 vote on proposed criteria to define endocrine-disrupting chemicals

European Commission considers 10-year reauthorization for glyphosate; decision reportedly unlikely until at least June

Friends of the Earth promotes research by University of Sussex's Goulson claiming most garden center plants contain neonics

Natural Resources Defense Council claims Walmart, Kroger, Costco, other retailers fail to promote responsible antibiotic practices

Calendar highlights

May 25	May 25	May 26-29
American Feed Industry Association "Communication with Shared Values" webinar	Vandana Shiva lecture at University of Winnipeg	Sun Valley Wellness Festival featuring Vandana Shiva, Wayne Pacelle
May 30	June 1-2	June 4-8
EU EDC criteria vote	Sustainable Foods Summit in Amsterdam	14th International Symposium on the Biosafety of Genetically Modified Organisms (Guadalajara, Mexico)

CLICK HERE TO ACCESS FULL EVENTS CALENDAR

Stakeholder	Monitoring	Bonus Eventus
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More information on the people and organizations influencing the food and agriculture debate

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - May 19-21, 2017
 Date: Sunday, May 21, 2017 10:36:24 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 monitoring highlights include reports on March Against Monsanto events around the world. An Indian state assembly passed a resolution against GM mustard and a parliament member wants to call a Punjab Assembly special session to pass a similar resolution.

- Alternative and mainstream media covered March Against Monsanto events across the world, although coverage through Sunday afternoon did not include wire services or major outlets in the United States. Protesters focused on Monsanto's seed policy and glyphosate, and Canadian protesters targeted GM labeling. A Monsanto release indicated the company focuses on feeding people and keeping the planet safe. **See more.**
- The Indian state of Kerala's legislative assembly passed a resolution rejecting GM mustard. Indian Parliament member Dharimvira Ghandi called for a special assembly of the state of Punjab's Assembly to vote on a similar resolution. Ghandi claimed the central government is willing to destroy the country's biodiversity to benefit companies such as Monsanto and Dow. **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: Genetic Literacy Project contributor examines recent reports of increased colon cancer rates among Millennials, warns against making unscientific simple associations between GMOs and increased cancer rates, noting similar colon cancer rates were observed in the 1890s

Commentary: Science mom writer in NY Magazine suggests food shopping revolution based on science and not misleading marketing like Non-GMO Project labels, claims copper sulfate and chlorpyrifos used in organic and conventional ag more toxic than glyphosate

Commentary: Natural News critical of \$3 million FDA plans to spend on consumer outreach and education campaign regarding agricultural biotechnology to explain environmental, nutritional, food safety, economic, and humanitarian impacts of biotech crops; adds most consumers want GMO labeling

Commentary: USFRA Food Dialogues piece by Digital Voices Council member Amanda Zaluckyj gives reasons farmers are happy to use GMO crops including reduced use of herbicides, insecticides, ability to use conservation tillage, reduced carbon emissions; notes GMO crops safe for humans, beneficial insects

Commentary: Blogger for American Council on Science and Health criticizes Whole Foods' claims that its organic produce its grown without any toxic pesticides, lists several organic approved pesticides that are very toxic to humans

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project says over 1,000 studies, most by independent researchers, document GMO safety; adds experts say there's no scientific basis to believe foods grown with 1 or 2 precisely tweaked and mapped genes would pose more allergenic problems than conventional, organic foods

More North America items

Africa

News: Nigerian news site reports experts at biosafety workshop warn activists plot for Nigeria to miss out on biotechnology, which would be a disaster for country with one of world's largest populations

News: News Ghana reports Monsanto's response to Food Sovereignty Ghana, worldwide March Against Monsanto, spokesperson says company focuses "on need to feed people and protect the planet"

News: Xinhua reports biotech maize and cotton varieties produced by local scientists expected to be released for field trials in Kenya soon, GM drought- and pest-resistant cassava, sorghum and sweet potato due to be complete soon

More Africa items

Asia

News: Indian news site reports Parliament member Dharamvira Gandhi requests Punjab Assembly special session to pass resolution against GM mustard, claims government out to destroy biodiversity to benefit Monsanto, Dow

Commentary: Smart Indian Agriculture editor Vivian Fernandes says in The Quint op-ed that activists should open their minds, let farmers decide if GM mustard works by allowing them to use the crop; says activists oppose the crop fiercely due to fear other GM crops will follow

News: Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) explains its ongoing biofortification research efforts through golden rice, which Golden Rice Project Leader Dr. Roel Suralta notes has potential to help address Vitamin A deficiency, Golden Rice Project is a collaborative effort between PhilRice and IRRI

News: India news outlet reports Kerala Legislative Assembly unanimously passed resolution rejecting GM mustard seed due to health and environmental safety issues, claims health of farmers at risk

More Asia items

Europe

Commentary: Dutch science journalist Hidde Boersma, formerly affiliated with Greenpeace, explains her documentary project, "Well Fed," in which she examines culture war surrounding GMOs, she argues anti-GMO sentiment is a luxury of those who don't have to worry about food

Commentary: Pro-GMO group Europabio says almost all soy from South and North American countries is GM; in EU, soy mainly feeds livestock, helping livestock farms prosper, which drives EU exports, jobs and growth; adds GM foods as safe as conventional but are regularly voted down

Interview: Italian news site talks to New Centre-Right deputy and former Food Safety Commission chairman about protests related to EU decision to authorize GM maize and cotton imports, says "protests not based on scientific evidence", asserts GM imports "absolutely safe" to humans and animals

Campaign: Polish NGO announces start of public consultation for draft GMO-free labeling bill, encourages comments to be sent before June 4 closing date

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Bolivian news site reports maize association to ask government to legalize GM maize, says growing conventional maize not economically viable for farmers; biotech opponents do not want native corn seed to be lost

News: Telesur reports on new trade deal between Russia and Venezuela, Russia will ship 60,000 tons of

wheat to Venezuela, which will establish five new companies to manufacture Russian industrial vehicles, highlights Russian state bodies' reports that Venezuela currently relies on shipments of GM wheat from the US

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: New Zealand news outlet reports former professor using CRISPR-Cas9 gene drive system to control pest problem by engineering male pests which only produce male offspring, claims "social risk" fears keeping advancements from occurring

[More Oceania items](#)

More Bonus Eventus Resources

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

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 Date: Thursday, May 18, 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

Today's global biotechnology monitoring highlights featured response to the unexpected death of India's environment minister with commentaries analyzing its impact on GM mustard commercialization. Canada's Parliament voted down a GMO labeling bill. A Chinese news outlet reported Kenyan farmers want to plant GM crops to deal with the nation's drought.

- India's environmental minister, Anil Madhav Dave, passed away Thursday. Media coverage noted Dave was to decide on the commercialization of GM mustard. An analysis by *Down to Earth* speculated the new minister may delay the decision until the Supreme Court hands down its decision on cases involving the crop's safety. **See more.**
- Canadian media reported Parliament rejected a GMO labeling bill with a 216-67 vote. A New Democratic Party of Canada news release complained about the result, claiming 80 percent of consumers want labeling. The bill's opponents argued that labels should warn only of dangers or potential allergens. MP Francis Drouin said, "Let's face it: this bill calls for mandatory labeling of genetically modified foods so that people will not buy them." **See more.**
- Chinese news agency *Xinhua* reported that Kenyan farmers are hoping the government approves GM crops to help address the country's ongoing drought. The drought has resulted in lower corn production, forcing shortages in the vital commodity. **See more.**

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

North America

Commentary: Pro-science blogger "Skeptical Raptor" writes for Daily Kos, debunking claims that consuming GM foods results in gene transfer, points out several flaws in PLoS One paper in question, notes that even if gene transfer did occur, it would not pose a health risk

Commentary: Editorial in rural newspaper calls U.S. FDA spending millions to inform consumers about GMOs a "peck on the cheek" for Big Ag; claims 15 percent growth in organic ag is increasing negative publicity about glyphosate, atrazine in water supply, food

Commentary: Forbes contributor Kavin Senapathy argues anti-GMO movement should be considered as socially unacceptable as anti-vaccine push, arguing both challenge scientific consensus, scare populations, cause preventable suffering,

Commentary: U.S. Right to Know e-newsletter focuses primarily on Monsanto's connections to third-party groups such as Genetic Literacy Project without disclosing affiliation in Roundup cancer lawsuit, also claims Monsanto continues ties with professors to publish positive articles without disclosure

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Kenyan news site reports as fall armyworms continue to wreak havoc on farms across the country, experts say the damage could worsen the current food crisis; armyworms in at least 10 counties could cause 100 percent loss in maize, rice, pasture, sorghum, millet, cotton and some vegetable crops

News: Nigerian news outlet reports on National Agricultural Seed Council (NASC) Director General Olusegun Ojo's warning of potential shortfall in seed production, on sidelines of training program organized by Open Forum for Agricultural Biotechnology (OFAB), as seed companies are not producing because of debts owed to them

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science's Joan Conrow examines progress in India's development of GM mustard, following recent approval by Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC), highlights South Asia Biotechnology Centre president C.D. Mayee's concern that activists are keeping India from being competitive

Commentary: Southern India newspaper editorial urges government to allow genetically modified crops, including mustard; warns against process being "hijacked by alarmist ideologies" that raise irrational, unscientific fears

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News release: U.K. Green Party MEP Keith Taylor applauds colleagues for voting decisively to oppose European Commission's proposal to authorize import of GM cotton and maize, claims the herbicides used on the crops pose "credible" human health risk

News: Agence France-Presse reports EU Parliament opposed herbicide-tolerant GM corn, cotton import, cites concerns regarding "independent research" highlighting herbicides hindering embryo develop, causing endocrine disruption

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Mexican news site columnist says if GM corn is allowed in Mexico, all corn varieties would soon be contaminated, harming biodiversity and forcing farmers to buy seed from Monsanto due to patent laws

News: Ecuadorian news site reports agro-ecological groups oppose country's new seed bill, saying it is against free exchange of seeds and limits healthy and safe food

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Australian ag-focused news outlet reports Australian grain industry needs to factor in attitudes on GM crops when exporting, highlights attitudes in China swung from favorable to negative on GM foods within 4 years with consumers willing to pay premiums for non-GMO; however low cost may make GM crops desirable in India

[More Oceania items](#)

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 Date: Wednesday, May 17, 2017 10:18:25 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 monitoring highlights included European Parliament members objecting to European Commission plans to approve GM corn and cotton for import. Activists promoted the upcoming March Against Monsanto event, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced plans for three public meetings in June to gather comments on revised biotechnology regulations. In India, activists met with a government official to discuss concerns regarding GM mustard.

- EU Parliament members took a nonbinding vote opposing the commission's approval of pesticide-resistant GM corn and cotton. Members said they want a drastic overhaul the approval process for imported GM products. **See more.**
- March Against Monsanto and other NGO sites publicized the upcoming protest march scheduled for Saturday. **See more**
- The USDA plans to host three meetings in June to receive comments on the Proposed Rule for Importation, Interstate Movement, and Environmental Release of Certain Genetically Engineered Organisms. **See more.**
- Ongoing media coverage regarding GM mustard included activists, students and farmers meeting with India Environment Minister Anil Dave to discuss concerns regarding commercializing the crop. Dave said their concerns will be addressed. **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.

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North America

Commentary: [Writing for Cornell Alliance for Science, Mark Lynas says China's much-needed biotech adoption is blocked by divided government, consumer GMO fears fanned by media anti-GMO exposes, shares plans to debate country's top GMO opponent](#)

Announcement: [Genetic Literacy Project infographic lists six "fear profiteers" who make most from creating consumer fears around biotechnology and the media empires they created](#)

Commentary: [Natural Health 365 staff writer presses readers to not be swayed by "propaganda" when the FDA launches education initiative on GM foods, claims increase in herbicide usage means greater likelihood of health issues for consumers](#)

News: [Quartz reports Florida-based Southern Garden Citrus seeking approval from U.S. FDA for commercial use of genetically engineered virus to combat citrus greening; company hopes to sidestep regulations attached to GM crops since virus doesn't affect the fruit, approval could take up to two years](#)

News: [Fox Business reports Monsanto investing heavily in gene editing technology, expects products to hit market within five years; opponents including V.A. Shiva Ayyadurai and Non-GMO Project claim "off-target" effects, lack of long-term studies concerning](#)

Commentary: Geneticist Layla Katirae examines Del Monte's new GM pink pineapple, summarizing the breeding process and use of RNAi, believes that the pink pineapple may not have any real health benefit, but notes its potential to reduce food waste and encourage people to eat more fruits and vegetables

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Study: Nigerian, Mexican researchers publish study in Frontiers in Plant Science highlighting effectiveness of Marker Assisted Recurrent Selection in improving genetic gains in yield under drought stress and favorable environments in maize; atrazine used on crops as pre-emergent

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Interview: Indian business news outlet interviews GM mustard innovator Deepak Pental, he believes lies about GM technology are irrational and belong in a post-truth world, notes anti-GMO sentiment has put India 20 years behind in research on ag-biotech capabilities, emphasizes importance of technology for future ag solutions

Commentary: Financial Express op-ed says it makes sense to approve GM mustard because it's locally produced by a public entity, will make India self-sufficient in edible oil, will increase farmer incomes

News: The Korea Herald reports officials cancel local annual flower festival after unauthorized strains of GMOs found in flower specimen; notes South Korea bans living modified organisms due to potential impact on ecosystems

Commentary: Ex-United Nations official and University of Oxford-educated researcher co-author Inter Press Service column arguing GM crops have not lived up to promises of increased yields and reduced herbicide usage; claims glyphosate usage has greatly increased, only beneficiaries are large ag companies who profit

Commentary: Vietnamese news site reports GMOs do not cause cancer, GM crop benefits include better farmer income, higher yields, pest and drought resistance, pesticide use reduction

Commentary: Indian news outlet editorial voices opposition to government approval of GM mustard, noting it ignores widespread opinion against its introduction, including by Swadeshi Jagaran Manch, claims it will destroy native mustard varieties and force farmers into dependence on foreign multinational corporations

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Announcement: ISAAA reported UK's DEFRA approves GM potato field trial to test blight- and nematode-resistant traits that resists bruising, produces less acrylamide

Announcement: EFSA will discuss authorizations for several GM corn varieties, develop supplementary guidelines for allergenicity assessment of GM plants, based on draft agenda for Scientific Panel on GMOs plenary meeting (May 17-18)

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Bolivian news site columnist criticizes NGOs lobbying to ban GM crops while farmers suffer through pest attacks, Bolivia imports corn; notes they claim glyphosate causes cancer while neglecting to mention red meat, barbecue, coffee, potato chips carry same risk and aflatoxin from organic crops kill people

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: Bloomberg reports hybrid black rice being grown in China has potential to help fight growing diabetes problem, highlights Australia's CSIRO developing rice with more fiber and Philippines rice researchers creating rice with more Vitamin A as ways to help consumers

More Oceania items

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<p>Stakeholder database</p> <p>More information on the people and organizations influencing food and agriculture issues.</p>	<p>Events calendar</p> <p>See where news could be happening next. Or let allies know about an upcoming event.</p>	<p>Bonus Eventus community</p> <p>Connect with academic experts and researchers, journalists and agriculture allies.</p>
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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - May 16, 2017
 Date: Tuesday, May 16, 2017 9:04:36 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 monitoring highlights included ongoing debate over the potential commercialization of GM mustard in India, North American discussion of GMO labeling and the discovery of GM rapeseed in South Korea.

- Opponents of GM mustard commercialization in India, including the Coalition for a GM-Free India and a group of farmers unions, continued to issue demands for Environment Minister Anil Dave to reject the crop. Business Standard published a piece from a food and trade policy analyst who criticized the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee's approval of the crop, expressing concern that India will become the "world's biggest dustbin for a risky, unwanted and harmful technology." However, a *Financial Express* columnist analyzed Dave's past statements and suggested he may have already made up his mind to support GM mustard. **[See more](#)**
- Canadian activist groups including the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network and Vigilance OGM called on members of Parliament to approve a bill under consideration that would create mandatory GMO labeling in the country. **[See more](#)**. In the United States, Just Label It and Environmental Working Group campaigning against the Regulatory Accountability Act, claiming it would create additional hurdles for the USDA to adopt new rules and suggesting industry is financially backing it as a last-ditch effort to block GM labeling. The bill is up for a Senate vote this week. **[See more](#)**
- A South Korean news outlet reporting that Monsanto's herbicide-tolerant rapeseed was found in 19 retail outlets nationwide although rapeseed is approved for feed but seed imports are prohibited. Environmental groups are voicing concerns the rapeseed might spread. **[See more](#)**
- Agriculture and environment ministers from 10 central European and western Balkan countries reportedly accepted a joint memorandum in which they declared that they will be harmonizing their GMO policies, expressing a preference for GMO-free agriculture. **[See more](#)**

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

North America

[Campaign: Alliance for Natural Health urges supporters to sign petition to stop USDA from using tax money to support global corporations like Monsanto; claims hundreds of millions of dollars are spent every year by the USDA to develop new GMO and crop protection patents that are given to private businesses](#)

[Commentary: True Activist columnist questions long-term health benefits of GM crops and whether U.S. FDA should lead campaign for consumer outreach; activist groups claim "Big Ag influence"](#)

[Commentary: Green Jihad blog questions motives of "Island Earth" documentary to push Slow Food movement, disparage attempts at enhanced food production such as biotechnology](#)

[Commentary: Ag policy director for Environmental Working Group speaks out against Regulatory Accountability Act, arguing it would keep GM labeling laws from taking effect through further approvals and "put industry costs above consumer rights"](#)

Commentary: Center for Science in the Public Interest Biotechnology Director Greg Jaffe calls on USDA to establish a science-based regulatory system to address GE and gene-edited crops, pointing out flaws in current regulations that can lead to over or under-regulation, believes such crops should be regulated proportionally based on potential risks

Commentary: Beyond Pesticides voices opposition to recently passed spending bill's inclusion of \$3 million in funding for a federal GMO outreach campaign, claims GMOs and associated herbicide use are responsible for monarch butterfly decline, poor soil health, and water contamination

More North America items

Africa

News: Nigerian news outlet reports environmental rights group HOMEF asking for revocation of Monsanto's permit for Bt cotton due to health and environmental concerns, also called for repeal of National Biosafety Management Agency Act

Announcement: Burkina Faso government updates biotech safety regime by establishing risk levels, conditions for destruction of GMOs presenting human, environmental health risks

Commentary: Nigerian Tribune contributor notes Open Forum of Agricultural Biotechnology (OFAB) recently convened professionals to brainstorm on how to convey "message of science to Nigerians"; emphasizes GMO technology offers scientific way to improve food production and "put money in the bags of farmers and contribute the nation's GDP"

More Africa items

Asia

Interview: Firstpost writer talks with Aruna Rodrigues, lead petitioner in India's Supreme Court GM mustard case, she claims "agronomical fraud" and says GM mustard will not meet promises of higher yields and decreased reliance on imports; also says Bt cotton has failed in India

Commentary: Research fellow at IFPRI writes op-ed in Business Standard refuting major arguments from anti-GMO activists surrounding GM mustard, cites scientific evidence for net benefits and minimal risks

Commentary: Hans India editor claims better farming practices should have been applied before permitting GM varieties such as mustard; suggests need for "long-term studies to evaluate their safety and ecological impact," advocates organic and agroecology practices

Commentary: Financial Express columnist claims environment minister may have already made up his mind on GM mustard approval despite activist groups' complaints, minister said all health issues have already been addressed and asked courts to dismiss activists' petition

Commentary: India's largest farmers unions ask country's environment minister to reject GM mustard commercialization; letter claims it would only benefit large ag companies and "testing has been rigged to have favourable results for this unsafe GMO"

Commentary: Agribusiness markets specialist writes in The Hindu, arguing GM mustard's higher yields could be a "game changer," crop deserves approval in India; notes one way to address safety and environmental concerns is to permit commercial cultivation in specific locations

News: Vietnamese news site reports Okanagan planting 85,000 non-browning GM Arctic apple trees in Washington state, with plans to increase to 300,000 trees; adds ISAAA report shows benefits of GE crops to farmers and consumers

More Asia items

Europe

Commentary: Biologist Roberto Defez writes blog post for Italy's Fondazione Umberto Veronesi, advocating use of genome editing techniques, highlighting many potential benefits, including in medicine, laments that widespread fear of GMOs has "paralyzed the entire industry and cast mistrust on scientific research"

Commentary: Inf'OGM reacts to French Senate bill that would amend intellectual property code and limit patent protection to a product containing genetic information, claims new bill reveals a "political will to further regulate the patent in the field of biotechnology;" bill sent to economic affairs committee with no hearing scheduled yet

News release: EFSA collecting applications for science experts to serve on Scientific Panel on GMOs; submissions accepted June 1 to Sept. 8

Commentary: EuropaBio newsletter features guest opinion by Spanish farmer Pedro Gallardo, who emphasizes importance of a well-functioning Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), he promotes many benefits of GM crops, and criticizes member states voting against GM crop approvals, believes proposed comitology reforms risk further politicization

News release: Central EU and Western Balkan ag and environmental ministers accept joint memorandum declaring plans to harmonize GMO policies to support traditional, GMO-free agriculture, citing market opportunities; Hungary, Austria, Germany to submit EU soy declaration in July

News: French news outlet reports on upcoming European Union Court of Justice decision regarding regulating products of mutagenesis and new breeding techniques, highlights activism against "hidden GMOs" produced via mutagenesis in France, as well as calls for products of gene editing to be regulated as GMOs

Report: USDA GAIN Report notes EFSA launches public consultation on a draft guidance document on the risk assessment of GE plant material at low levels in food and feed material not intended for import into the EU; interested parties asked to submit comments by June 30

News: Croatian news site reports area under GM crops increased by 3 percent in 2016 to 185.1 million hectares in 26 countries, according to ISAAA's annual biotech report; adds GM crops increased by 17 percent in Europe to over 130,000 hectares, with 95 percent of this area in Spain

News: French business magazine amplifies ISAAA report announcing cultivation of GM plants rose by 3 percent in 2016, reference cyclical decline in 2015

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Argentine environmental group Fundavida worries ag companies are taking control of National Institute of Agricultural Technology by prohibiting use of the term pesticides, claims Monsanto is controlling food supply with genetic engineering and damaging the land with chemicals

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News release: New Zealand Soil and Health Association welcomes Consumers' Right to Know Bill, which would require all single component foods to display country of origin, arguing that lack of country of origin labeling makes it harder for New Zealanders to avoid foods containing GMOs and pesticide residues

[More Oceania items](#)

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - May 15, 2017
 Date: Monday, May 15, 2017 10:56:17 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 previews of a European Commission committee meeting on the import of GM cotton and maize varieties, the CEO of Bayer responding to European lawmakers' concerns about a proposed merger with Monsanto and ongoing reaction to India's move toward commercializing indigenous varieties of GM mustard.

- The European Commission's Health and Food Safety Directorate General Appeal Committee will meet Tuesday (May 16) to discuss approving the commercialization and import of GM cotton and maize varieties. This meeting follows a the approval by a European Parliament committee last week of two non-binding resolutions calling on the commission to drop attempts to allow the products. Those resolutions will face a vote by MEPs on Wednesday. **See more**
- Bayer CEO Werner Baumann sent a letter to EU lawmakers who had called for the cancellation of the company's purchase of Monsanto. Baumann's response argued the takeover of Monsanto would not result in any degradation in environmental and health standards or consolidation in the market for products such as seeds. A Dutch news outlet interviewed Bayer board member Liam Condon, who indicated Bayer failed to acknowledge consumers' concerns about Monsanto's technologies before moving forward with the merger. **See more**
- Several farmer groups joined environmentalists in opposing the commercialization of GM mustard in India while the head of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science and Technology, Environment and Forests is lobbying the environment minister to postpone the vote on GM mustard until he can further investigate the impacts of the crop. *The Hindu* published an editorial calling for the decision to be based on science rather than emotion or politics. **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 Canadian Parliament will vote May 17 on mandatory labeling of GM foods, opponents say wording is too vague, would perpetuate myth that GM foods are unhealthy; notes US labeling law will go into effect in 2019

News: Politico Pro reports on complications of traceability in getting US beef to China market, including Mad Cow, ractopamine concerns while US poultry industry tries to overcome avian flu barriers with the country, and biotech approval delays could soon come to end; USDA says traceability hearings not attempt to replace ADT

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project writer shares how RNAi reduces crop spoilage, increases nutrients in food, can be used for crop protection; says full potential of RNAi for crop improvement remains to be realized

News: Food Ingredients First reports Milk Specialties Global adds NonGMO Project Verified Organic NonFat Dried Milk "clean label" product to its protein portfolio; says addition shows company's commitment to "supporting the increasing demand for cleaner label products"

Commentary: Dietitian on USFRA Digital Voices council says she doesn't eat "clean," asserts many food trends driven by food companies aren't fact-based, criticizes Chipotle for marketing that implies GMO are bad

Commentary: "Farmer's Daughter USA" Amanda Zaluckyj praises former President Obama's recent comments during interview at Seeds&Chips Global Food Innovation Summit in Italy, in which he encouraged Europeans to "follow the science" on GMOs, noting his encouragement is for a balanced approach

More North America items

Africa

News: Argentina's National Institute of Agricultural Technology (INTA) reports on visit by Ugandan delegation to learn about GMOs and biosafety, and to assess possibility of future collaboration

News: The Nation reports Kenyan delegation of farmers, government officials and private sector representatives were impressed with visit to Malawi's GM cotton trials, express interest in bringing technology back to Kenya

News: Uganda newspaper reports on Uganda delegation visit to remote Zombo district bordering Democratic Republic of Congo; highlights local drought conditions, quotes area tribal leader who calls on parliament to handle GMO seed issue with care "to avoid negative effects to those who plant them"

More Africa items

Asia

Commentary: In Forbes, National University of Singapore professor examines U.S.-China trade deal; notes U.S. can request Chinese bureaucrats make a decision on outstanding Food Safety Certificate biotech applications, but no guarantee of approval

News: Vietnam Biz reports U.S.-China economic plan includes potential for approval of eight pending U.S. biotech applications following safety evaluations this month by China's National Commission on Biosafety

Commentary: Philippines NGO shares news that organization of small-scale organic farmers was recognized by federal, local government for climate-resilient farming practices and awarded funding; group promotes organic agriculture and opposes GMOs, aerial spraying

Commentary: India newspaper editorial encourages adoption of GM mustard following recommendation by Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee; says India needs to increase its agricultural production, GM crops are a path do so

News: New Indian Express reports India's head of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science and Technology, Environment and Forests calls on environment minister to delay decision on GM mustard until his committee concludes evaluation of GM crops

Commentary: The Tribune editorial board writes on potential for GM mustard to be "watershed moment" clearing way for other GM crops in India, says outcome from Bt cotton not "as disastrous as critics had warned"; Environment Ministry trying to "clear doubts" about consumption and cultivation of GM mustard by terming opposition "unscientific"

Commentary: Manila Bulletin piece by Coalition for Agriculture Modernization in the Philippines chair Emil Javier shares ISAAA report, notes biotech crop adoption rate is fastest among agricultural technologies in modern times; benefits of GM crops include increase in farm productivity that benefits farmers, saves forests, reduces pesticide use

More Asia items

Europe

News: Swiss news site reports Parliament's summer session will include discussion of release of GMOs with markers resistant to antibiotics; two chambers already agree not to authorize cultivation of "zones with GMO," four-year extension of moratorium on GMOs in agriculture to 2021

Event: European Commission Health and Food Safety Directorate General Appeal Committee meeting (May 16) will focus on discussion of draft authorizations for sales of GM cotton, GM maize

News: Politico Pro Morning Ag report notes Bayer CEO responds to European Parliament, states Monsanto takeover would not result in degradation of environmental, health standards or consolidation of seed market; mentions Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed to discuss GMO licenses for two cotton, maize strains on May 16

Interview: Dutch news outlet interviews Bayer's Liam Condon on challenges facing the merger with Monsanto, Condon believes Monsanto's reputation is what it is because the company failed to acknowledge consumers' concerns about its technologies, highlights Bayer's efforts to increase public engagement

Commentary: French activist group Inf'OGM blasts moves to classify gene editing products as conventional, promote deregulation of these new GMOs; cites study finding GM soy diet's negative effect on rats

News: Food Ingredients First reports Milk Specialties Global adds NonGMO Project Verified Organic NonFat Dried Milk "clean label" product to its protein portfolio; says addition shows company's commitment to "supporting the increasing demand for cleaner label products"

Commentary: Greenpeace, with organic, food safety NGOs sends open letter to European Commission President Juncker calling for decision against authorization of GM maize from DuPont, Monsanto, Syngenta, cites majority of EU countries with GMO bans

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Brazil's AS-PTA recaps Seminar on Agroecology featuring case study presentations by seven Latin American countries; discussion highlighted maintenance of ecological practices by peasants, decontamination of water, soil; group expects to meet again in September at Latin American Congress of Agroecology

News: Natural Blaze reports on discovery of illegal GM corn cultivation in Bolivian village of Charagua, local NGO SOS MAIZ BOLIVIA warned about negative impacts on native maize varieties and human health

Video: Global Justice Ecology Project interviews Eliane Oliveira of Brazil's Landless Workers Movement (MST) on their fight against tree plantations, especially GE trees, she highlights negative environmental impacts of industrial tree plantations, including water scarcity, MST wants to increase government and public awareness

News: Director of Brazilian magazine Oasis reports on University of California's development of GM algae, highlighting many potential immediate uses, such as human food, animal feed and biofuels, as well as other potential applications, researcher Jonathan Shurin emphasizes growing need for sustainable food and energy

Commentary: Puerto Rican news outlet warns readers about dangers of GMOs, noting they are found in many food items, and claiming they have not undergone sufficient health and environmental safety testing, points to IARC's review of glyphosate, promotes upcoming lecture by Nutritionist Vilma Calderón on risks of GM foods

News: Cuba's state news agency highlights art exhibit, "Cartels for food sovereignty," focused on opposition to transgenic maize; anti-GM group claims GMOs scientifically proven to be dangerous to

environment and health

More Latin America items

Oceania

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

More Oceania items

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

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - May 15, 2017
 Date: Monday, May 15, 2017 4:05:03 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

As the European Commission's Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed plans to meet this week to discuss neonicotinoids, endocrine-disrupting chemicals and glyphosate, a new wave of commentary criticizing EU regulations has emerged.

In a piece on his "The Risk-Monger" blog, Belgium's David Zaruk argues that "only misguided fools, ideological zealots or morally compromised individuals would support regulatory actions against either glyphosate or neonicotinoids." He lays blame for questionable decisions at the feet of European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker. Zaruk also wrote a [separate piece](#) highlighting a German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment official's defense of its assessment finding glyphosate does not cause cancer.

Former MEP George Lyon also weighed in on the EU's pesticide regulations, asserting that the commission seems "hell bent on ignoring the evidence and imposing a further blanket ban on the use of neonicotinoids" while the reauthorization of glyphosate was "hijacked" by a populist political campaign despite scientific findings that the herbicide is safe. He further argues that "it has been the same story" with GMOs.

Similar arguments can be found in British MP Matt Ridley's column for *The Times*, which suggests Britain should create an "innovation principle" as it frees itself from the EU's stifling regulations on pesticides and GM crops.

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

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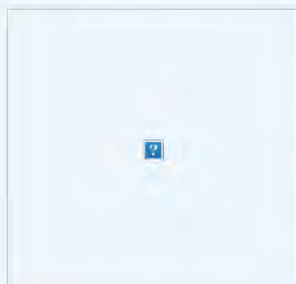
[Stakeholder Spotlight](#)

[Stories Worth Sharing](#)

[What's Trending?](#)

[Calendar highlights](#)

Stakeholder Spotlight: Matthew Schnurr



■ Stories Worth Sharing

[David Zaruk: Regulatory action against glyphosate, neonics would be product of "Junck Science" from European Commission president](#)

[Ex-MEP George Lyon: EU regulatory system a "disaster for farmers." with neonic restrictions a "classic example"](#)

[British MP Matt Ridley: With chance to free itself from EU regulation of herbicides and GM crops, Britain should adopt "innovation principle"](#)

[Henry Miller: European Commission ignoring "inconvenient truth" that its own Joint Research Centre opposes neonic ban](#)

[Science 2.0: USDA study shows how modern beekeeping allows Varroa mites to spread, becoming "biggest culprit" in colony failures](#)

Canadian environmental geographer and political ecologist Matthew Schnurr is appearing in news reports, aligning his views with those of groups such as Food Sovereignty Ghana by claiming GMO crops will not be successful in Africa.

Affiliated with Dalhousie University, Schnurr's work and writings have been used and cited by anti-biotech, eco-feminist activists and agroecology advocates as supporting their claims that GMOs exploit the poor.

[CLICK HERE](#) to learn more about Schnurr.

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[Genetic Literacy Project: Bangladesh's success with GM crops could spur innovation in other developing countries](#)

[CATO Institute: Why should U.S. tax money support organic marketing when there are no nutritional or environmental benefits?](#)

["Food Evolution" documentary's North American rights acquired, New York City premiere set for June 23](#)

[Navneet Anand: India's Senior Congress leader should stop impeding growth of GMO technology as Bangladesh farmers benefit from it](#)

[Greg Jaffe: GMO labeling often dishonest, "nothing unsafe about foods made from GMOs"](#)

[The American Interest: Gene editing could allow farmers to boost yields while using less pesticides](#)

[Iowa Farm Bureau: "No GMOs" labels becoming marketing ploy for companies with flagging sales](#)

[Rothamsted Research: EU ban of neonics would be bad for farmers, increase pest resistance to chemicals](#)

[Phibro director of food integrity: March for Science overlooked fact that responsible ag antibiotic use does not cause resistance in humans](#)

[Stephan Neidenbach: 10 memes showing why to support biotechnology](#)

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What's Trending?

[Obama: Don't cut off conversation on GMOs - "Let's see what the facts are"](#)

[U.S. federal agencies seek input from governors as part of WOTUS rewrite](#)

[U.S. Food and Drug Administration to launch \\$3 million campaign to educate consumers about genetically modified foods](#)

[Colorado columnist's five-part series explores consequences of Boulder County's GMO ban](#)

[U.K. NGOs urge retailers to adopt B&Q policy to stop selling neonic-treated plants as scientist plans to release study on the topic](#)

Calendar highlights

May 15-17	May 16	May 17-18
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EDC-MixRisk Consortium meeting in Stockholm	Pennsylvania State University pollinator research symposium	European Commission Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed meeting on EDCs, glyphosate, neonics
May 17	May 18-19	May 18
Agricultural and Food Law Consortium webinar on genetically engineered salmon	Cornell University BEST Biotechnology Symposium	American Feed Industry Association webinar "What Consumers Want"

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From: Jay Byrne
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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - May 12-14, 2017
 Date: Sunday, May 14, 2017 9:54:27 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 commentary on GM mustard, which is one step away from commercialization in India. A new U.S.-China trade deal includes a Chinese agreement to evaluate eight varieties of GM crops by the end of May. Mexico's Supreme Court opted not to review a Monsanto appeal that requested GM maize permits be issued during an ongoing trial.

- Following the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee's favorable recommendation of GM mustard, media, anti-biotech groups and biotech advocates commented on the potential for India's first GM food crop. *The Indian Express* and *The Times of India* op-eds supported approving the GM crop, while Vandana Shiva and several NGOs opposed the decision. Farmers unions, NGOs and the Swadeshi Jangran Manch wrote letters to Environment Minister Madhav Dave and Prime Minister Narendra Modi urging them to reject GM mustard. **See more.**
- As part of a recent U.S-China trade agreement, the Chinese agreed to review eight pending applications for GM crops from Monsanto, DuPont Pioneer and Syngenta. China's National Biosafety Committee's evaluation is due by the end of May, and some have been stuck in the Chinese review process for up to six years. The protocol requires that for any variety failing the review process, the committee must identify a reason for the failure. **See more.**
- Mexico's Supreme Court declined to review an appeals court decision from 2013 that suspended GM maize cultivation permits, so GM corn will continue to be suspended in the country. **See more.**

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

North America

Commentary: In last of 5-part series, Boulder Daily Camera's Mara Abbott asks farmers for policy suggestions, says disconnect between farmers and consumers adds to problem as decisions made without knowledge of farming systems based on activists' narrowly focused solutions, notes CU researchers agree GMOs advance sustainability

Commentary: Henry Miller writes for Project Syndicate, criticizing environmentalists for shunning GE crops and pesticides and promoting low-yielding, labor intensive agroecological methods, believes denying developing nations access to agricultural technology is the real human rights violation

Commentary: Canadian Biotechnology Action Network e-newsletter reports on local groups' request for Prince Edward Island Premier to hold public hearings before approving GE fish production facility, highlighting risks to wild salmon, encourages supporters to email the Premier

Commentary: Kavin Senapathy writes for Forbes, calling for America to "break up" with Dr. Oz, highlighting his spread of misleading and potentially dangerous information to millions of Americans, notes she has previously covered Oz's misleading statements about GMOs

Commentary: Canadian Biotechnology Action Network e-newsletter reports upcoming vote on GMO labeling has been moved to May 17, urges supporters to contact their MPs in support of mandatory labeling, highlights recent meetings with 19 MPs, in collaboration with Kids Right to Know

Commentary: Author/activist David Bollier promotes OpenSourceSeed license initiative, warning that corporate control of seeds has led to loss of biodiversity, highlights OpenSourceSeeds' agenda of promoting food security through seed diversity, as well as ecological farming practices

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Ghana News Agency reports on Environment Minister Kwabena Frimpong-Boateng's call on members of National Biosafety Authority's (NBA) Appeals Tribunal Committee to operate with fairness and due diligence, NBA's Eric Okore urged those with concerns about GMOs to provide scientific evidence rather than spreading propaganda

News: Nigerian news outlet reports on recent workshop organized by National Biotechnology Agency in collaboration with Open Forum on Agriculture Biotechnology (OFAB), with goal of increasing public understanding of biotech and its benefits, Agency Director General Lucy Ogbadu hopes gene editing will make the public more accepting

News: Malawi news outlet reports on Ministry of Foreign Affairs' plans to send agricultural experts to Brazil to learn how to effectively combat fall armyworms, as they are resistant to commonly used pesticides

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Times of India editorial calls on government to grant final approval of GM mustard, noting it has undergone extensive safety tests and pointing to India's urgent need to boost yields, urges government not to bow to pressure of anti-GMO lobby groups

News: Reuters reports on China's recent promise to evaluate eight US GM crop varieties by the end of this month as part of trade deal, highlights products from Monsanto, Dow and DuPont that have been stuck in the Chinese approval process for years, as well as class action lawsuit over Syngenta's release of GM corn without Chinese approval

News: NDTV reports GEAC approves GM mustard for commercial release in India, with anti-GMO activists and farmers remaining opposed; notes the crop awaits final approval from Prime Minister Modi who will consult with the Environment Minister before making a decision

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: GMWatch criticizes University of Arizona research into GM corn that controls aflatoxin, says non-GMO corn already controls aflatoxin while RNAi technology in GM corn poses "considerable risks"

News: Danish news outlet reports on debate surrounding whether or not products of gene editing should be regulated as GMOs, highlighting ongoing lawsuit in France, Kim Holm Boesen of Agricultural and Fisheries Agency emphasized importance of establishing a clear stance in Denmark

Interview: Gilles-Eric Seralini tells Greek news site Monsanto polluting planet with "pesticide plants", claims EFSA and FDA grant approvals based on "what companies say"

News: French environmental news site reports GM crops on rise in 2016 according to ISAAA's annual biotech report, but number of cultivating countries is down from 28 to 26

Commentary: Green European Journal contributors claim industrial ag practices are not necessary to feed the world, arguing that poverty is the real cause of hunger, they claim industrial ag practices harm the environment with monocultures and pesticides, and point to IARC's conclusion about glyphosate

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Interview: Talking Biotech's Paul Vincelli questions Uruguayan Ministry of Agriculture's biosecurity director on how GMOs are regulated in the country

Commentary: GMWatch notes Bolivian NGO reports discovery that farmers plant illegal GM corn in the country; NGO worries about cross-pollination, pesticide use

Commentary: Sustainable Pulse amplifies La Jornada article, reports Mexican Supreme Court denies Monsanto appeal to reinstate GM maize permits during trial

News: Mexican economy news outlet reports on ISAAA's 2017 global biotech adoption report, highlighting 110 fold increase in adoption rates over 21 years, 10 Latin American countries reached a total of 80 million hectares of biotech crops, even as Mexico still prohibits GM maize cultivation

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Australian news site amplifies ISAAA report that biotech cultivation increased in 2016 by 5 million hectares worldwide

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From: Jay Byrne
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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - May 11, 2017
 Date: Thursday, May 11, 2017 9:03:18 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 India's Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee giving a favorable recommendation for indigenous GM mustard. GM cotton trials were suspended in Ghana. Three trading firms are backing a movement towards planting non-GMO soy in Brazil's largest soy-producing state.

- Indian news sites reported GEAC gave a positive recommendation for the commercialization of indigenously developed GM mustard. The final decision now is up to India's environmental ministry. However, *Mint* reported there is a Supreme Court case pending on the variety and the RSS-affiliated Swadeshi Jagran Manch, ideological parent of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, strongly opposes GM crops. A court hearing could be scheduled in July. **See more.**
- In Ghana, the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research suspended GM cotton trials in the country after Monsanto withdrew funding for the project. A CSIR investigator said the company pulled out due to Burkina Faso's staged withdrawal of Bt cotton. Nigerian news site *Joy* reported Ghana's initial Bt cotton trials were going well as the GM cotton fields required substantially fewer pesticide applications than conventional cotton fields. **See more.**
- *Reuters* reported Brazil's largest soy-producing state, Mato Grosso, is beginning to move towards producing non-GMO soy as farmers anticipate growing demand for non-GM soy in the Asian and European markets. The article noted three trading firms -- Amaggi SA, Imcopa International SA and Caramuru Alimentos SA -- are backing the effort. **See more.**

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North America

Audio: AgDaily podcast interviews scientist Kevin Folta, who describes how groups like U.S. Right To Know use FOIA requests to intentionally disparage scientists' reputation and work on GMOs

Commentary: Scientist Mary Mangan and pro-GMO teacher Stephan Neidenbach write for Genetic Literacy Project, examining ties between Organic Consumers Association's anti-vaccine agenda and US Right to Know's FOIA requests targeting pro-biotech academics, noting OCA's anti-vaccine campaigns are funded by spreading fear of GMOs and pesticides

News: Canadian Press reports on environmental groups Earth Action and the Council of Canadians' call for public hearings on proposed GE salmon production facility in Prince Edward Island, arguing that AquaBounty's plan to produce eggs and fish on the Island is different from the proposal approved last year

Video: Trailer for "Secret Ingredients" documentary by Jeffrey Smith and Amy Hart features doctors and scientific experts including Steven Druker and David Perlmutter who warn viewers about risks of GMOs and pesticides, as well as families describing how organic diets improved their kids' health, solicits donations for production

News: New Hope Network reports the company Our Little Rebellion created a supply chain with Nebraska

family farmers to offer non-GM corn products, calls its story the "Corn Revolution"

More North America items

Africa

News: Kenya hosts forum to discuss comprehensive pest management systems to fight fall armyworm, a pest that could cost African nations up to \$3 billion this year

News: Zambian news source reports Seed Control and Certification Institute working on "standard threshold" for drought-tolerant seed varieties across the COMESA region of Africa

More Africa items

Asia

News: The Hindu reports India's Supreme Court likely to hear case in July on whether GM mustard will be commercially released, Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee recommended crop for approval

News: Press Trust of India reports on Environment Ministry's approval of GM mustard following Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee's positive recommendation for its commercial use, final approval must come from Union Environment Minister Anil Madhav Dave, highlights continued opposition from Swadeshi Jagran Manch

Commentary: Indian news outlet contributor examines Monsanto's decision to withdraw application of Bollgard-3 Bt cotton technology due to regulatory uncertainty, highlighting trait fee dispute, notes farmers need an alternative solution as pests are developing resistance to current Bt cotton technology

More Asia items

Europe

News: French agricultural site reports EFSA finds MON 810 does not pose risk in Spain or Portugal

News: Bulgarian news site reports Austria is "preparing European alliance against" GMOs, says non-GM agriculture opens opportunities in Central, Southeastern Europe; Austian ag minister says family farms can't compete against corporations, but "production is highest quality"

News: EU food policy news outlet reports Polish Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development is drafting a bill to introduce a label for GMO-free foods

News: European news sites report groups planning March Against Monsanto event May 20; group wants to "educate the public" and encourage politicians to move against GMOs, pesticides, patents for LMOs

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Ecuadoran news site reports indigenous groups plan to file lawsuit as soon as Parliament passes new seed law; claim law seeks to control community seed ownership

News: Brazilian news site reports prosecutor's office reinstates fine against Monsanto in lawsuit dating to 2005 for carrying out research without proper license

News: Brazilian environmental news site Monsanto-funded ISAAA's biotech update shows GM crop cultivation increased in 2016

Commentary: Bolivian anti-GM NGO reports Roundup Ready corn discovered in country, warns government not fulfilling legal obligations to protect against serious risks to "country's plant genetic patrimony and the health of the population"

More Latin America items

Oceania

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

More Oceania items

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

From: Jay Byrne
 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - May 10, 2017
 Date: Wednesday, May 10, 2017 9:00:38 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 the University of Saskatchewan's reply to the *Canadian Broadcasting Corp.*'s story on a professor's work with Monsanto based on a U.S. Right to Know report. Nigeria's government instructed federal agencies to cooperate on detecting GMOs to improve biosafety in the country. Former U.S. President Barack Obama told a crowd in Italy that it's OK to be cautious, but we should continue exploring biotechnology.

- *CBC* ran the University of Saskatchewan's reply to a report in which USRTK's Gary Ruskin claimed professor Peter Phillips has conflicts of interest due to collaboration with Monsanto. Biotech advocate Kevin Folta and fellow University of Saskatchewan professor Stuart Smyth also replied to the negative report. **[See more.](#)**
- Nigerian news sites reported the federal government instructed the Nigerian Customs Service and the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control to partner with the Nigeria Biosafety Management Agency to detect illegal GMOs in the country. Environment Minister Ibrahim Jubril said it is necessary to ensure Nigeria does not become "a dumping ground for poisonous and genetically modified foods." **[See more on Nigeria biosafety.](#)** Meanwhile, Cornell Alliance for Science fellow Modesta Nnedinso Abugu wrote that biotechnology has the potential to improve Nigeria's food security. **[See more on Nigerian food security.](#)**
- *Politico* and other media reported Obama spoke at a conference in Italy and told the crowd, "The truth is that humanity has always engaged in genetic modifications," and added we cannot stop discovering new things. **[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: Nature editorial warns about overuse of anti-science label following recent science march, noting many "anti-science" political measures don't have anything to do with science itself, believes debate surrounding GMO labeling has more to do with concerns about big agribusiness than health,](#)

[Commentary: March Against Monsanto blogger amplifies RT's coverage of released court documents on Monsanto's "Let Nothing Go" campaign to defend its image online, highlights allegations that Monsanto "ghostwrote" studies on glyphosate's safety](#)

[Commentary: American Veterinary Medical Association policy committee says mandatory labeling of GMO food products is 'unnecessary,' given the safety of the technology and the fact that labeling can send the wrong message](#)

[Campaign: 137 farmer, consumer, and environmental groups write letter to Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Charles Grassley, Ranking Member Feinstein, Senator Lee and Senator Klobuchar, urging them to ensure that Makan Delrahim will closely examine potential impact of Bayer-Monsanto deal as head of Antitrust Division at DOJ](#)

[Commentary: Organic Consumers Association's Ronnie Cummins lists five "rules for revolutionaries" in](#)

promotion of Resistance and Regeneration movement, claims industrial ag practices are extremely damaging to the environment, calls for collaboration between anti-GMO/pro-organic movement and other political issue movements

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Nigerian news site reports federal government tasks customs, food and drugs agency to partner with Biosafety Management Agency to detect illegal GMOs; environment minister says country must become "dumping ground for GM foods"

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science fellow Modesta Nnedinso Abugu of Open Forum on Agricultural Biotechnology-Nigeria Chapter writes blog post for CropLife, examining potential for biotech to improve Nigeria's food security, as discussed at recent event organized by Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)

Announcement: ISAAA reports Kenyan farmers ask government to approve Bt maize, Bt cotton to aid with crop yields during drought, armyworm attacks

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Bangladeshi news site reports Bangladesh may commercialize Golden Rice in 2018; says action could help dispel rumors and myths surrounding GMO safety

Study: Chinese researchers develop canker-resistant citrus plants using CRISPR/Cas9 editing

News: Vietnamese news site chronicles Monsanto's history in Vietnam, from Agent Orange to GMOs; notes former ag minister called GMOs a "scientific marvel" Vietnam needs to embrace, but activists say they are handing country's food sovereignty over to the agribusiness

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: GMWatch promotes annual March Against Monsanto in London on May 20; notes hosts include Beyond GM, GM Freeze

News release: Czech Academy of Science announces seminar will focus on GM crop, biomedicine use; notes despite GMO safety, conservative laws prevent Czech Republic from realizing full benefits from biotech

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Puerto Rico newspaper highlights first ever Agricultural Biotechnology Season's End Festival represented by the Puerto Rico Agricultural Biotechnology Industry Association; notes ITIF's Val Giddings gave presentation on contributions being made by ag biotech to improve quality of life around the world

News: Bolivian news site reports NGO tested samples and found 30,000 hectares cultivated with glyphosate-resistant GM maize, says it violates Bolivian GMO ban, threatens health and food sovereignty

[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 - May 9, 2017
 Date: Wednesday, May 10, 2017 12:06:49 AM

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 movement toward South African regulators approving Bayer's acquisition of Monsanto, plans for Malaysian oversight of living modified organisms and an investigation into genetically modified flowers found for sale in Europe.

- Multiple news outlets, including *Reuters*, reported that Bayer agreed to divest its LibertyLink properties to win South African approval of its acquisition of Monsanto. The African Center for Biodiversity issued a release criticizing the South Africa Competition Commission's approval of the deal, claiming its divestment demands do not go far enough to protect consumers and small farmers from the long-term damage expected from the merger. **See more** Among other African NGO activity, Food Sovereignty Ghana published the final declaration from the International Meetings of the Resistance to GMOs recently held in Lorient, France. The group also promoted the upcoming March against Monsanto protest, sharing the meeting location with local supporters on its Facebook page. **See more**
- Malaysian media outlets reported the country's natural resources and environment minister announced plans for the biosafety to introduce 10 standard operating procedures for its enforcement activities to detect living modified organisms. The minister would not disclose the proposals, which are to be completed in four months. **See more**
- The U.K. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is investigating the sales of genetically modified petunias amid complaints from the NGO GM Freeze that the illegal flowers could pose environmental risks. Concerns have also been raised in Finland and Italy, where the sale of GM carnations and petunias prompted the government to issue an alert to the horticulture industry to properly label the flowers. *The Telegraph* and the *Daily Mail* provided coverage of the Defra investigation. **See more**

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

North America

Commentary: CBI director of external engagement Michael Stebbins links to GMO Answers post recapping sixth-generation Florida farmer Lawson Mozley's Facebook Live chat focused on GMO plant science and food production during Earth Day; notes Lawson explains GE is "one of the greatest tools farmers have at their disposal"

Commentary: Farm Babe counters claims that Monsanto is evil, says many other companies sell glyphosate-based products as well and she's never met a commercial farmer who doesn't like Monsanto

Campaign: Pesticide Action Network calls on supporters to contact Department of Justice in opposition to planned mergers between Bayer-Monsanto and Dow-DuPont, claiming they will lead to increased use of chemical cocktails and ag practices responsible for increase in superweeds

News release: Friends of the Earth wants U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee to carefully consider assistant attorney general's nomination to ensure proposed merger of Monsanto and Bayer is free of political interference, claims merger would be negative for American farmers and food safety

Commentary: Texas Farm Bureau reports federal budget allocates \$3 million for public outreach on

GMOs, cites Pew study finding only 39 percent of adults believe GMOs are safe despite affirmations from scientific consensus

[More North America items](#)

Africa

[News: Rwandan news source reports experts call for quick, multipronged effort to fight fall armyworm in Africa, including biopesticides and transgenic pest resistant crops, among other methods](#)

[News: South Africa business news site reports crop insurer urges South Africa to assist in promoting food security by increased public-private partnerships such as Water Efficient Maize for Africa](#)

[News: Deutsche Welle reports environmentalists in São Tomé and Príncipe reject transgenic corn, under cooperation with China; claim the agrochemicals used on the corn are unknown and that it is unclear if they contaminate water, kill animals or cause other issues; Greenpeace activist on hunger strike at embassy in Lisbon](#)

[Commentary: Nutritionist Mercy Lung'aho writes for International Center for Tropical Agriculture's \(CIAT\) blog, emphasizes importance of biofortification for tackling malnutrition in Africa, praises work by HarvestPlus and International Potato Center \(CIP\), calls for better understanding of what vulnerable populations eat and how](#)

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

[Commentary: Strategic communications professional Navneet Anand calls out India Senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh for impeding the growth of GMO technology in India; notes Indian farmers highly favor Bt cotton, numerous field trials of other GMO crops have proven successful](#)

[News: India business news outlet reports Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee to convene meeting with Food Safety and Standards Authority of India to resolve issue of importing GM processed foods](#)

[News: China news source examines ChemChina's national strategy to strengthen domestic agriculture industry via new acquisitions, including Syngenta purchase](#)

[News: The Hindu - India's Karnataka state government grants funds to 26 biotech start-ups as part of government initiative to nurture innovation in the country](#)

[News: Xinhua reports researchers from China and U.S. hybridized GE cotton with conventional cotton to reduce resistance in pink bollworm; could provide key benefits to farmers in developing nations](#)

[News: Vietnam news outlet reports on 2017 ISAAA report showing continued growth of biotech crops across the world, highlights environmental benefits and benefits to farmers in developing countries](#)

[News: Indian environmental news outlet reports on recent Natural Farming Summit where organic farming expert Kapil Shah warned about GE "Terminator Technology," claimed Bt cotton worsens pest problems, and criticized scientific innovation that puts profits over the environment](#)

[News: Vietnamese news outlet reports amount of GM soy and corn imported into Vietnam for animal feed is rapidly growing, causing uncertainty about impact of GMOs on the quality of meat, eggs and milk being consumed](#)

[Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project contributor examines Bangladesh's success in GM crop adoption, believes it may inspire innovation in other developing nations, highlighting potential benefits of biotech in countries like India and Myanmar](#)

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Campaign: Global Justice Ecology Project urges members to ask European Food Safety Authority to stop working with experts funded by the food industry, asking for a five-year cooling off period in between

News release: Volunteer Reapers promotes latest action in which 120 members destroyed test field of GM rapeseed in Villy-le-Moutier; claims government allows ag companies to market GM seeds without tests to assess environmental risks

News: Italian news site reports former president Obama speaks in Milan at Seeds & Chips conference, says being cautious on GMOs is OK but people should remain open-minded, adding society can't stop discovering new things

Commentary: U.K. environmental advocacy group argues open pond testing of GM algae could be risky to health and environment, claims it's irresponsible to allow tests to proceed with very little regulatory oversight; cites "dramatic uptick in algae bloom" from agricultural nutrient runoff

News: French agricultural news site reports Ingredia created new approach to obtain dairy from cows fed on grass and without GMO food origins

Commentary: French anti-GMO NGO Inf'OGM thanks supporters for helping raise €12,010 for its planned survey on GMO labeling in imported products, 120 percent over their campaign goal

Commentary: Italian food industry magazine concerned about announcement FDA will raise awareness of biotech benefits, questions directive away from organic and if biotech will be a focus of Trump administration

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Brazilian news site reports Landless Workers Movement activists attending national agrarian fair denounce chemical, GMO technologies harming health, economics of small farmers, communities, push for agroecological model free of agribusiness control, profit

News: Brazilian radio station reports parliament members schedule vote for project authorizing GM foods in school meals, claim repeal necessary to properly supply essential foodstuffs to meet the nutritional needs of children

More Latin America items

Oceania

Commentary: Friends of the Earth Australia calls for open national discussion on gene editing because ethical, cultural, societal and ecological implications are enormous; cites Australian Academy of Sciences paper

More Oceania items

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From: Jay Byrne
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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - May 8, 2017
 Date: Monday, May 8, 2017 9:03:08 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 monitoring included developments related to European Union approval of GM cotton, maize and soy, reaction to a Mexican state's declaration that it is a GE-free region and ongoing coverage of a report on the expanded use of GM crops.

- Members of the European Parliament's Environment Committee have adopted resolutions prohibiting imports of GM cotton and maize due to concerns about the health impacts of the pesticides to which they are resistant. The resolutions will face votes in a May 15-18 plenary session. **See more.**
- Testbiotech has filed a legal case challenging the EU authorization's of the import of GE soybeans produced by Bayer and Monsanto. **See more** Separately, the German NGO issued a release today amplifying new research out of Nature that it claims suggests transgenic maize cultivated in Spain will be able to pass DNA to teosinte plants, prompting the group to argue the EU GM maize approvals pose an environmental threat.
- Mexico-based news outlets reported that indigenous community organizations are questioning Quintana Roo government's recent decree that it is a GE-free region, arguing that such decrees can only be made by federal authorities such as SAGARPA and accusing the state government of a deceptive strategy to demobilize the struggle against GMOs. **See more.**
- The International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications report on the global growth of GM crop usage continues to generate coverage in several regions. An article out of Australia noted the report is prompting debate between environmental groups challenging the findings and industry representatives defending them. **See more**

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

North America

Commentary: Modern Farmer writer questions \$3M in federal spending bill for FDA campaign promoting GM foods; notes near-consensus on health safety but claims environmental risks, such as pesticide-resistant pests, exist; cites article on Republican supporters receiving donations from Monsanto

Letter to the editor: Colorado newspaper runs letter from local farmers who support Boulder County GMO crop ban, claiming higher yield with non-GMO farming; alleges Roundup kills microbial vitality of soil

Commentary: Hoosier Ag Today's Gary Truitt reports FDA will spend \$3M on campaign to educate consumers about agricultural biotechnology after key stakeholders sought to counter "a tremendous amount of misinformation;" predicts next 100 days could feature "more undoing of Obama era nonsense"

Commentary: Natural News contributor points to new court documents obtained by U.S. Right to Know demonstrating that Monsanto is allegedly "secretly" paying think tanks such as Genetic Literacy Project and American Council on Science and Health to promote safety of glyphosate and discredit "Health Ranger" Mike Adams

More North America items

Africa

News: Nigerian news outlet reports on recent workshop organized by National Biosafety Management Agency (NBMA) and Program for Biosafety Systems (PBS) to encourage collaboration of regulatory agencies, Minister of State for Environment Ibrahim Jibril noted importance of not running away from benefits of biotech and GMOs

News: South Africa's Engineering News reports Competition Commission approved Bayer acquisition of Monsanto upon condition that Bayer sell Liberty Link trait technology with obligations for buyer to commercialize

News: Nigerian news outlet reports women's rights activist speaks against GMO opponents raising false alarm about health and safety implications; adds outright opposition to new farm science directly contributes to continued growth of poverty and hunger in Nigeria

News: Ghanaian business news outlet reports on recent workshop where CropLife Ghana President William Kottey noted inadequate knowledge about products and inefficient import controls, leading to entry of illegal products, could undermine efforts to mitigate risks of pesticides to human health and the environment

News: French political news outlet reports on controversy surrounding Monsanto's GM cotton in Burkina Faso, Blandine Sankara of Citizen Collective for Agroecology (CCAÉ) praised government decision to halt cultivation of Monsanto's Bt cotton

News: Nigerian news outlet reports on development of non-GMO vitamin A rich cassava varieties by National Root Crops Research Institute (NRCRI), International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and HarvestPlus, highlighting World Bank estimate that Nigeria loses \$1.5 billion per year in GDP due to vitamin deficiencies

More Africa items

Asia

Study: University of Arizona, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences publish study in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences find hybrid of Bt cotton, non-Bt cotton prevents, reverses pesticide resistance in pink bollworm

News release: University of Arizona researchers contribute to study conducted in China finding hybrid mix of Bt cotton, non-Bt cotton in same field maintains pink bollworm susceptibility to pesticide, reverses evolution of resistance

Campaign: Italy resident launches Change.org petition calling on government of India to stop GMO trials claiming health risks, crop contamination, creation of superweeds, impact on bees, contamination of waterways

More Asia items

Europe

Commentary: British author Matt Ridley shares his recent Times column, an open letter to George Freeman MP, in which he calls for Britain to adopt the Innovation Principle, arguing that the Precautionary Principle is very harmful to innovation, pointing to lengthy and costly process of developing biotech products and pesticides

News: Agrow reports Testbiotech initiates lawsuit against the European Commission for approving the import and food-feed use of three GMO soybean lines from Bayer and Monsanto

News: Dutch food industry news outlet reports on MEPs' opposition to EU Commission plans to authorize imports of herbicide-tolerant GM maize and cotton in two new resolutions, highlighting concerns about

health risks of 2,4-D

News release: U.K. NGO GM Freeze voices opposition to Defra's approval of open air field trial of GM potatoes at The Sainsbury Laboratory, voicing concerns about food safety and GM contamination, and arguing that the potatoes have no benefit to society

News: Horticulture Week reports GM orange petunias found in the U.K. and Finland despite being banned in the EU; government trying to figure out the origin of the plants and seeds

News release: Testbiotech funds, amplifies research finding ongoing hybridization of maize and teosinte in Spain, suggesting Spain-grown GM maize will likely share DNA with local teosinte varieties, group believes findings will cause EU Commission to stop cultivation of GM maize

News: Swiss news site shares ISAAA report finding Mexico, Brazil, India areas of growth for GMO crops while Switzerland has moratorium; notes GM free zones in Mexico, India's effort to position country as "a champion of research" for GMO cotton

Commentary: German GMO-free site highlights increase in food products containing GM-free labels in Germany, notes Cargill's involvement with the Non-GMO Project shows demand from U.S. consumers

News: Agrow reports members of the European Parliament's Environment Committee have made another call for the European Commission to abandon proposed approvals for genetically modified crops

Report: EFSA releases annual post-market environmental report on MON 810, concluding no "decrease in susceptibility" to corn borers, also shows no effects on human or animal health

Commentary: German anti-genetic engineering information site reports in discussion on gene editing, scientists favor it as useful, low-cost, low-risk breeding tool for plants and animals; opponents say classifying gene editing as non-GE takes away freedom of choice from those opposed to genetic manipulation

Commentary: Organic farmer Tijs Boelens and Corporate Europe Observatory's Nina Holland write for Belgian news outlet, criticizing Young Green party's position on GMOs as demonstrating a "lack of knowledge," they claim there is no scientific consensus on GMO safety, and voice concern about influence of industry lobbyists

Study: Nature Genetics publishes Finland-led study examining adaptive landscape of the silver birch tree in Europe

News release: University of Buffalo promotes faculty research sequencing genomes of the silver birch tree across Europe; notes the research could be a starting point for breeding trees that better meet the needs of various industries

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Argentinian news outlet reports on Monsanto's legal claim against Santa Fe cooperative in Chaco, Unión Agrícola Avellaneda, for alleged unauthorized use of insect resistant Intacta soy technology

News: Mexican news outlet reports on indigenous community organizations' questioning of Quintana Roo government's recent GE-free region decree, arguing that such decrees can only be made by federal authorities such as SAGARPA, and accusing state government of deceptive strategy to demobilize struggle against GMOs

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Australian farming news site reports on annual ISAAA report; CropLife Australia CEO says

Australian farmers embrace GM seeds, lower pesticide, fuel use, greater flexibility; anti-GMO lobbyist Bob Phelps says only Brazil, U.S. saw meaningful growth, no new traits in GM seeds

Commentary: Tasmanian news site article by anti-GMO lobbyist negatively views ISAAA report stating GM crop growth primarily in U.S., Brazil; claims complex traits such as drought tolerance not delivered, GM seed companies merging due to small consumer market for GM foods

More Oceania items

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - May 8, 2017
 Date: Monday, May 8, 2017 4:03:15 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

This week's newsletter features articles on a wide range of topics:

- a response to a World Health Organization report that suggested pesticides play a key role in the death of children around the world;
- a U.K. research group suggesting the evidence for a European ban of neonics is lacking;
- thoughts from a Nobel laureate and other scientists on the potential of a genetically engineered moth;
- a New Zealand regulatory scientist criticizing a United Nations special report on pesticides;
- an examination of the growth of GMO crops in Bangladesh;
- a criticism of biotechnology opponents in Nigeria;
- and more

To view items on this newsletter, first log in to your profile on the [Bonus Eventus Community](#) page. If you have not yet created a Bonus Eventus account, simply [fill out the Request Membership form](#) on the front page of the site. To share articles, simply 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: AgroEcology Fund



While the AgroEcology Fund has not been a prominent figure in the news, its grantees (including Vandana Shiva, the Center for Food Safety and La Via Campesina) are making headlines almost daily across the globe attacking modern agriculture.

With a particular focus on

■ Stories Worth Sharing

Angela Logomasini: "Misguided" World Health Organization report faults pesticides for children's deaths when poverty is the real cause



Kavin Senapathy: Nobel laureate Richard Roberts sees GM diamondback moth as tool to fight the pest without insecticides



International research panel: New terminology needed to tackle antibiotic resistance; blame should not be placed on agriculture



Alex Berezow: U.S. Right to Know's anti-GMO efforts feed Russian propaganda



Julie Gunlock: Removing GMOs from store shelves won't improve public health but will impact Americans' food budgets



Scotland's Herald: Rothamsted Research team sees "lack of hard evidence" to support European neonic restrictions

New Zealand EPA chief scientist: UN special report misinterprets negative impact of pesticides, which increase crop yields



"Farm Babe" Michelle Miller: Natural, antibiotic-free, cage-free, organic labels all misleading



campaigns in Africa and Latin America, the AgroEcology Fund promotes activities to ban plant biotechnology, pesticides and other conventional agriculture practices and to restrict or block the use of these tools via legislative lobbying, lawsuits and other public advocacy campaigns.

Run with the support of the influential Arabella Advisors and their New Ventures Fund, the AgroEcology Fund advisory board also includes representatives from Greenpeace and the Pesticide Action Network.

[CLICK HERE](#) to learn more about the AgroEcology Fund.

[CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES](#)

[Caleb Onwe: "Horrifying level of ignorance and suspicion" evident among Nigerian opponents of biotechnology](#)

[Genetic Literacy Project: With Bt brinjal, field trials of other crops, Bangladesh becoming major producer of beneficial GM crops](#)

[University of Tennessee promotes study finding no measurable impact on honeybees from agricultural pesticide exposure](#)

[AgChat Foundation video shows how to extract DNA from strawberries, explains how genetic modification benefits consumers](#)

[Henry Miller: Colleges misleading students about sustainable farming, organic methods "hugely wasteful of arable land and water"](#)

[Stephan Neidenbach: "Zero evidence" that Monsanto pays people to post positive comments about the company online](#)

[Farmers Guardian: Easy for EU bureaucrats to shun biotechnology in Africa because their families are not the ones starving](#)

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What's Trending?

[European Commission releases new proposal to identify endocrine-disrupting chemicals, sets possible mid-May vote](#)

[ISAAA report: 3 percent more GM crops grown last year, with biggest increase in Brazil](#)

[Lab study by Canadian, U.K. researchers concludes thiamethoxam could impair bumblebee reproduction](#)

[Tyson to eliminate antibiotics from its poultry by end of 2017](#)

[Walmart, True Value commit to phasing out neonic products and neonic-treated plants](#)

Calendar highlights

May 8-11	May 8-12	May 9-10
Seed & Chips Global Food Innovation Summit	Agrotopia Academy of Agroecology conference in Belgium	Chemical Watch Biocides Symposium in Barcelona, Spain
May 10-11	May 10-11	May 11-13
North Carolina Biotechnology Center's Ag Biotech Entrepreneurial Showcase	Inaugural Animal Nutrition Conference of Canada	Seeds of Resilience Summit in Atrisco, N.M.

[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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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - May 5-7, 2017
 Date: Monday, May 8, 2017 12:44:30 AM

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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 monitoring included Syngenta shareholders approving the ChemChina offer. Activist and organic groups objected to the U.S. government budgeting \$3 million for a public information campaign on GM food. Following a U.S. Right to Know FOIA request, the *Canadian Broadcasting Corp.* reported on alleged conflicts of interest by the University of Saskatchewan's Peter Phillips in partnering with Monsanto.

- Syngenta shareholders voted Friday to approve ChemChina's \$43 billion purchase bid. NGO Pesticide Action Network noted the National Farmers Union and Iowa Farmers Union oppose the deal. The National Farmers Union claimed the merger would give Syngenta an unfair advantage in the Chinese market. **See more.**
- EcoWatch, March Against Monsanto, and Whole Foods magazine criticized the proposed federal budget for including \$3 million to inform the public regarding GMO safety. Whole Foods noted the natural food industry opposes GMOs for health and environmental reasons. **See more.**
- CBC reported on emails that USRTK's Gary Ruskin claims show professor Peter Phillips has a conflict of interest because of his work with Monsanto. Ruskin said Monsanto recruited a team of top academics in a "Machiavellian" effort to sway public opinion. **See more.**

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North America

Commentary: In part 3 of 5-part series, Daily Camera columnist Mara Abbott points out county's GMO ban means beet farmers cannot cultivate beets, disrupts sustainable system that saves water, reduces pesticide use, sequesters more carbon

News: Dow Jones Newswire reports Monsanto turns to new gene-edited crops, but faces more competition from DuPont, Dow

Commentary: Forbes columnist says Nobel Laureate Roberts calls diamondback moth a serious pest of crops such as cabbage and broccoli, feels GM diamondback moth provides another tool to fight it; Cornell University seeks approval for open field trial for the self-limiting moth

Commentary: EcoWatch contributor reports on Congressional budget deal allocating \$3 million for what she refers to as a "government-controlled propaganda campaign" on GMO safety, amplifies argument by Center for Food Safety's Andrew Kimbrell that Monsanto has plenty of money, meaning GMO advocacy should not be left to taxpayers

Commentary: Science blogger Stephan Neidenbach lists 10 best memes illustrating why we should support GM technology

News: Daily Caller reports on Ag Secretary Sonny Perdue's recent statement of opinion that labeling food as organic or non-GMO is mainly a marketing strategy, regarding federal GMO labeling law, Perdue

emphasized importance of providing consumers with all of the information they want without burdening and disrupting the supply chain

Commentary: Jon Entine and Rebecca Randall write for Genetic Literacy Project, examining many environmental benefits of no-till systems, and how glyphosate and herbicide-tolerant GM crops facilitate them, they acknowledge that over-reliance on one chemical can lead to resistance, and advocate diverse weed management strategies

Commentary: News Target contributor responds to recent Forbes article by Kavin Senapathy, accusing her of hypocrisy in her assessment that anti-GMO movement is sexist for targeting moms, pointing to her letter campaign with other pro-GMO moms in response to Just Label It's celebrity mom campaign

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Farmers Guardian editorial says African drive for innovation and science to meet food security needs exposes EU's arrogance and detachment from farming realities, adds bureaucrats in Brussels shun GM crops because "when they return home, they will not find their families starving"

News: Ghana news site reports former deputy ag minister says Ghana needs GM technology for food security, says Africa should benefit from biotechnology

News: Xinhua News Agency reports scientists are stressing novel technologies, partnerships, awareness campaigns are key to containing fall armyworms that are ravaging crops in several African countries

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: The Times of India reports think-tank NITI Aayog points to growing acceptance of GM crops, notes Bt cotton success in India, draws ire of RSS-affiliate Swadeshi Jagran Manch accuses it of serving corporations, disputes that Indian farmers enthusiastic about Bt cotton

News: Indian news site reports area planted with Bt cotton declined for first time in 2016 after bad experience the previous year

Commentary: UN ESCAP Committee on Science Technology & Innovation director says Pakistan, world need GM crops to feed growing population, GM mosquitoes can help control disease

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Italian news site reports molecular biology researcher Nina Fedoroff says continuous population growth requires GM crops to help grow more food with fewer resources; notes humans have modified food for centuries

News release: EuropaBio issues call for applications for Most Innovative European Biotech SME Awards 2017, inviting small and medium sized biotech companies to apply in either healthcare, agricultural or industrial biotech, applications are due June 26

Commentary: In sponsored content for Politico, EuropaBio posts interactive quiz on GM crops in Europe, pointing out paradox of widespread opposition to GM crops while EU relies heavily on GM imports, the quiz highlights scientific consensus on GMO safety, as well as statistics on GM crop adoption

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Mayan news site writer criticizes government for non-legally binding declaration that

Quintana Roo is GMO-free while Monsanto has GM soy permit; says government turns its back on Mayans, beekeepers, farmers; calls for canceling Monsanto's GMO license

News: Argentina news site reports Greenpeace report denounces seed bill, claims conflict of interest for officials, direct links from scientific NGOs supporting bill for seed, agrochemical companies; alleges bill would harm native people, environment, health of farmers, food quality

News: Ecuadorian news site reports national assembly approves seed law with 76 affirmative and 20 abstaining votes, debate on law "defined by prohibition of the entry and use of transgenic seeds" and protection, marketing and exchange of native seeds

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Commentary: Australian beekeeping supply site details threats of neonics in Part 1 of two-part series, cites studies finding neonics help farmers economically, but notes the studies are suspect because they were chemical industry funded, highlights other findings of insecticides linked to CCD, viruses, reduced reproduction, foraging problems in bees

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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 monitoring included the release of International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications' annual report. European Commissioners said the EU needs "a broad reflection" on new breeding techniques (NBTs) in light of a scientific report on gene editing.

- The ISAAA annual report revealed 26 countries grew biotech crops on 185.1 million hectares, an increase of 5.4 million hectares or 3 percent over 2015. Anti-biotech NGO InFOGM disputed the ISAAA's figures. **See more.**
- EurActiv reported a European Commission spokesman said the Scientific Advice Mechanism report on NBTs shows the EU should "move away from a GMO-centered discussion" regarding plant breeding innovation because the techniques are so different they should not be evaluated as a group. *The Epoch Times* reported Greenpeace is campaigning to regulate NBTs as GMOs. **See more.**

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North America

Commentary: Henry Miller writes for National Review, criticizing Stanford University's organic teaching gardens as misleading, points out several ways in which organic ag practices are less sustainable than conventional, including greater land use due to lower yields, believes it makes no sense that modern technologies like GMOs are shunned

Commentary: Kauai blogger amplifies Washington Post, Boulder Daily Camera pieces casting doubt on perceived benefits of organic farming, foods

News: Politico's morning ag news roundup reports recently passed omnibus spending bill includes \$3 million for FDA consumer outreach program on biotech, while it did not include rules for how USDA should implement GM food labeling, Ag Secretary Perdue emphasized importance of providing consumers with access to information they want

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: U.S.-based farming news site reports South Africa is only food-secure nation in Africa, despite farmers facing numerous hardships; notes it also grows GM crops

News: Cameroon Tribune reports African experts brainstorming on biosafety capacity development during two-day meeting in the nation's capital; NEPAD regional head says biosafety must be protected while biotechnology is used

Commentary: Agriculturalist Isaac Ongu writes for Genetic Literacy Project, reporting on recent Earth

Day observance and science march in Uganda, highlighting students who came out to march to show support for biotech

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Filipino news site reports Negros Occidental to expand anti-GMO law to use in fight against HFCS, also could come to legislate against other GM products

Commentary: Contributor to Indian publication Swarajya voices concern about several new technologies including GMOs, claiming they pose health risks and push farmers into a cycle of dependency, and points out that pests have developed resistance to Monsanto's Bt cotton

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Natural Society reports GMO "super wheat" approved to be grown in U.K. cross-contamination concerns; notes unauthorized Roundup Ready wheat has been discovered growing in U.S. fields at least four times

News: Belgium news source reports the European Academies' Science Advisory Council says the EU needs to "urgently" clarify the status of organisms bred using gene editing because they fall outside the scope of regulations on GMOs; notes EASAC's recommendations intended to provide road map for policymakers

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Ecuadorian environmental NGO warns draft seed law establishes artificial division by stating native seeds constitute people's heritage but genetic resources are state's patrimony

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News release: GE-Free New Zealand announces benefit of ability for regions to declare themselves GE-free, pointing to recent Nielsen survey showing 70 percent of Chinese consumers seek out non-GMO products, noting New Zealand's free trade deal with China has seen investment due to GE-free status

[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 monitoring included an American Council on Science and Health article asserting that U.S. Right to Know campaigns aid Russian propaganda. A Colorado columnist continued a series on the Boulder County Commission's decision to ban GM crops from public lands. The struggle to commercialize GM crops in Nigeria continued as a biotech agency director and NGO directors advocated for and against biotechnology in the country.

- ACSH's Alex Berezow demonstrated how U.S. Right to Know director Gary Ruskin, along with the Organic Consumers Association's Ronnie Cummins, aids Russian propaganda by undermining Americans' confidence in science and technology. [See more.](#)
- A Colorado newspaper columnist continued her series of articles on Boulder County's ban on GMOs, noting that the organic movement profits from making a "bogeyman" of GM crops. [See more.](#)
- Nigeria's National Biotechnology Development Agency director said GM crops are key to Nigeria's food security, while two environmental and health NGOs called for repeal of the National Biosafety Act and Monsanto's GMO permits. [See more.](#)

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

North America

News: Washington Post reports FDA will allocate \$3 million to fund campaign to promote GMOs in food under recently passed government budget agreement, following recent letter from over 50 ag and food industry groups voicing concern about widespread misinformation about biotech, opponents believe taxpayers shouldn't pay for industry PR

News release: Cornell University promotes Gates Foundation-funded study published in Nature Genetics journal finding cassava is genetically decaying, putting important crop at risk

Commentary: North Carolina State University genetic engineering researcher writing in Slate details how synthetic biology allows government to engineer insects to deliver protective genes to plants and other advances to use for military applications, focusing on countering biological threats

Commentary: Michigan news source publishes piece by Traverse City Area Chamber of Commerce researcher who highlights biotech products' unpopularity with some consumers, notes they have increased production significantly

Commentary: Rachel Parent writes for Huffington Post Canada in support of mandatory GMO labeling, highlighting Health Canada survey which found that 78 percent of Canadians want GMO labeling, claims there is no scientific consensus on GMO safety, and that proposed labeling bill is not anti-GMO, but pro-transparency

News: Capital Press reports on EPA approval of herbicide to control GM bentgrass that escaped field trials, drifted in two Ontario counties

More North America items

Africa

Announcement: Third World Network bookstore posts "Bt Cotton in Burkina Faso: When Theory Does Not Match Reality," claiming to tell the story of the failure of GM cotton in the country, discusses reasons for "debacle," including commercial interest in pushing corporate-owned Bt technology

News: Nigerian news outlet reports President of Biotechnology Society of Nigeria believes biotech crops will facilitate agricultural growth and food security, urges anti-GM advocates to not play politics with biotech

News: South African newspaper reports African Centre for Biodiversity is asking court to overturn government decisions to approve commercialization of Monsanto's drought-resistant maize; spokesman claims group objects due to "environmental damage" and restrictions on farmers' ability to save seeds

News: Nigerian newspaper amplifies joint statement of environmental and health NGOs calling for repeal of National Biosafety Act, revocation of Monsanto's GMO permits to protect nation's food, environment

More Africa items

Asia

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project contributor examines Bangladesh's success in GM crop development, highlighting successful adoption of Bt eggplant, and field trials of Bt cotton, GM disease-resistant potato, and golden rice, believes Bangladesh has potential to become a major producer of GM crops

News: Chinese news outlet reports on Ministry of Science and Technology's new plan for biotech innovation, which estimates that China's biotech sector will exceed four percent of GDP by 2020, with biotech advancements expected in medicine, agriculture, resources and environmental protection

News: Xinhua reports China has conditionally approved Dow-DuPont merger, asks companies to divest some businesses as precondition of approval; notes the conglomerate would control 40 percent of China's weed-killer market

More Asia items

Europe

News: Agrow reports advisers say new plant breeding techniques need separate EU reviews because they differ from GMOs significantly

Video: CropLife shares series of videos touting biotech crops as solution for food security in various African countries; highlights Water Efficient Maize for Africa, cowpea, cotton

News: Western Balkans news site reports Serbian grain association director says Serbia likely to "soften its position" on its GMO ban in order to join WTO

News: Bulgarian agricultural news site reports GMO Resistance meeting attracts 130 activists from 30 countries; says activists look to counter agribusinesses that seek to change definition of GMOs, call for "convergence of actions around the world against" GMOs

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Mexican news site reports peasant group leader denounces state government for weakness in protecting beekeeping from GM crops; said risk is ministers will support GM crops, which will lead to beekeeping disaster

News: Telesur reports activists sue Monsanto for countering negative Internet comments with hired individuals to post positive comments about GMOs, other products; claims Monsanto uses "pseudo-scientific" studies to back its safety claims

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

There were no noteworthy biotechnology developments in Oceania in 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

Global biotechnology monitoring today featured a new European Food Safety Authority draft risk assessment on low-level GMO presence in food and feed imports, a preview of field-trial research on genetically engineered algae and stakeholder response to and new developments in the major agribusiness mergers.

- The European Food Safety Authority opened a public consultation on of the low-level presence of genetically modified plant material in imported food and feed. It will accept comments through June 13. **See more**
- An **embargoed news release** from the University of California, San Diego announces faculty scientists and researchers from Sapphire Energy have completed the first outdoor field trial sanctioned by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for genetically engineered algae. Results showed that genetically engineered algae can be successfully cultivated outdoors without adversely impacting native algae populations. The research will appear in the journal *Algal Research*. The release is embargoed until Thursday (May 4). **See more**
- The China Ministry of Commerce approved the Dow-DuPont merger contingent on DuPont divesting components of its pesticide business (**see more**). Meanwhile, the National Farmers Union wrote a letter urging U.S. Federal Trade Commission Secretary Donald Clark to oppose the ChemChina-Syngenta merger due to concerns it would disrupt trade flows and accelerate agriculture industry consolidation (**see more**). In Europe, several MEPs wrote to Bayer shareholders to urge them to stop the planned merger with Monsanto, claiming Monsanto's environmentally unfriendly business practices would damage Bayer's image (**see more**).

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North America

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project managing editor Tim Barker examines debate over National Academies of Science's GMO report, highlights argument by Val Giddings and Henry Miller that the report did not go far enough in affirming consensus on GMO safety, and that it contains several inaccuracies

News release: Danforth Plant Science Center announces its researchers have discovered gene that influences grain yield in grasses related to food crops; lead researcher says new determinant identified in control of grain yield that could be crucial to improving food crops like maize

Commentary: Robert Schooler, Cornell student and creator of an anti-GMO course, writes open letter to Bill Nye criticizing GMO episode of his new Netflix show, accuses Nye of spreading propaganda, ignoring science on risks of GMOs, and dismissing valid concerns, criticizes appearance by Monsanto's Robb Fraley

Campaign: Organic Consumers Association email asks Canadian residents to call MPs and tell them to vote yes on Bill C-291 requiring labels on foods containing GMOs; second debate on bill set for May 5

News release: Biotechnology Innovation Organization welcomes release of US Trade Representative's 2017 intellectual property rights report, notes emphasis on legal protections, enforcement issues, restrictive patentability criteria, lengthy patent backlogs, and threat of outright expropriation affecting future of biotechnology

News: Science magazine reports "Food Evolution" documentary helping show benefits of GM crops helping to convince undecided public, skeptics still wary of safety; notes Ugandan farmer excited about GM banana government will not allow her to grow

News: CBC reports AquaBounty facility on Prince Edward Island to produce GE salmon will not need new federal assessment, Atlantic Salmon Federation worries fish sterilization not guaranteed

Campaign: Organic Consumers Association's Ronnie Cummins calls for help building "resist and regenerate" meetup groups to fight corporate takeover of America's democracy, says USDA decision to not test foods for Roundup and EPA's reversal on Dow's chlorpyrifos are part of national emergency

News: Associated Press reports court delays first of tens of thousands of lawsuits against Syngenta for introducing GE corn variety before China approved it for imports

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: French news outlet reports Common Front formed out of recently completed Second International Meeting of Resistance to GMOs in Lorient, actions to be primarily directed towards Africa

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science says recent March for Science in Nigeria aimed at fostering better relationships between scientific community and public; speakers addressed safe adoption of biotechnology in agriculture, adding science has played vital role in green revolution

Commentary: Nigerian news site columnist writes about Earth Day observance in Abuja, laments country's "horrifying level of ignorance and suspicion" of science, as evidenced by public outcry opposing biotechnology; amplifies remarks by director of National Biotechnology Development Agency on biotechnology's potential as solution to food security

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: Treehugger amplifies Fairtrade International report on multiple long-term threats facing cotton farmers, including climate change, food security and biotechnology; adds India farmer suicides linked to "ugly cycle of dependence" on GM seeds and chemicals

Commentary: EcoWatch amplifies Reuters report of declining GM soy sales in China, claims consumers "growing increasingly wary" of GM products and asking for non-GM alternatives, despite government assurances of safety

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Audio: Radio France Internationale podcast talks to activist Elsa Garrido about her hunger strike and launch of Sao Tome and Principe Pro-Environment Movement against introduction of GM maize on Sao Tome Island

News: The Scientist reports on John Innes Centre researchers' development of transgenic plants that reduce the green peach aphid's chance of survival and the aphid's ability to develop pesticide resistance quickly

Commentary: EuropaBio calls for EU member states to "overcome GMO hypocrisy" in sponsored content for Politico, criticizing member states that vote against GM imports even though their economies are dependent on GMOs, highlights many benefits of GM crops, and potential to improve food security and the economy

News: Politico's morning ag roundup reports on Health Canada's assessment that glyphosate is safe for humans and the environment, several MEPs write letter to Bayer shareholders opposing acquisition of Monsanto, Cornell Alliance for Science corrects Politico's reporting on its assessment of AAAS study on GM crop safety

Commentary: French political magazine amplifies biologist Christian Velot's speech at international Lorient conference against GMOs, claims ag companies lie to consumers on animal feed ingredients, strong mobilization of citizens keeps Monsanto from being accepted

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Uruguayan news source amplifies Plant Biotechnology Journal study by scientists from Japan's Riken Institute and CIAT researchers reporting on development of "very promising" drought-resistant GM rice

News: Mexican news site reports state government legal counsel declares Yucatan will remain GM-free, counsel says decision made for "health of the people and to preserve the environment"

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

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

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 Date: Monday, May 1, 2017 9 05:38 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Global biotechnology monitoring today featured discussion of how Europe should regulate new breeding techniques, promotion of research sequencing the complete genome of barley and additional opposition to Nigeria's biosafety bill from the Health of Mother Earth Foundation.

- The EU Commission's Scientific Advice Mechanism published an explanatory note asserting that new techniques, which include genome editing, differ enough that it is "not optimal" to group them together and they should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The note will be debated at a Sept. 28 meeting. In Germany, the agriculture ministry opened a multi-part dialogue on genome editing, with the next debate scheduled for June. **See more.**
- The University of California-Riverside and Australia's Murdoch University issued news released promoting their researchers' involvement in a paper published in *Nature* on sequencing the complete genome of barley. Researchers say the findings will help them create more resilient and higher-yielding barley varieties through breeding and genetic modification. Coverage noted the research could lead to better beer and whiskey. **See more.**
- The Health of Mother Earth Foundation promoted its recent training session for journalists that claimed Nigeria's biosafety bill would benefit corporations and GM crops could pose risks to human health and the environment. It also gained local coverage in *The Guardian* newspaper. **See more.**

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North America

Event: Committee for Skeptical Inquiry hosting annual conference Oct. 26-29 in Las Vegas, Kevin Folta and Kavin Senapathy among scheduled speakers

Commentary: Huffington Post editor highlights public misperception around GMOs in trailer to Bill Nye's Netflix show, "Bill Nye Saves the World"

Commentary: Daily Camera community columnist, in first of five-part GMO series, speaks out against Boulder County GMO ban and anti-GM advocacy groups who attack GM crops as "proxy" for other issues, affirms technology offers environmental and economic benefits

Commentary: Extra Newsfeed contributor criticizes GMO episode of Bill Nye's new Netflix show, notes that while there is nothing wrong with GMOs in and of themselves and that they are safe for human consumption, he opposes corporate control of our food system and Monsanto's business practices, criticizes Nye for having a Monsanto executive on his panel

Commentary: Beyond Pesticides reports on field trials of mosquitoes infected with Wolbachia bacteria near Key West, in effort to curb spread of zika, highlights development of GE mosquitoes as well as several pesticides that are frequently used for mosquito control, advocates use of less risky alternatives

Commentary: Farmer's Daughter blogger Amanda Zaluckyj explains several environmental and economic benefits of no-till systems, notes GM crops make it easier to employ no-till on a wider scale

Commentary: Hoosier Ag Today staffer highlights University of Illinois study that consumers place more trust in food attribute labels such as "hormone-free," "non-GMO" than nutrition, health, price; notes labels not regulated, do not have to be factual, imply that hormones are used in some poultry when they are not

Commentary: Natural News claims study on GM nematodes shows genetic modifications "can persist and remain active throughout many generations" and have lasting effect on species "more far reaching than we could have ever imagined"

Event: French-American Science Festival 2017 includes May 2 presentation in Chicago by AgroParisTech, Pennsylvania State University professor on recent applications of genome-editing technologies in crops, farm animals; notes need for new EU regulatory approach for new cultivated plant varieties

More North America items

Africa

News: Nigerian news outlet reports anti-GMO advocacy group, in training session for journalists, claims country's GM crops are cancerous, unsafe for environment; add current Biosafety Act signed under pressure from commercial groups

Commentary: Joyce Ebebeinwe of Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEF) writes for Nigerian environment news site, recounting recent Media Training on Biosafety event, where HOMEF director Nnimmo Bassey warned that Nigeria's biosafety bill may serve corporate interests over the people's, other speakers pointed to health and environmental risks of GMOs

More Africa items

Asia

Commentary: Indian news outlet contributor claims Green Revolution and use of agricultural chemicals has led to soil depletion and other negative environmental effects, advocates transition to organic practices, notes government assistance will be necessary to help farmers make the transition

Commentary: Research intern at Carnegie India writes for local news outlet, advocates increased advancement in RNAi research, highlighting enormous potential of the technology in both medicine and agriculture, points to India's challenges with traditional GMOs, including GM mustard controversy

More Asia items

Europe

News: Agence France-Presse reports protesters from Middle East, Europe, South Africa gather in Brittany to oppose seizure and licensing of seeds, imposition of GMO seeds, affirm right to food sovereignty

News release: German Federation for the Organic Food Industry's (BÖLW) Managing Director Peter Röhrig made statement at recent Food and Ag Ministry dialogue event, where he voiced concern that patents are already being registered on products of new breeding techniques, despite lack of clarity on legal status of technologies like CRISPR

News release: German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) announces allocation of six million Euros to fund a "National Research Strategy BioEconomy 2030" crop improvement initiative over the next two years, Research Minister Johanna Wanka emphasized need for crops with higher yields that are resistant to effects of climate change

Announcement: German government's Bioeconomy Council notes beginning of agriculture ministry's multi-part dialogue process on dealing with genome editing; next discussion planned for June 26

News release: European Commission's Scientific Advice Mechanism promotes review finding new techniques in agricultural biotechnology, including gene editing, differ significantly and it is "not optimal" to group them together; public debate planned Sept. 28

News: U.K. subscription agriculture news site reports on French government report ruling gene-editing technology such as CRISPR should be exempted from laws governing GMOs

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Mexican news outlet reports on Quintana Roo Environment Secretary Alfredo Arellano's support of beekeepers in efforts to keep the state GMO-free, noting negative impact of GM soy on honey production

News: Colombian news outlet reports on recent tests by National University of Colombia Food Science and Technology master's student which found traces of GMOs in 13 maize cereal samples, several of which were labeled as organic, highlights Colombia's current GMO labeling laws

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: The Guardian examines future of Australia's cotton industry, concerns over water use and climate change impacts; highlights national science agency's work with Monsanto to roll out genetically modified varieties better suited to Australia's climate

News: Australian Associated Press reports Murdoch University professor leads global team to map two of seven chromosomes of barley DNA; findings will be used to modify crops to increase tolerance to drought, heat, avoid disease, yield better beer

News release: Murdoch University professor leads global alliance to map two of seven barley chromosomes allowing for identification of genes that control yield, adaption to climate, quality, pest, disease tolerance; university department head says discovery will enhance industry productivity, profitability, global food security

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

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - May 1, 2017
 Date: Monday, May 1, 2017 4:01:15 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

Issues with armyworms in southern Africa have drawn international media coverage and a response from the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization. In this week's Favorable Outcomes newsletter, we feature an editorial from Uganda suggesting that this year's pest issues should encourage the government to pass a biotechnology bill that would help prevent pest issues for farmers in the future.

Other items include a criticism of California's plan to list glyphosate as a carcinogen based on the questionable findings of the International Agency for Research on Cancer, a piece by National Cattlemen's Beef Association CEO Kendal Frazier questioning the motives of the Humane Society of the United States and a study suggesting most teachers in Mexico would be interested in learning more about genetically modified foods.

To view items on this newsletter, first log in to your profile on the [Bonus Eventus Community](#) page. If you have not yet created a Bonus Eventus account, simply [fill out the Request Membership form](#) on the front page of the site. To share articles, simply 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: Christopher Portier



International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) expert consultant and Environmental Defense Fund senior scientist Chris Portier is generating social media buzz this week after it was disclosed he is now also

Stories Worth Sharing

[Uganda's Daily Monitor: Armyworm infestation a reminder to pass biotechnology bill so farmers have protection against pests](#)

[Richard Levine: U.S. Geological Survey expert sees habitat loss - not neonics - as key threat to wild bees](#)

[Julie Kelly/Henry Miller: California's listing of glyphosate as potential carcinogen based on "flawed" logic of IARC](#)

[Hank Campbell: Activist groups single out American Council on Science and Health as blocking spread of "fear and doubt about farming"](#)

[National Cattlemen's Beef Association CEO: "Radical" Humane Society has singular goal of putting cattlemen out of business](#)

[Jenny Splitter: "I don't have to buy organic to make sure my kids are safer or healthier" because GM, conventional foods are safe](#)

[Science 2.0: Study claiming thiamethoxam impacts bees' ability to fly not based on real world tests](#)

[Mexican research: 47 percent of teachers say they don't know enough about GM foods, 90 percent interested in learning more](#)

...serving as an expert consultant in lawsuits alleging glyphosate causes health risks, including cancer.

Portier led the IARC committee that decided to review glyphosate while failing to disclose his direct conflicts of interest being employed by an NGO known for its advocacy opposing pesticide use. He later was appointed to serve as the only invited outside expert to the subsequent IARC committee that claimed glyphosate causes cancer.

Since that time, Portier has been lobbying U.S. and European governments to ban the herbicide and is now also profiting from plaintiffs' attorneys suing over its use.

[CLICK HERE](#) to learn more about Portier.

[CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES](#)

[Center for Consumer Freedom research director: Activist demands on antibiotics, organic farming "aren't actually good for the environment"](#)

[The Hindu: Biofortification could be the solution for dietary micronutrient deficiencies](#)

[Iowa editorial: Farmers demonstrating how collaboration with conservationists can preserve soil and water](#)

[Genetic Literacy Project: Australia losing out on economic benefits, reduced herbicide use and greenhouse gas emissions due to sluggish adoption of GM crops](#)

[CLICK FOR BONUS EVENTUS MONITORING](#)

What's Trending?

[Syngenta CEO: ChemChina deal expected to close in May](#)

[Defra rejects National Farmers Union's request for exemption to European neonic ban](#)

[Prince Edward Island accepting public comments on AquaBounty proposal to expand GE salmon operation](#)

[European College of Commissioners bumps glyphosate reauthorization from meeting agenda](#)

[University of California-San Diego study claims thiamethoxam exposure disrupts honeybees' ability to fly](#)

Calendar highlights

May 1	May 2	May 3-4
NGOs mobilize for May Day	Environmental Working Group "Earth Dinner" to honor Whole Foods CEO	Animal Agriculture Alliance Stakeholders Summit
May 4-5	May 4	May 6
UCLA Chemical Entanglements Symposium featuring Tyrone Hayes, Andrea Gore	Cornell University Antimicrobial Resistance Symposium with keynote from CDC official	Tyrone Hayes, Warren Porter speak at Ecology Center "Pesticides, corporations and scientific integrity" event

[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 - April 28-30, 2017
 Date: Sunday, April 30, 2017 9:03:12 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 protests at a Bayer shareholder meeting. NGOs meeting in France intend to coordinate activist actions worldwide, and reports indicated Chinese consumers' fear of GM products is impacting producers.

- Reuters and German media reported demonstrators outside a Bayer shareholders meeting protested the company's purchase of Monsanto. Bayer CEO Werner Baumann told shareholders Monsanto's reputation will be a "major challenge," but the acquisition is a "perfect fit for our strategy" and creates "substantial additional value." **See more.**
- Reuters reported Chinese consumers' fear of GMOs is beginning impact the crushing industry, which relies on GM soy. **See the Reuters report.** *The American Interest* amplified the report and commented, "It's vitally important that this emotional rejection of GMOs is fought" because GM products are needed to feed an expanding world population. **See *The American Interest* article.**
- The "GMO Resistance" meeting in Lorient, France, sought "to coordinate the action of activists from all continents," according to French radio news site Hit West. The site reported delegates from NGOs in 30 nations attended the weekend event. During the meeting, Ali Tapsoba from Burkina Faso told participants, "If we allow multinationals to privatize seeds, they will decide how we think (and) eat." **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: [Kavin Senapathy writes for Forbes, praising CNN Chief Medical Correspondent Sanjay Gupta's decision to back out of 6th annual Food Revolution Summit, noting other "experts" listed on the summit include Vandana Shiva and David Perlmutter, and that the event's website contains false information about GMO safety](#)

Commentary: [Boston Globe amplifies The Ecologist article claiming gene-edited and synbio products are less predictable than GMOs, thus they should have more stringent regulations; says genetic engineers trying to dodge GE stigma](#)

News: [Daily Caller reports on Harvard physician Jeremy Faust's concerns about recent science march, highlighting his argument that science is being undermined from within, as researchers are pressured to publish research rapidly and continuously, and his criticism of several environmental groups for false belief that GMOs are dangerous](#)

Commentary: [Wesley Smith of Institute of Religion and Public Life publication First Things accuses Bill Nye of undermining science by politicizing it, criticizes recent science march, notes certain views on controversial issues like GMOs are frequently labeled "anti-science," questions authority of scientific consensus](#)

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Executive Director of the Nigeria-based NGO, Every Woman Hope Centre says modern biotech is a 'boon' to biodiversity, all Nigerians must beware of 'misleading activism'; asserts that incessant clamor against the Biosafety Act directly contributes to the continued poverty and hunger

News: Reuters reports fall armyworm invasion has spread to Angola, according to FAO's Joyce Mulila Mitti, who noted that small farmers often don't have the money or expertise to use pesticides effectively

News: Local news source reports HOMEF is urging the Nigerian government to nullify permits granted to Monsanto for the commercialization of GMO maize and cotton; notes the group blames NABDA, which was not established to 'promote toxic chemicals in the country'

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Indian news site reports RSS group wins GMO debate with think-tank Niti Aayog, notes Niti-Aayog's draft of 3-year-plan says alternatives to GM crops should be explored

News: Vietnamese news outlet reports on debate over GMO safety, highlights claims that GMOs cause increased toxicity and allergenicity, and that they are harmful to soil health and biodiversity, also reports on debate surrounding GMO labeling in the US and the EU

News: Asian Scientist reports Chinese researchers have, for the first time, developed an easier way to edit multiple genes with CRISPR technology, ultimately demonstrating 'high efficiency multiplex gene editing in plants'

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Italian news site reports ag association Coldiretti claims honey imported from China contains GM pollen, recommends using honey "made in Italy"

Commentary: Paste Magazine contributor Anna Brones touts documentary "Seed: The Untold Story," an exposé focused on how seeds and seed diversity are essential to our existence; claims as seed diversity is lost we are more threatened so we must take action against large corporations

Report: In 2016 GMO Network members attended EFSA scientific meetings for GMO risk assessment, developed EFSA guidance documents: the supplementary guidance for allergenicity assessment of GM plants and (2) the guidance for risk assessment of low levels of GM food

Audio: French radio news site posts podcast on anti-GMO meetings in Lorient over weekend, organizer interviewed says objective is to "coordinate action of activists from all continents"

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Uruguayan news site reports Agriculture Minister Tabaré Aguerre says government's biotech regulations so strict it has not approved GM products that are approved in Germany, notes gene editing soon will supplant transgenic technology

News: El Salvadoran news outlet reports on Agricultural and Agroindustrial Chamber of El Salvador (CAMAGRO) President Agustín Martínez's recent statement on importance of biotech for boosting agricultural productivity, and making crops more resilient to pests and climate change, he noted resistance to the technology is based on ideology

Interview: News site for University of Costa Rica interviews Mexican UNAM scientist who warns about

"serious risks to biodiversity and health" from GM crops, claims GM model "totally unfeasible" with unfulfilled promises of alleviating hunger and decreasing pesticide use

More Latin America items

Oceania

There were no noteworthy biotechnology developments in Oceania during the weekend 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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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - April 27, 2017
 Date: Thursday, April 27, 2017 9:00:40 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included the Cornell Alliance for Science requesting that *Politico* correct a report that one of its studies challenged American Association for the Advancement of Science statements. The American Council on Science and Health announced it was tabbed by a law firm and U.S. Right to Know as the biggest reason activist claims against the food supply did not gain more traction. The Center for Food Safety began a petition opposing changes to agricultural regulations.

- *Politico Pro* reported that Cornell Alliance for Science "poked holes" in claims by the AAAS that consuming GMOs was no more risky than consuming conventionally produced food. The report suggested that Cornell published a literature review of 12,000 abstracts that was challenged by a piece in the journal *Frontiers for Public Health*. The Alliance for Science sent *Politico* a correction notice that stated the organization has never challenged AAAS claims, that its study is currently underway and has not yet been published and that *Frontiers* is listed as a predatory pay-for-play publisher. **See more.**
- The ACSH's Hank Campbell announced an environmental law firm and USRTK's Gary Ruskin singled out the science association as the the biggest reason that \$1 billion in activist spending failed to gain more ground in campaigns seeking to undermine confidence in the food supply. Campbell said this occurred despite the fact that activist groups outspent ACSH 1,000 to 1. **See more.**
- The Center for Food Safety said President Donald Trump ordered USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue do a 180-day review to eliminate "unnecessary regulations" and created a task force to eliminate policies and regulations hindering agribusiness profits, claiming "the oversight, production, and export of genetically engineered crops are high on the list." The NGO urged readers to sign a petition in protest. **See more.**

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

North America

Commentary: American Council on Science and Health's Hank Campbell announces that ACSH has been singled out by an environmental law firm and US Right to Know's Gary Ruskin as the key reason that \$1 billion in activist spending has failed to gain more traction, notes ASCH is outspent 1,000 to 1 by anti-science groups

Commentary: Competitive Enterprise Institute policy director argues new Trump task force needs to "remove barriers to innovation," including rules on biotech regulation

Commentary: Canadian anti-GMO NGO Vigilance OGM voices opposition to AquaBounty's request to Prince Edward Island government for approval of a new facility to produce GE salmon, voicing concern about negative environmental impact should GE salmon be released into the wild, claiming land-based containment still poses risks

Campaign: Just Label It email urges supporters to ask Nestlé to label GMOs, criticizes company for labeling GMOs on packaging globally but not in U.S.

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project contributor examines recent Breitbart vs. Kellogg's incident, noting it forced some anti-GMO liberals to support the food manufacturer's decision to pull advertising from the far right-wing news outlet, with some acknowledging that the GMO argument has been "overblown"

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: East African Vanguard reports Ugandan MPs throw Makerere University lecturer out of national biosafety bill discussion for openly describing presenter who favors modern biotech research as incompetent

News: Xinhua reports professor Caroline Thoruwa, chairperson of African Women in Science and Engineering, calls on Kenyan government to increase funding for agricultural biotechnology to help empower female scientists

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Vietnamese news site questions Monsanto Dekalb director on Monsanto tribunal accusations, says Monsanto is different company than the one that manufactured Agent Orange, notes it now provides GM seeds that help farmers; activists point out it manufactures glyphosate, other pesticides

News: Pakistan Today reports international academicians and scientists attend Islamabad workshop to promote safe use of modern biotech to attain food security and defeat poverty; Pakistani Minister for Food Security and Research says safe use of modern biotechnology needed to enhance agricultural production

News: DNA India reports local seed firm appeals against Delhi High Court, rejecting its claim that Monsanto was incorrectly granted patent for Bt cotton seeds; court said if the company wants to use Monsanto's technology, it has to pay

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: St. Louis Business Journal reports on Molotov cocktail attack on Monsanto facility in Olmeneta, Italy, the facility is still operational but has suffered close to hundreds of thousands of Euros in damage, the attacker also sprayed a message against Monsanto's merger with Bayer

News: French news site reports Burkina Faso's Blandine Sankara to speak at International Meeting of Resistance to GMOs

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Agencia EFE reports CropLife's Jose Perdomo notes Latin America has 25 percent of world's arable land, can plant year-round, but must increase food production 60 percent by 2050; Agro-Bio director says with less space to produce more, world needs GM crops

Study: Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Education journal publishes Mexican university research finding 47 percent of Mexican teachers reported not having enough knowledge about GM foods while 90 percent expressed interest to learn about biotechnology; adds teachers may influence attitudes of children about GM food

Commentary: Universidad Nacional Agraria La Molina biologist David Castro explains gene introduction can generate changes in expression, causing variation in concentration of proteins, fats, other metabolites, but it doesn't necessarily create a risk; notes GM products are tested for safety

[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 - April 26, 2017
 Date: Wednesday, April 26, 2017 9:04:01 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included a group opposing a plan to raise GE salmon on Canada's Prince Edward Island. Indian cotton farmers are reportedly returning to Bt cotton seed after trying out indigenous varieties.

- During a public meeting, the Council of Canadians' provincial chapter opposed AquaBounty's plan to raise GE salmon on Prince Edward Island. *The Guardian* reported there were mixed opinions at the meeting, as some believed the plan would bring "innovative jobs" to the area. According to *CBC*, the Prince Edward Island Salmon Council requested a federal risk assessment. [See more.](#)
- *Tribune News Service* reported Indian cotton farmers are planting Bt cotton seed once again after they found indigenous cotton varieties did not recover their input costs. Seed companies say Bt cotton seed is selling at a premium while there are no takers for indigenous or "desi" varieties. [See more.](#)
- A group of NGOs, the Stop Bayer/Monsanto Alliance, announced plans to protest the proposed merger at the Bayer shareholder meeting in Bonn, Germany, on Friday. The city of Bonn wants to move the demonstration from United Nations Square in front of the building to a side street. [See more.](#)

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

North America

Commentary: Contributor for finance site Insider Monkey lists 15 advantages and disadvantages of GMOs, claims there are some health and environmental risks, but acknowledges that GMOs will be key for feeding the world's growing population, highlights potential health and environmental benefits of biotech

News: Michigan TV station reports Michigan State University extension researchers are encouraging farmers to grass-feed their cattle because it's "slightly better for the environment" and consumers are concerned that up to 90 percent of corn and soybeans are GMO despite no evidence of health risks

Commentary: Ken Roseboro of The Organic & Non-GMO Report writes for Huffington Post, believes criticism of Cargill's decision to offer Non-GMO Project verified products is based on fear that more and more consumers are rejecting GM technology, emphasizes importance of giving consumers what they want

Commentary: Kevin Folta reviews climate change episode of Bill Nye's new Netflix show, highlights previous controversy surrounding Nye's views on GMOs before changing his mind, criticizes Nye for preaching to the choir, and alienating those who are not convinced about climate change

Commentary: Doctoral student says biotech skepticism isn't anti-science, cites objections to GE salmon, notes classifying objections as "anti-science" is likely to alienate those with relevant concerns

Announcement: Center for Food Safety announces launch of Global Seed Network, a free, online peer-to-peer network for people to share rare and heirloom seeds, claims industrial ag practices such as pesticide

use harms the environment, highlights negative impact of having large companies control most of the seeds in the US

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Ghana News Agency reports stakeholders at government plant protection workshop warn fall armyworm invasion could derail government's agriculture initiative; one expert speculates chemical solution could result in resistance problem

Commentary: Ugandan news site suggests Uganda can learn best farming practices from Brazil, which achieved food security by increasing yields using fertilizer, GM crops

News: Nigerian news site reports Federal Ministry of Science and Technology official says at March for Science event that agricultural biotechnology and genetic improvement are recognized as solution to food security; National Biotechnology Development Agency, Open Forum on Agricultural Biotechnology involved in organizing event

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Tribune News Service reports India farmers are returning to Bt cotton after experiment with desi variety fails to bear fruit; farmers say Bt cotton varieties are being sold at a premium with "no taker" for desi seeds

Commentary: Third World Network amplifies article in The Ecologist on gene editing and synbio, believes that products of new breeding techniques and synbio are GE technologies and should be regulated as such, highlights risks of off-target effects

News: Reuters reports Indian government think tank says country could prevent foreign firms from monopolizing the market for GM seeds by only allowing the sale of locally developed varieties; seen as boost for in a boost for transgenic mustard produced by Delhi group

News: New Food Magazine reports, according to Research Nester, the global GMO food market will grow at a compound annual growth rate of 3.2 percent; India and China projected to be emerging markets for GMO foods

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: NGOs announce plan to demonstrate at April 28 Bayer shareholder meeting in Bonn; second protest April 29 in Berlin

Commentary: French member of EU Parliament blogs he voted for resolution objecting to Commission's approval of GM maize, claims safety data on maize is incomplete or nonexistent, says Commission's choice for a firm's commercial interest against the public interest is unacceptable

Interview: Greek news site interviews Seralini, who says pesticides in food are bigger problem than pathogens, claims his book will tell how to detoxify; says pesticide and GMO problems are interrelated and wants to eliminate all pesticides from agriculture

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Mexican businessman says next government must embrace large agribusinesses to guarantee food security; says 80 percent of Mexican scientists agree support GM food introduction; notes Mexico should not accept GM maize

Commentary: Argentine environmental NGO reports on case before country's Supreme Court examining Monsanto's claim to GM plant patent rights; court considering Monsanto claim and Amicus Curiae request by more than 80 organizations, headed by Vandana Shiva

More Latin America items

Oceania

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project publishes University of Guelph Ph.D student's assessment that Australia's sluggish adoption of GM crops has cost it hundreds of millions of dollars in economic benefits, along with missed chance to cut herbicide use and greenhouse gas emissions

More Oceania items

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - April 25, 2017
 Date: Tuesday, April 25, 2017 9:03:11 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 biotechnology monitoring featured news on an updated conflict-of-interest policy from the U.S. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine following criticism of a paper on genetically modified crops and an NGO attempt to block GM maize in Africa.

- The Chronicle of Higher Education reported that the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine will change their conflict-of-interest policy following criticism of recent papers, including one on the safety of genetically modified crops. A Tufts University professor and researcher with the advocacy group Food & Water Watch had criticized the academies for failing to disclose millions of dollars in contributions received from Monsanto, Dow and DuPont. **See more.**
- The African Centre for Biosafety announce it has filed an appeal with the High Court of South Africa seeking to overturn the government's authorization of a Monsanto GM maize variety that it claims has not been proven to be drought-tolerant. **See more.**
- The Mexican province of Quintana Roo will declare itself transgenic-free in approximately one month, according to comments by Alfredo Arellano Guillermo, head of the Secretariat of Ecology and Environment (SEMA), in *La Jornada Maya*. **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: Fortune highlights "promising" startups, including AquaBounty's GE salmon, that are using cutting-edge technology to make meat more sustainable; notes consumers will have to be convinced their food tech isn't scary

News: Bloomberg BNA reports new USDA secretary will soon help decide new GM labeling rules; administration is considering streamlining labeling regulations with nutrition facts panel requirements

News: Law360 reports New Jersey soup maker being sued for allegedly selling all-natural soups containing GMOs

News: CBC reports AquaBounty Canada facing concerns to rear GM salmon in Prince Edward Island, environmental groups claim this goes against the environmental impact plan submitted last year

News: Canadian news outlet reports AquaBounty Technologies seeking to raise GM salmon at Prince Edward Island facility, public comments accepted at information session and by contacting provincial government

News release: Friends of the Earth, other environmental groups send letter to U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee members expressing concern about how nominee to become Assistant Attorney General in Antitrust Division will decide merger between Monsanto and Bayer, claiming it will negatively impact farmers and increase prices for consumers

News: Cadillac News reports Michigan State University Extension researchers are encouraging Michigan farmers to consider raising grass-fed beef cattle in response to consumer concerns about GMOs

Commentary: Reason Foundation magazine editor blogs on failed anti-GM legislation in Oregon, highlights that county bans are little more than "political theater" even in strong liberal states due to fear of government control and heavy costs to farmers

News: Brownfield Ag News reports Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council chairman John Kelley signs agreement granting a license to Des Moines-based Schillinger Genetics to commercialize non-GMO, high oleic soybeans

Event: Food Revolution Summit (April 29-May 7) to feature speakers that include Vandana Shiva, Mark Hyman, Michael Greger, Neal Barnard, Nathan Runkle; promotional materials claim pesticides, hormones, antibiotics, GMOs and toxic, untested chemicals spreading like a virus through the food supply

Commentary: National Chicken Council notes animals that eat GMO feed don't become a GMO, nor is there a food safety risk when consuming animal ag products raised with GMO food ingredients; also explains how GMOs are used in chicken industry today

More North America items

Africa

Commentary: Natural Blaze editor Heather Callaghan argues Burkina Faso took a big risk by gambling on Monsanto's GM cotton, is now reverting back to the non-GMO variety; industry official estimated output rising by as much as 20 percent

News: The Nation reports Nigerian environmental group HOMEF asks government to review act that established National Biosafety Management Agency, claiming agency lacks mandatory duties to perform its stewardship role and ensure GMOs do not harm humans, animal health and environment

Commentary: African Centre for Biosafety posts objection to commercial release of Monsanto's drought-resistant GM maize varieties in South Africa, says there's a lack of data backing applicant's claim variety shows improvements to yield under drought stress

Commentary: Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa, in open letter, tells African Regional Intellectual Property Organization that development of Arusha Protocol favors foreign entities, ignores civil society and farmer input from ARIPO region; asks group to improve cooperation and communication

Commentary: BIO president Jim Greenwood's Earth Day column argues it makes no sense to believe scientists on climate change while simultaneously rejecting the overwhelming consensus on GMO food safety; calls it a disservice to starving people around the world

News: Rwandan news source reports agricultural experts say African nations should allocate more funds to ag science, research and technology to bridge crop production gap and ensure food security

News release: African Centre for Biodiversity announces it has lodged an appeal with High Court of South Africa to overturn government agency decisions to approve commercialization of Monsanto's GM drought tolerant maize variety, argues that Monsanto's claims of drought tolerance have not been scientifically proven

Commentary: Nigerian environmental news source posts remarks by Health of Mother Earth Foundation director at media training event, he says food sovereignty means people have right to food produced via ecologically sound and sustainable methods; claims Nigeria's biosafety law favors biotech and is against public interest

More Africa items

Asia

Commentary: MintPress News says "symbolic" Tribunal finds Monsanto violates global food, health and environmental rights; notes Monsanto's business model for dissemination of its biotech products has created untold suffering around world, particularly in India

Study: Current Opinion in Biotechnology publishes investigation by Cornell University researchers that found iron-biofortified crops to be efficient means of overcoming iron deficiency in individuals tested in Africa, Asia

News: Vietnam News Agency reports, following the release of the 'Monsanto Files,' parliamentarians from the Party of European Socialists announce plan to request commission of inquiry on Monsanto

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Event: Polish social advocacy NGO hosts "Food labeling GMO-free Poland - challenges and prospects" debate April 27 in Warsaw; participants will discuss issues of law governing labeling of non-GMO foods, benefits and challenges for food and feed manufacturers, farmers and consumers

Commentary: U.S. Soybean Export Council notes EuropaBio green biotechnology director spoke at Polish Grain & Feed Chamber event on benefits of biotech crops, highlighting the hypocrisy at EU and member state levels that causes commercial biotech pipelines to focus outside of Europe; notes effort to delay Polish GM ban

Commentary: Science journalist Hidde Boersma writes for Belgian news outlet, promoting "Ecomodernism," argues that biotech will be necessary to produce enough food using less land, points to scientific consensus on GMO safety, highlights exciting developments in biotech, including CRISPR

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Mexico's La Jornada reports National Corn Product System Committee head asks agriculture ministry to stop importing maize, arguing it benefits a few companies to the detriment of producers and millions of consumers; claims Mexico could have food sovereignty with maize in no more than 10 years

Commentary: Mexican human rights NGO says fast-tracking approval of General Biodiversity Law will privatize country's genetic resources, severely affecting principle of self-determination, constitutional rights of indigenous and peasant people

Commentary: Brazilian natural news site contributor warns about health and environmental risks of GMOs and their associated pesticides, highlights research by Anthony Samsel and Stephanie Seneff, promotes new book entitled "Transgenic Crops - Risks and Uncertainties," which examines 750 studies on GMO risks

News: La Jornada Maya reports Mexican state of Quintana Roo will declare itself GMO-free in one month; farmers worry honey contaminated by GM crops will hurt their exports to Europe

News: Uruguayan news site reports Native Seed Network and Friends of the Earth say regulated coexistence between native and GM maize isn't possible; group concerned local varieties disappearing, pushed out by GM crops

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

There were no noteworthy developments during today's monitoring of Oceania. Please 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 biotechnology monitoring highlights included developments in a class-action lawsuit over Syngenta's Viptera corn, news on the potential time from for the close of ChemChina's purchase of Syngenta and a report about cotton production in Burkina Faso after growers moved away from a genetically modified variety.

- The first of many lawsuits demanding Syngenta cover damages resulting from marketing its Viptera corn prior to China import approval began today in Minneapolis. Following a report from the *Associated Press* this weekend, *Bloomberg* had an in-depth piece today highlighting how lawsuits are taking place as ChemChina progresses in its acquisition of Syngenta, pointing out that China may end up owning the seeds it rejected. **See more** Separately, as part of the company's first quarter earnings announcement, Syngenta CEO Erik Fyrwald said he expects the merger with ChemChina to close next month. **See more.**
- *Bloomberg* reported that Burkina Faso cotton growers are seeing outputs rising by 20 percent now that they have returned to conventional seeds and away from Monsanto's Bt cotton. The U.K. NGO GMWatch amplified the piece, claiming Burkina Faso's transition should be a lesson to other countries considering GM cotton. **See more.**

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North America

Commentary: Northwestern student newspaper columnist claims March for Science misrepresented science, treating it as a politicized entity, uses safety of GM foods and environmentalists' ongoing fight against them as an example

News: Christian news service reports Competitive Enterprise Institute senior fellow claims Monsanto Tribunal a "media stunt" not based in science, noting GM foods are safe and more similar technologies are needed

Commentary: Hoosier Ag Today writer reflects on Earth Day, suggests "environmentally friendly advances in science and technology" such as biotech crops are ignored, media coverage is "distorted and one-sided"

News: U.S. agriculture news outlet reports American Chamber of Commerce wants faster response time from Chinese government for approvals of GM crops; currently takes six years for approvals

News: Politico Pro reports Trump administration considering tying together GMO labeling disclosure regulation with Nutrition Facts update; administration official notes implementation would take years, saving food manufacturers money

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: The Science Times reports crop-killing armyworms have spread from Western Africa to Rwanda and Kenya, with Ugandan crop damage reaching an estimated \$193M; experts say the pests must be sprayed by Belt concentration, a pesticide that is unaffordable for most farmers

Commentary: Ugandan newspaper recommends passing biotechnology bill before dealing with armyworm infestation; notes bill would allow farmers to grow crops without fear of damage from microscopic pests

Commentary: German radio network correspondent writing in Portuguese newspaper suggests independent experts assess environmental effects of GMO corn introduced by Chinese on Sao Tome and Principe, suggests health of the residents could be at risk

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: The Hindu reports on the positive benefits biofortification could have to help those with micronutrient deficiencies; iron, zinc and vitamin A are primary focus of biofortification efforts

Commentary: CGIAR reports review of biofortification efficacy trials found test subjects in Asia, Africa showed significant improvement in iron status after consuming iron-biofortified crops

News release: Convention on Biological Diversity site notes Filipino Department of Agriculture Biotech working to strengthen participation of five government departments involved in biosafety regulation of GMOs; recently conducted biotechnology training on basic tools for crop, animal improvement

News: Bangladesh newspaper reports Bangladeshi geneticist urges scientists at conference on agricultural biotechnology for food security to preserve indigenous rice varieties by cultivating them along with developed varieties; conference held by Cornell Alliance for Science in conjunction with global March for Science

News: Indian news site reports farmers and civil society groups from around Asia call for end to Golden Rice field trials at recent Manila gathering; opponents worry about cross-contamination, loss of genetic purity, health concerns

Commentary: Sri Lankan news site says Monsanto Tribunal finds company guilty of ecocide, crimes against humanity; adds Tribunal claims Monsanto guilty of manipulation, misrepresenting science, discrediting independent scientific research

News: The Times of India reports Odisha state agriculture minister announces government working on implementing organic farming policy in 15 districts in first phase; speaking at event for Navdanya-published book, minister claims conventional farming has health hazards and has led to crop loss; Vandana Shiva promotes book as attempt to spread organic farming

News: Vietnamese news outlet reports on successful application of organic biotech in rice cultivation, reducing pesticide inputs, Nguyen Tho of Vietnam Plant Protection Association notes benefits of organic biotech include improved soil health and biodiversity

News: Indo-Asian News Service profiles agricultural scientist M.S. Swaminathan; hailed as Green Revolution mentor, he says GM technology will soon become obsolete with advent of nano-technology and other solutions; adds country's public policy for GM crops lagging

News: United Arab Emirates news outlet reports on government plans to limit imports of GMOs, with new requirements for testing to ensure safety for human consumption

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: GMWatch amplifies EU Food Policy report that German Green MEP Martin Hausling launched "blistering attack" against EFSA, saying "stop pretending you are an independent institution";

GMWatch adds EFSA accused of bias and corruption, and should not rely on industry-sponsored studies

News release: Anti-GM NGO Testbiotech announces release of report on "risks and problems" with new GE technologies like CRISPR, including biodiversity impact and need for "comprehensive regulation"

News release: French peasant seed network gives update on lawsuit other peasant organizations asking French Council of State to ban cultivation of herbicide-resistant GM crops, regulate gene-edited products currently marketed as conventional varieties without health and environmental assessment, labeling or monitoring

Commentary: French anti-GMO NGO promotes Réseau Semences Paysannes (Peasant Seeds Network) short film informing consumers about gene-edited food products, denounces attempts to avoid regulation

Commentary: French NGO inf'OGM claims EU texts on GMOs are complex, discouraging Europeans from reading them, despite public opposition to GMOs and desire for information

Interview: Romanian news outlet interviews one of the local March for Science organizers, Mihai Miclaus, who believes lack of effective communication is responsible for consumers' misunderstanding of GMOs, pointing to common confusion about hybrids and perceived risks

News: Times of Malta reports seminar on safeguarding traditional strains of seeds from fruits, vegetables and herbs concludes saving local seeds may hold key for Malta's food crop survival; adds genetic diversity declined when agribusiness began breeding crops identical in size and color

Commentary: French lawyer examines legal basis, including use of precautionary principle, for European Commission member states to adopt emergency measures and bans for authorized GM food and feed

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: La Prensa reports official with Ministry of Rural Development and Equity for Communities affirms Mexico City government's support for native corn; adds city's constitution calls for prevention of harmful GE products while favoring development of organic agriculture

Interview: Mexican news outlet interviews University of Veracruz coordinator for sustainability who supports biosafety law that would require foods with GMOs to be labeled; notes some claim transgenic foods can cause health issues, including cancer

News release: Brazil's Embrapa to showcase biofortification technologies at 1st Congress of Food and Nutrition in Piauí April 26-28, including biofortified cowpea and sweet potato; notes researcher will chair conference about Brazil's food biofortification program

News: Mexican news site reports seed fair observes 15 years of saving, sharing seeds to preserve native crops; seed collective member calls on Yucatan's Mayan communities to continue resistance activities against GM soybeans

News: Brazilian news outlet reports on Administrative Council of Tax Appeals' (Carf) ruling that Dow's purchase of Brazilian company Agromen is irregular, as it enabled Dow to increase its market share in GM maize while paying less taxes

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Commentary: Australia-based agronomist Tran Bac Hai writes for Vietnamese news outlet, examining debate on GMO safety, summarizes regulations in Australia, highlights legal dispute over cross-contamination, calls for transparency and strict regulations of GMOs in Vietnam, believes long-term health impacts are unknown

[More Oceania items](#)

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From: [Jay Byrne](#)
 To: [Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS](#)
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - April 24, 2017
 Date: Monday, April 24, 2017 4:00:57 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

When the European Commission's Joint Research Centre reviewed the impact of the 2013 neonic restrictions, it found that farmers were negatively impacted and bees - which activists claimed would be protected by the new regulations - had not benefited. The findings were secreted away as the commission instead drafted a proposal to expand and extend the neonic ban, but U.K. House of Lords member Matt Ridley detailed the report in his column for The Times last week. Politico later highlighted it as the lead item in its daily [agriculture news](#) roundup.

Other highlights of this week's newsletter include a Genetic Literacy Project piece written by three toxicologists who believe the International Agency for Research on Cancer's monograph program needs to either be brought into the 21st century or discontinued, an appeal from Mark Lynas for Tanzania to stop burning GM corn that could be used to feed the hungry and Julianna LeMieux writing for the American Council on Science and Health about a lawsuit asking Los Angeles public schools to stop serving processed meat.

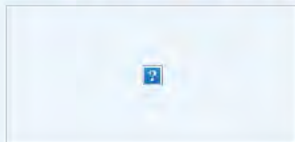
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In This Issue

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

Stakeholder Spotlight: Food Revolution Network



The Food Revolution Network is a for-profit entity run by John and Ocean Robbins promoting self-help, diet and lifestyle products that condemn GMOs, pesticides and other non-organic foods and products.

The Robbins' venture uses organic and alternative health

■ Stories Worth Sharing

[Matt Ridley: Joint Research Centre findings show EU neonics restrictions are "disastrously counterproductive"](#)

[Toxicologists: International Agency for Research on Cancer monograph program should be modernized or abolished](#)

[Kavin Senapathy: Monsanto tribunal a "fake trial that distracted from real problems" such as food security](#)

[Mark Lynas: "Absurd" for Tanzania to burn GM corn while its people starve](#)

[Julianna LeMieux: Los Angeles school lunch lawsuit citing IARC is about "ridiculous vegetarian agenda," not keeping kids healthy](#)

[Andrew Porterfield: If results of new breeding techniques can't be detected, should they be regulated as GMOs?](#)

[Terry Daynard: Ontario bee health review a reminder of importance of Varroa mites, but views on neonics disappoint](#)

[International Food Information Council: Chlorpyrifos subjected to strict](#)

marketing partners to promote online lectures called "empowerment" packages they sell and then enlist these new empowered members to sell to their friends and family.

According to the Robbins, avoiding GMOs and pesticides will save you and the world. Each year, they host an annual Food Evolution Summit - the 2017 event launches on Saturday and runs through May 7. This year's featured speakers include Vandana Shiva, Mark Hyman and a cast of other health and food gurus promoting their wares.

[CLICK HERE](#) to learn more about the Food Revolution Network.

[CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES](#)

[safety standards based on "vigorous research"](#)

[Chicago Council: U.S. should prioritize research in developing agricultural technology, supporting innovation](#)

[Real Agriculture: Number of bee colonies in Canada at record high after agriculture industry solved neonic dust issue](#)

[Monsanto CTO Robb Fraley: Deceptive, predatory publishing is the fake news of the science world](#)

[Myles Power: Consumers' lack of knowledge about biotechnology has created ingrained societal "fear and distrust" in GMOs](#)

[Acton Institute: Western GMOs may help improve living standards in Cuba](#)

[California dietitian: Environmental Working Group's "Dirty Dozen" list largely discredited by scientific community](#)

[CLICK FOR BONUS EVENTUS MONITORING](#)

What's Trending?

[Reports: Dow asked Trump administration to set aside studies on three organophosphate pesticides due to "fundamental scientific unsoundness"](#)

[U.S. Senate committee plans Wednesday hearing to review legal basis for Waters of the United States rule](#)

[NGO-backed tribunal releases verdict claiming Monsanto violates human rights](#)

[French National Consumer Institute magazine releases study finding EDCs, pesticides in hair samples from children](#)

[GMOs, pollinators draw attention of activists during March for Science](#)

Calendar highlights

April 25	April 27-28	April 27
Winona LaDuke lecture at New York University on food sovereignty	19th International Conference on Regenerative Agriculture and Agroecological Restoration	Farm Animal Investment Risk and Return "Superbugs & Super Risks" forum
April 28-30	April 28-29	April 29
International Meetings of the Resistance to GMOs	Beyond Pesticides' National Pesticide Forum: "Healthy Hives, Healthy Lives, Healthy Land"	World Veterinary Day: "Antimicrobial Resistance - From Awareness to Action" theme

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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 worldwide coverage of March for Science and Earth Day events.

- International media reported on March for Science events in cities in the U.S. and around the world. A Chicago Sun-Times columnist claimed politicizing the march devalued the message. A blogger wrote that the event focused more on social justice than science while blogger Joan Conrow argued the University of Hawaii gave in to "anti-science bullies" by requesting March for Science speakers to refrain from controversial topics. **See more.**
- Media praised the new Netflix series, "Bill Nye Saves the World," which focuses on GMOs in one episode during its first season, which debuted Friday. Vox called Nye the "unapologetically political" science guy and referred to a segment featuring Monsanto's Robert Fraley as "a major misstep." **See more.**
- An Australian farming news site reported that China's lack of approval of Monsanto's new Bollgard 3 cotton seed varieties could cost the country's export sector hundreds of millions of dollars. **See more.**

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North America

Commentary: Brooke Borel writes for Slate as part of its synbio series, examines outdatedness of current biotech regulatory framework, highlights recent draft guidances published by USDA and FDA, worries that Trump administration will either do nothing or eliminate regulations altogether, emphasizes importance of agencies updating laws

Commentary: Kavin Senapathy writes for Forbes, criticizing International Monsanto Tribunal's verdict, noting it was a fake trial that distracts from real issues, noting farmers in Africa are being denied valuable disease-resistant and drought-tolerant technologies due to continued anti-GMO activism, which stifles innovation

Commentary: GMO Free Pennsylvania issues rebuttal to Val Giddings' recent pro-biotech piece in Lancaster Farming, argues that GMOs are not sustainable or necessary to feed the world, points to growing problem of herbicide-resistant weeds, as well as claims about glyphosate's carcinogenicity

Commentary: Kevin Folta describes renewed attacks on his reputation regarding funding from Monsanto, launched by US Right to Know's Gary Ruskin, in response to Folta's Twitter posts about an educational outreach program with students from his lab, Folta reemphasizes importance of science communication in spite of hate and ignorance

Commentary: Moms Across America leader blames biotech farming, pesticides for environmental pollution, landclimate change

Commentary: Executive Director of Malaysian Biotechnology Information Centre (MABIC), Mahaletchumy Arujanan, writes for Genetic Literacy Project, laments fact that organic movement decries biotech

industry funded science while they receive funding from organic industry, shares personal challenges with science communication in Malaysia

Commentary: Learn Liberty contributors Henry I. Miller, Jeff Stier slam Earth Day organizers for distorting science to advance cynical agendas; lament that many stumping for the event share opposition to environment-friendly advances in science and technology, such as ag biotechnology, fracking, nuclear power

More North America items

Africa

Commentary: Katherine Chaweza, a Cornell Alliance for Science Fellow and communication and outreach coordinator for Malawi's Programme for Biosafety Systems, highlights Malawi's progress towards GM crop commercialization, with cotton, cowpea and banana varieties in field trials, points to Malawi's fully functional biosafety framework

Commentary: Public Radio International reports on March for Science, highlights event coordinator Kishore Hari's surprise at the widespread international interest, Nkechi Isaac of Nigeria Alliance for Science noted importance of science for food security, highlighting need for GMOs in Nigeria

More Africa items

Asia

Commentary: Bangladesh policy research institute questions a recent CropLife International article on Bt eggplant, claims there were "massive failures" between first and second round plantings

Commentary: Greenpeace campaigners emphasize that while Monsanto tribunal is nonbinding, its recommendations come from "real and independent judges;" notes people's movement grows to 'protect citizens and the environment from toxic pesticides'

Commentary: Journalist on Indonesian news site claims eating organic is "much healthier than conventional foods", says GE plants "are known to lower the immune system"; cites dangers of CLA, antibiotics and chemical fertilizers

News: Chinese news outlet reports on Xinjiang Alashankou Inspection and Quarantine Bureau's plans to increase inspections to prevent illegal access to GM seeds, following concerns about illegal GM soybean cultivation

Commentary: Turkish news site contributor says country's seed industry is under control of five biotech giants thanks to government's "absolute submission policies"; health and environmental consequences cited

More Asia items

Europe

Commentary: French blogger amplifies documents published by anti-GMO NGO Inf'OGM regarding "hidden GMOs" produced via mutagenesis, highlighting claims that they violate the precautionary principle, threatening human health and the environment

Commentary: EU Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, Carlos Moedas, writes for Portuguese news outlet, announcing his participation in March for Science, he briefly notes current debate on GMOs, emphasizes importance of communicating success of science in Europe

Commentary: GMWatch reports Monsanto tribunal finds, far from contributing to food security, Monsanto "negatively affected food availability;" says "most damning" conclusion is the world can feed itself using agroecology

News: Food Chemical News reports FDA intends to ask the Ninth Circuit to reverse a lower court ruling

requiring it to provide plaintiffs with additional materials related its legal dispute with groups who are challenging its approval of AquaBounty GE salmon

More Europe items

Latin America

Audio: Global Justice Ecology Project's Anne Petermann speaks on KPFK radio's Sojourner Truth show, recounting her recent visit to Chile as part of Campaign to STOP GE Trees, she claims tree plantations damage the environment, worries that Chile has potential to become a major exporter of GE trees

News: Brazilian news agency reports on recent study in Scientific Reports which identifies various sugarcane genes that are targeted by the chemical ripener etefon, which project coordinator Marcelo Menossi notes may be potential targets for future GE applications to develop sugarcane varieties that accumulate more sugar

More Latin America items

Oceania

News release: Federated Farmers encourages its members to join March for Science events in New Zealand, group's national president says "we seem to follow the scientific consensus on climate change but ignore it on genetic modification"

News: Australian news outlet reports on potential export issue for Monsanto Australia's stacked trait Bollgard 3 GM cotton variety, which International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications (ISAAA) indicates has not yet received Chinese approval, Monsanto states the issue is due to Chinese "shipping-related import documentation"

More Oceania items

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - April 20, 2017
 Date: Thursday, April 20, 2017 9 01:47 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 a *Politico* review of Senate hearings showing U.S. Agriculture Secretary nominee Sonny Perdue's stance on biotech and organic food. The Stop Golden Rice Network called on the Filipino government to disallow further field tests on Golden Rice.

- *Politico* reported that when Sen. Chuck Grassley asked during Senate hearings about other countries' delays in approving GM crops, Perdue said he will "insist that USDA be more aggressive in supporting advancements in biotech." The new agriculture secretary also said he wants the USDA to continue promoting organic and local food. **See more.**
- NGOs that make up the Stop Golden Rice Network issued a news release calling on the Filipino government to disapprove requests from the International Rice Research Institute for additional field research on Golden Rice. The release claims Golden Rice threatens "the lives and livelihood of Asian farmers." **See more.**

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

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

North America

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project contributor examines debate over whether or not products of gene editing should be regulated as GMOs, notes that while changes made via gene editing are detectable, they are indistinguishable from changes made via mutagenesis, chemically introduced changes, or conventional breeding

Campaign: Center for Food Safety email notes Health Canada recently approved GM apple, potato and salmon yet still has no laws in place to label modified foods; asks readers to sign petition supporting legislation set for debate (May 5) in the House of Commons that calls for mandatory labeling of GMO foods

Commentary: Monsanto's Robb Fraley writes for Medium, laments rise in "predatory journals," equates deceptive publishing to "fake news," highlights increased likelihood that non-peer-reviewed articles will gain media coverage, thus influencing public opinion, praises Gates Foundation's open access efforts

Commentary: Environmental attorney Carol Dansereau writes in CounterPunch magazine claiming "assault on science is nothing new;" highlights Syngenta "smear campaign" against Tyrone Hayes for research linking atrazine to reproductive abnormalities in frogs; claims companies block GM seed research

Commentary: Vegan GMO director Jayson Merkle tells readers who see veganism as a movement for "reasoned justice" that they need to attend March for Science; cautions that the movement cannot fall victim to PR campaigns aimed at manufacturing false scientific controversies, including myths about GMO safety

News: Western Farm Press editor reports recent Farm Bureau event included farmer Jason Perry of Perry

Farms telling attendees Roundup Ready GMO corn is "a lot better for the environment" as there are fewer pesticides required and the improved drought-tolerant plants require less water

More North America items

Africa

News: Agence France-Presse reports on spread of fall armyworm to Rwanda, amplifying FAO claims regarding pest's threat to food security in region

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science's Mark Lynas writes for magazine, notes Tanzania burns GM corn despite drought, starvation, fact that scientists agree the crop is perfectly healthy; says the absurdity "is what happens when science is ignored."

More Africa items

Asia

News release: Stop Golden Rice! Network calls for rejection of field trial applications for golden rice in the Philippines, with recent protests during Earth Day celebrations, claiming golden rice threatens local rice industry, food security, farmer livelihoods and environmental health

News: Russia Today reports on potential for ChemChina-Syngenta merger to make China a leading GMO producer, as it will gain availability of valuable seed technology to feed its growing population, notes China currently relies heavily on soybean and corn imports

News: The Times of India reports Vandana Shiva, Navdanya plan to develop Jai Prakash University as "green campus," will include developing seed bank at the university, adding agrosience classes

News: Vietnamese news service reports Monsanto tribunal claims company ruined Vietnam's environment, was complicit in war crimes

Commentary: Vandana Shiva writes for Asian Age, invokes Ghandi's protest against East India Company in promoting her "satyagraha yatra," a protest for a "suicide-, hunger-, disease-free" India

News: Press Trust of India reports Delhi-based NGO Navdanya to develop community seed banks in West Bengal as part of "Organic India" campaign to save, breed and multiply native seeds and prevent bio-piracy of indigenous seeds and plants

More Asia items

Europe

Interview: Cert ID Europe sustainability expert Andy Green tells Food Navigator demand for non-GMO feed is increasing in the U.S. and will continue to do so; notes global non-GMO certification leader improving its platform to reduce costs; notes feed industry concerns about climate change

News: Russia Today reports on potential for ChemChina-Syngenta merger to make China a leading GMO producer, as it will gain availability of valuable seed technology to feed its growing population, notes China currently relies heavily on soybean and corn imports

More Europe items

Latin America

Campaign: Environmental NGO reports on Facebook their legal appeal to suspend Monsanto's Intacta soy reaches Argentina's Supreme Court; NGO bases case on precautionary principle, claiming government failed to adequately evaluate health and environmental risks

Commentary: ETC Group's Silvia Ribeiro warns in Mexican news outlet that proposed biodiversity law "legalizes looting" of country's genetic resources through privatization; Greenpeace calls proposal

"monster ... which if approved will be a step back in conservation of biodiversity"

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

[News: Australia's Farm Weekly reports FoodWatch to submit petition requesting federal legislators to protect non-GMO farms from GM contamination](#)

[Commentary: Referencing the recent legal opinion of the nonbinding people's tribunal in The Hague, MADGE Australia says International law needs to be expanded to make corporations like Monsanto accountable for their actions](#)

[More Oceania items](#)

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: [Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS](#)
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - April 19, 2017
 Date: Wednesday, April 19, 2017 10:35:26 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 additional coverage of the Monsanto tribunal. Florida Keys officials began testing GM mosquitoes to control mosquito populations carrying Zika and other viruses. In Italy, a Monsanto building was set on fire by activists, and there was an update on the destruction of a rapeseed fields in France.

- There was continuing coverage of and commentary on the NGO-run Monsanto tribunal. Latin American coverage included an interview with Argentine judge Eleonora Lamm, who served on the tribunal's panel. Vandana Shiva claimed the judgment "shows this is a criminal company." Other anti-biotech responses came from Greenpeace, Corporate Europe Observatory, MADGE and former French environmental minister Corinne Lepage. *Le Monde* reported a Monsanto spokesman said the anti-biotech body has no legal standing and reached a "predetermined verdict" by denying scientific evidence and ignoring court decisions. **See more.**
- The Associated Press reported the Florida Keys Mosquito Control District released 20,000 GM mosquitoes to help reduce mosquito populations to help control Zika and other viruses. The test will last three months with releases twice a week. **See more.**
- Italian news sites reported arsonists used Molotov cocktails to damage a Monsanto building in Olmeneta, Italy. Meanwhile, a French news site reported that the Volunteer Reapers who destroyed a BASF field of rapeseed crops bred using mutagenesis also damaged a neighboring field owned by KWS France. Company officials said their crop was neither genetically modified nor mutagenic. **See more.**

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North America

News: Agri-Pulse reports ag industry stakeholders undecided on how to interpret current regulatory guidelines for gene-editing products, claims regulation is behind the technology and unsure if FDA approval even needed

Commentary: DTN's Washington Insider highlights potential of CRISPR to solve several agricultural challenges, such as Florida's struggle to combat citrus greening, examines current regulatory debate, believes the debate will be over if science can produce products that consumers can't live without

News: Bloomberg BNA reports APHIS supports permit application for field trials of GE moth, organic farming advocates claim dead moth larvae could cause environmental and health issues

Campaign: Children's March for Humanity announces upcoming march in Washington, D.C. on June 17, 2017, with sister marches in other cities, to fight to protect children from negative health impacts of toxic chemicals in our food, water, air, medicine, and vaccines, the event will feature anti-glyphosate speakers, and is seeking speakers on GMOs

News: Capital Press reports Oregon bill allowing biotech patent-holders to be sued for "unwanted GMO presence" survives crucial legislative deadline; Center for Food Safety legal fellow calls move "good news," policy director with Oregonians for Food and Shelter disappointed "poorly-written" legislation is

moving forward

Commentary: OFW Law agriculture and food security specialist Marshall Matz writes for Agri-Pulse, examining reasons why people are not outraged over ongoing famine in developing nations, believes people are disconnected from agriculture and have never faced true hunger, notes anti-biotech sentiment also hinders progress

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Ugandan news source publishes piece by Nigerian farmer warning of dire consequences of potential increase in US pesticide use under EPA head Scott Pruitt, cites recent UN report suggesting pesticides don't help feed world, fatally poison 250,000 annually

News: Rwandan news source reports Rwanda Defence Forces and the National Police are making joint effort to help contain fall armyworm, save crops using multiple methods, including use of profenofos and cypermethrin; Agriculture Board says outbreak could lead to total loss of crop yields for maize, wheat, rice and sorghum

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Indo-Asian News Service reports Vandana Shiva used Monsanto Tribunal opinion to declare GM mustard in India doesn't increase yield and "stands no chance" of acceptance, claims decision will embolden other groups to speak out against Monsanto

News: Quartz reports China to be a global leader in GM food once merger between ChemChina and Syngenta completed, Chinese government continuing to invest more in GM crops despite public skepticism

News: Press Trust of India reports on Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) decision to transfer responsibility of evaluating and approving GM Bt cotton to Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), made during recent GEAC meeting under the Environment Ministry

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Former French member of European Parliament writes Huffington Post column about Monsanto Tribunal opinion focusing on divide between human rights law and responsibility of multinational corporations, advocates for UN adoption of Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mankind

News: French TV news site reports KWS France field impacted by Volunteer Reapers' destruction of rapeseed fields, say their crop was not GM nor modified by mutagenesis

News: European news sites report Monsanto tribunal judges say company guilty of human rights abuses, "ecocide," war crimes; Monsanto spokesman notes anti-biotech body has no legal standing, reached "predetermined verdict" by denying scientific evidence, ignoring court decisions

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Chilean news site reports Monsanto's GM seed plant nears approval by authorities

News: Argentine news site reports Argentine judge served on Monsanto tribunal that gave opinion Monsanto is guilty of non-crime of "ecocide," says opinion regarding glyphosate could impact the country

News: Reuters reports 93.4 percent of Brazil's total planted area last season was planted with soybeans,

corn and GM cotton, according to consultancy Céleres, with 49 million hectares of those three products being GM, Céleres believes more significant changes in transgenic crop adoption may be possible only for cotton going forward

More Latin America items

Oceania

Commentary: The Australian arts writer takes issue with Monsanto's involvement in Bill Nye's Netflix show, claims lack of anti-GM voice is "irresponsible" and questions who funded the show

More Oceania items

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - April 18, 2017
 Date: Tuesday, April 18, 2017 9:04:47 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included the release of the verdict resulting from the Monsanto "tribunal" held by environmental NGOs last October. There was also limited coverage of the debut of the documentary "SEED: The Untold Story."

Consolidated highlights include:

- The Monsanto "tribunal" run by NGOs released its verdict today concluding that Monsanto's actions violate human rights to a healthy environment, food, health and public information, adding that Monsanto would be found guilty if ecocide was a formally recognized crime under international law. The panel voiced concerns that Monsanto's development of genetically modified crops resistant to herbicides increased use of glyphosate, a herbicide considered carcinogenic by the International Agency for Research on Cancer. The verdict prompted coverage from European media outlets including *Agence France-Presse* and received promotion from activist groups including Inf'OGM, Organic Consumers Association, Sustainable Pulse, Moms Across America and GMWatch. Monsanto issued a statement noting the tribunal's verdict was a "non-legal opinion" issued by anti-agricultural technology and anti-Monsanto critics. **See more**
- There was limited media reaction to the Monday night airing of "SEED: The Untold Story" on the Public Broadcasting System show "Independent Lens." The Los Angeles-area progressive news site *Truthdig* provided a review of the documentary, and the non-fiction film industry magazine *Realscreen* reported that the filmmakers called it "by far the most expensive film they've made," with funding from Whole Foods Market and two crowdfunding campaigns. **See more.**
- Commentary on the upcoming March for Science included pieces from Mark Lynas in *The Guardian* and a Cornell Alliance for Science piece that highlighted Bt brinjal and water-efficient maize. The Center for Food Safety also noted its plans to "speak out against the suppression of science." **See more.**

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North America

Commentary: Real Agriculture contributor recounts recent discussion with Kevin Folta about challenge of overcoming skewed perceptions of risk in food and drink, highlighting Folta's example of Wild Turkey's advertisement that their whiskey is non-GMO, noting that alcohol is a known carcinogen while GMOs are perfectly safe

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science fellow Mark Lynas writes op-ed in *The Guardian* to provide support for global March for Science, admits despair at science denialists involved with climate sceptic, anti-vaccine and anti-GMO movements

Commentary: Food Safety News reports several issues will press new USDA head Gov. Sonny Perdue after confirmation, including making federal GMO food labeling law reality; adds Purdue will have to fill in details on law that played out state-by-state for several years

News release: Organic Consumers Association announces Monsanto Tribunal judges issue opinion finding that Monsanto is in violation of basic human rights to a healthy environment, to food and to health, OCA believes the findings will lead to more liability cases against Monsanto and similar companies

Commentary: AltHealthWORKS founder Nick Meyer warns scientists are experimenting with new varieties of seedless gene edited fruits that will not require bee pollination; says lack of proper regulation of gene-edited foods could open door for 'silent takeover' and genetic modification of our food supply

Commentary: True Activist contributor Amelia Kinney highlights Oregon bill that would allow farmers to take legal action if their crops are contaminated by GMOs; notes plaintiffs stand to receive compensation up to three times amount of damages

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Local news source reports Biotechnology Society of Nigeria president Benjamin Ubi asserts biotech key to country's sustainable agricultural production, saying benefits 'cannot be over emphasized'

News release: Food Sovereignty Ghana announces support for International Day of Peasants' Struggle, calls for return to sustainable agriculture models, urges Parliament to publish consultations on Plant Breeders Bill

Commentary: Op-ed in Kenya's Daily Nation by public policy analyst warns drought, armyworm infestation causing "bigger national food crunch than projected," recommends Kenya adapt more proactive approach to food security, broaden GMO tolerances and consider drought- and pest-resistant GM crops

News release: Imperial College London announces it is developing synthetic biology in East Africa with aim to impact food security, industry, health and environment; head of college's Centre for Synthetic Biology and Innovation says region has "opportunity to move towards a far bigger bioeconomy" and "not just focus on agriculture"

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: The Times of India reports GEAC agrees to transfer evaluation, management, approval and monitoring of Bt cotton to Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) in move to more robust monitoring regime; notes GEAC remains non-committal on timeframe for final decision on commercial release of GMO Mustard

Commentary: Vietnamese news site reports scientist believes GM foods can benefit densely populated countries, increase productivity and economic efficiency; adds research and introduction of GM food in Vietnam is slow, and consumers are afraid

Commentary: India IP law firm summarizes key 2016 patent developments, including seed companies refusing to pay royalties on Monsanto's Bt cotton and ensuing legal ramifications

Commentary: Vietnamese news outlet contributor examines GMO debate from a vegetarian perspective, argues that GMOs are unnatural, but that no adverse health effects have been demonstrated after many years of use, highlights concerns about adverse effects on animals

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Retraction Watch reports paper by researcher Federico Infascelli, who has questioned the safety of GMOs, flagged after receiving concerns there were issues with some images; last year, he was formally reprimanded by the University of Naples for including manipulated data in three papers

Report: Monsanto Tribunal judges release verdict, conclude company activities violate human rights to a healthy environment, food, health, open research

News release: Monsanto responds to NGOs' tribunal verdict, noting it is a "non-legal opinion" issued by anti-agriculture technology and anti-Monsanto critics; reaffirms commitment to helping solve food security issues

Commentary: French NGO Inf'OGM amplifies Monsanto Tribunal advisory opinion on company's alleged infringement of environmental and human health, claims ecocide should be established in international law

Commentary: French news outlet contributor accuses EU of imposing GM maize on France, criticizes process which allows the EU Commission to permit GMOs at the EU level in spite of a majority of countries and MEPs being opposed, as well as the majority of EU citizens

Audio: French science podcast discusses presidential candidates' platforms to "preserve the health of French people;" notes Jean Luc Mélenchon, Benoit Hamon advocate for ban of GMOs, pesticides, EDCs; Emmanuel Macron calls for more GMO research

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Event: Global Justice Ecology Project highlights U.S. tour (April 20-May 23) by two Honduran cultural workers using music and storytelling to amplify message of Berta Caceres that agribusiness developments are "death for the population"

News: Mexican news site reports research professor believes Mexico maize production declining due to contamination from transgenic varieties; he urges organic agriculture and preservation of native seeds as solution

Interview: Argentinian news outlet interviews Eleonora Lamm, one of the judges for the International Monsanto Tribunal; she recounts hearing testimony about negative impact of GMOs and pesticides on the environment, damage to Mexican beekeepers' livelihoods, and negative health impacts of glyphosate, especially in Argentina

News: Mexican news outlet reports on Mennonite community's request for permission to continue cultivating GM cotton in Janos, arguing that it is intended for textile use only, and that it reduces the number of herbicide applications

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Campaign: Australian pro-GMO partnership, GMOonly, launches first line of pro-GMO cotton T-shirts, containing messages about benefits of GM technologies, plans to launch more GMOonly products, including foods, home accessories and jewelry

[More Oceania items](#)

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From: Jay Byrne
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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - April 17, 2017
 Date: Monday, April 17, 2017 9 04:20 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included the debut of an NGO-backed documentary, "SEED: The Untold Story," on public television stations in the United States. The activist group La Via Campesina marked its annual International Day of Peasant Struggle by promoting a campaign asking a United Nations working group to ensure peasants access to land and seeds.

Consolidated highlights include:

- PBS planned to air "SEED: The Untold Story" on Monday night during its "Independent Lens" program. The documentary features interviews with Indian activist Vandana Shiva, Center for Food Safety founder Andrew Kimbrell, scientist Jane Goodall and others who claim agribusinesses have greatly reduced seed diversity around the world. It is set to debut in the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand later this week. **See more.**
- La Via Campesina promoted the International Day of Peasants' Struggle, noting it has planned demonstrations, public debates and festivals ahead of a May 4 meeting of the UN Open Ended Intergovernmental Working Group. **See more.**

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North America

News: Agribusiness news outlet reports U.S. federal judge denied nationwide class-action suit against Syngenta over GMO corn but also denied Syngenta's request to prohibit punitive damages; also highlights EPA reassurance it will meet deadline for pesticide registration decisions

Commentary: Center for Science in the Public Interest's biotechnology director asserts NAS finds GE foods don't pose higher health risk than non-GE; adds some companies market food products as non-GMO to create nonexistent distinction and give them competitive advantage, sometimes at premium price

Commentary: Kauai Eclectic blogger Joan Conrow comments on topics including March for Science demonstrators and the irony of anti-GM activist groups advocating for scientists to be heard, highlights anti-GM groups being funded by organic industry

News: Food Navigator reports FDA considering requests related to deadline for changes to Nutrition Facts Label; new label to go into effect July 2018 for large manufacturers, one year later for small companies

Commentary: Huffington Post publishes independent environmental journalist's piece questioning motives of March for Science co-organizer as being pro-GMO, refers to Genetic Literacy Project as "scientific crackerjacks" funded by Monsanto

Event: PBS debuts "Seed: The Untold Story" documentary that highlights activists' claims about decrease in seed varieties due to agribusiness involvement and how farmers, scientists, and lawyers are

attempting to "defend the future of our food"

News: Digital Trends series examines innovative new solutions farmers, scientists, and entrepreneurs are working on to feed world; gene editing seen as one solution, with applications that can improve hardiness of crops, livestock

News: Civil Eats reports as seed industry consolidates with mergers, open source breeders hope to preserve handful of important varieties for farms of future; geneticist/plant breeder profiled, claims small farms stay viable by keeping costs down by saving seeds, growing seed crops to sell, developing new varieties that do well regionally

Commentary: Guest blogger on One Green Planet claims growing evidence shows GMO crops responsible for environmental damage, health problems; cites Charles Benbrook's research purporting GMO crops have led to increased pesticide use

More North America items

Africa

Commentary: SciDev.Net, reporting on Africa Diaspora Biotech Summit at University of Cambridge, notes Africa's biotech sector and genomics research hindered by lack of reliable electricity/energy supply

More Africa items

Asia

Commentary: Chairman of Indonesian peasant union writes Global Justice Now commentary to advocate for UN declaration granting rights to peasants for land, seed and biodiversity; highlights email campaign to Boris Johnson to support UN declaration

News: Philippine business newspaper reports Monsanto executives urging government to promote high-yielding GM corn seed to achieve goals of boosting output and enabling farmers to export; notes potential yield of latest variety is triple country's average

Announcement: Masipag Mindanao changing name to Agro-Eco Philippines to reflect organic agriculture NGO's extension to other parts of Philippine archipelago

Video: Indian news site posts video of Vandana Shiva calling on chancellor and students of Banaras Hindu University to help small farmers by supporting organic farming on campus and promoting indigenous food

More Asia items

Europe

News: Croatian media outlet reports only one food company currently has a GMO-free label on food products in Croatia despite lack of regulations defining the term GMO-free in Europe or the country

Commentary: Turkish newspaper claims GMO foods ruin human health, causing host of ailments, including fatigue, depression, back pain

More Europe items

Latin America

News release: La Via Campesina commemorates International Day of Peasants' Struggle by organizing demonstrations, public debates and festivals ahead of the UN Open Ended Intergovernmental Working Group session (May 4) to raise awareness of peasant farmers' right to land, seeds and biodiversity

News: Bolivian news site reports business group asks government for leniency on deadlines for new rules

requiring GM food labels by end of year; extra costs for companies cited

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: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - April 17, 2017
 Date: Monday, April 17, 2017 4:02:12 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

U.S. taxpayer funding of controversial research groups, such as the International Agency for Research on Cancer and the Ramazzini Institute, continues to be a focus of food policy commentators. This week's Favorable Outcomes newsletter features a piece by Steve Sherman in The Daily Caller that describes the "laughable" conspiracy theory suggesting that President Barack Obama's administration colluded with Monsanto to keep glyphosate on the market after the questionable IARC ruling on the herbicide's cancer-causing potential.

Our Stakeholder Spotlight this week focuses on a group founded by Ramazzini Institute president Phillip Landrigan, the Children's Environmental Health Network. The NGO recently launched a project that aims to highlight alleged dangers from glyphosate and other herbicides to children in the U.S. Midwest.

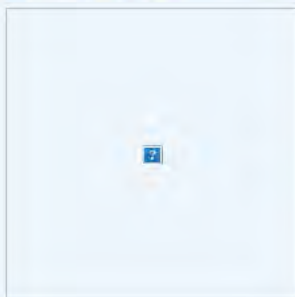
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- [Stakeholder Spotlight](#)
- [Stories Worth Sharing](#)
- [What's Trending?](#)
- [Calendar highlights](#)

Stakeholder Spotlight: Children's Environmental Health Network



The Children's Environmental Health Network (CEHN) is an anti-chemical NGO founded by Ramazzini Institute president Philip Landrigan.

CEHN recently launched a "Herbicide Use and Birth

Stories Worth Sharing

[Steve Sherman: IARC getting U.S. tax money to replace fact-based science with conspiracy theories](#)

[Kevin Folta: Don't cut funding for tomato gene project that benefits scientists, farmers and consumers](#)

[David Zaruk: American activists find "greener pastures" in Europe for emotional claims on topics such as GMOs, IARC glyphosate review](#)

[Alison Bernstein: Caffeine more dangerous than glyphosate, yet we consume it willingly at high levels](#)

[Stephan Neidenbach: Dietitian behind "Food Sleuth" column fails to disclose close relationship with Organic Valley](#)

[Andrew Kniss: Herbicide use seems to be increasing more rapidly on non-GM crops than on GM varieties](#)

[Michigan State University researchers: Activist group's "Dirty Dozen" list does not use same rigorous standards as food safety scientists](#)

[Amjad Husaini: "Prejudiced campaign by vested interests" slowing acceptance of biotech crops](#)

Outcomes in the Midwest" campaign led by Charles Benbrook that claims glyphosate and other pesticides are harming the health of children and mothers. It has been amplified by other activist groups, including U.S. Right to Know, Beyond Pesticides and March Against Monsanto.

To learn more about CEHN, [CLICK HERE](#).

[CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES](#)

Genetic Literacy Project: Gates Foundation releases \$10M grant to develop virus-resistant cassava to be grown in Africa [?](#)

New Mexico farmer: Experience at SXSW festival shows people are starting to understand more about food production [?](#)

Iida Ruishalme: European study shows honeybee survival depends on beekeeper education and disease control [?](#)

Ivo Vegter: Organic movement as being "based on instinctive fear of progress and anti-scientific ignorance" [?](#)

Ex-Iowa Farm Bureau president: Agriculture industry mergers could bring "next generation of innovative new solutions" sooner [?](#)

Former Minnesota House Agriculture Committee chairman: Biotech innovations produce stronger crops, raise production [?](#)

[CLICK FOR BONUS EVENTUS MONITORING](#)

What's Trending?

Results of NGOs' Monsanto mock tribunal to be announced at Tuesday news conference

McDonald's advises shareholders to vote down proposal seeking timeline to phase out antibiotic usage in beef and pork supply

U.S. Right to Know promotes Canadian Food Inspection Agency testing that found glyphosate in 30 percent of samples

U.S. Food and Drug Administration extends comment period on genome editing regulations

NGOs urge Maryland's Republican governor to sign bill to prohibit neonic usage on pollinator habitat areas

Calendar highlights

April 17	April 18-19	April 19
International Day of Peasant Struggle promoted by La Via Campesina	Second International Conference on "Biotechnology in Agriculture" (Albania)	Collaborative on Health and the Environment conference call on human health impact of neonics
April 19-21	April 20	April 20
U.S. National Organic Standards Board meeting (Denver)	"SEED: The Untold Story" movie premieres in U.K., Australia, New Zealand	Collaborative on Health and the Environment conference call on antibiotic resistance

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

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - April 14-16, 2017
 Date: Sunday, April 16, 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

Global biotechnology developments over the weekend included French NGOs attempting to persuade the European Court of Justice that gene-edited products should be regulated as GMOs. A French candidate for president said he would like to eliminate the precautionary principle from decision-making policy on technology. A Colorado county commission voted in favor of a plan to phase out GM crops.

Consolidated highlights include:

- French NGO Inf'OGM published documents submitted by NGOs to the European Court of Justice arguing that products created using new gene-editing techniques should be regulated as GMOs. **See more.**
- French conservative presidential candidate Francois Fillon called the precautionary principle "deviant and arbitrary" and "a pretext for inaction." Instead, Fillon advocates for a "principle of responsibility." **See more.**
- The Boulder County Commission approved a plan to phase out GM crops and neonicotinoid use on county-owned lands. The Farmers Alliance for Integrated Resources director criticized the action and said it "is an ideology-based decision" rather than a science-based one. **See more.**

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

North America

[News: Food Navigator reports Dannon urges judge to dismiss false advertising lawsuit asserting dairy products from cows fed GMOs cannot be marketed as 'all natural,' says the action is based upon 'daisy-chained' logic](#)

[Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project quotes former lab scientist who questions if organic community will accept newer gene editing techniques like 'rewilding', and how will they be regulated versus other biotech crops](#)

[Commentary: Vermont farmer comments on VT Digger on the Vermont Farm Bureau's interest in protecting industrial ag interests at expense of sustainable farming methods, highlights biotech crops' negative impact on health and environment](#)

[Commentary: Canadian-based journalist, farmer Kevin Hursh notes marketers say using science to defend GMOs is less effective than using empathy, consumers getting mixed messages; laments the 'food trend push' originates from agriculture due to heartfelt conviction GMOs are bad, marketing tactics, or profit motives](#)

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Nigerian doctor blogs on the importance of adopting biotechnology in Nigeria to help boost food production and assist small-scale farmers to meet food demands

News: African news site reports ten ways African youth are reinventing agriculture on continent, experimenting with GM seeds to increase production and combat climate change among ways listed

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: Indian news outlet contributor calls on Competition Commission of India (CCI) to stop Dow-DuPont merger, pointing to dangers of potential to increase monopolistic powers of multinational corporations, points to conflict with Indian laws on seed patenting, believes more sustainable ag methods should be given a chance

News: Financial Times reports ChemChina moving aggressively in its timeline to purchase Syngenta after receiving clearance from the Chinese Ministry of Commerce, deal could be completed by end of May

News: The Times of India reports Vandana Shiva embarks on satyagraha yatra to 'create awareness about seed dictatorship', tribute paid to freedom fighters who fought British colonial rule in 1857

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Le Monde reports on Volunteer Reapers' recent vandalism of BASF oilseed rape plots with seeds produced via mutagenesis, in protest that the crops are not regulated or labeled as GMOs, BASF's Jean-Marc Petat noted they are not GMOs and that the techniques used are allowed

News: French news site reports presidential candidate François Fillon considers precautionary principle 'deviant and arbitrary' and 'pretext for inaction', instead advocates 'principle of responsibility'

Commentary: French physicist writes in academic news site that France's popular consensus on GM food is in 'clear opposition to the scientific consensus' that GMOs do not pose risk to humans or animals; argues in democracies 'essential that the best available scientific information is the starting point for public debate'

News: French news site reports 2nd International Meetings of GMO Resistance to take place in Lorient April 28-30, representatives from 27 nations expected

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Interview: Brazilian news outlet interviews Monsanto's Robert Fraley, he voices excitement about developments in CRISPR technology, points to advantages in pending merger with Bayer, and highlights challenges posed by herbicide resistance

News: Puerto Rican news outlet reports on upcoming lecture by nutritionist Vilma Calderón on May 18, which will focus on impact of GM foods on human health and the environment, Calderon claims GMOs have not been sufficiently tested for safety, and that they are less nutritious while containing more allergens

[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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 Date: Thursday, April 13, 2017 9 04:20 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 a GMO pre-emption bill died in Oregon's House of Representatives, although a similar bill survives in the Senate. Health Care Without Harm promoted a purchasing guide to its "Redefining Protein" report, which advocates avoiding GM soy.

Consolidated highlights include:

- Capital Press reported an Oregon bill that would have allowed local governments to regulate GMOs failed to survive a legislative deadline. However, a similar bill was scheduled for a work session in the Senate. **See more.**
- The NGO Health Care Without Harm released a purchasing guide as a supplement to its "Redefining Protein" report. The supplement recommends avoiding GM soy because the crop is "linked to the increased use of pesticides." **See more.**
- A North Carolina State University researcher who chaired the National Academies of Sciences committee that published a report on GM crops last year, responded to a critique of the report by Henry Miller and Val Giddings. **See more**

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North America

News: Politico's morning ag roundup reports on former USDA deputy secretary Chuck Conner's statement that he has no interest in returning to USDA on sidelines of recent Consumer Federation of America's National Food Policy conference, his presentation included criticism of anti-GMO activism

News: New Jersey community news site reports Shiva Ayyadurai, a scientist who feels GMOs lack safety assessment standards, is running against Elizabeth Warren for Massachusetts U.S. Senate seat

Commentary: Organic Consumers Association's newsletter reports on upcoming press conference on April 18 where the five Monsanto Tribunal judges will announce their opinion after reviewing testimony given last October, as well as on lawsuit alleging that Monsanto's labeling of Roundup is misleading, and opposition to proposed organic checkoff program

Interview: Grind TV interviews Hawaiian surf filmmaker Cyrus Sutton on his new documentary about GMO agriculture, which claims that Hawaii imports between 80 and 90 percent of its food due to presence of industrial ag companies testing GM crops on the islands, he points to health and environmental risks of GMOs and associated pesticides

News release: North Carolina State University's Fred Gould, who chaired the NAS report on GE crops last year, responds to "uninformed indictment" on the report's thoroughness, reiterates acceptance of GE crops is nuanced, public input and trust is essential, and more focus should be given to regulating plant characteristics

News: Politico's morning ag roundup reports on former USDA deputy secretary Chuck Conner's statement that he has no interest in returning to USDA on sidelines of recent Consumer Federation of America's National Food Policy conference, his presentation included criticism of anti-GMO activism

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: African Centre for Biodiversity promotes report that claims large agri-business mergers will "deepen inequalities" and exacerbate ecological, political, social crises

News: Nigerian news source reports professor Benjamin Ubi, president of the Biotechnology Society of Nigeria, says biotech will facilitate sustainable ag production and is a "panacea" to current food challenges; notes Ubi urges anti-GMO campaigners not to play politics

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: Biotech professor replies to anti-biotech article in Kashmir Reader, notes biotechnology not held back by different scientific opinons, but by prejudiced campaigns by vested interests; notes studies show biotech reduces ploughing, reduces pesticide use, enhanced drought tolerance

News release: Syngenta announces acquisition by ChemChina approved by Chinese Ministry of Commerce; transaction expected to close in second quarter of 2017

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Agrow reports Monsanto and Bayer received safety clearance from EFSA for two GM stacked-trait oilseed rape and soybean lines

Commentary: Ecological news site says UN report claims small-scale agriculture is only way to eliminate world hunger, not biotechnology

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Mexican news site notes Mayans and their counsel have stymied GM planting, have taken case to Supreme Court, and elevated the question to possible elimination of GM cultivation permits

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

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

[More Oceania items](#)

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 Date: Wednesday, April 12, 2017 9:03:20 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 Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee declined to review a GM mustard variety. In the U.S., prominent technology news outlet *Wired* summarized efforts to genetically engineer a virus that would confer resistance to citrus greening. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization announced a partnership with Consumers International on a hunger program.

Consolidated highlights include:

- Local news outlets reported that India's GEAC did not review a pending application to commercialize GM mustard. Officials told *Press Trust of India* that, despite an agenda which had included the crop, the GEAC was still waiting on a subcommittee review and recommendation before assessing the application. **See more.**
- Following up on reports that USDA had approved a trial of the technology, *Wired* magazine profiled the company behind efforts to genetically engineer a virus that would confer citrus greening resistance to mature trees. The article noted that while the company was also testing genetically engineered trees with an innate resistance to the pathogen, researchers said that consumer skepticism of GMOs and the long regulatory process for approval made that option a difficult sell for growers. **See more.**
- The FAO announced that it had partnered with international NGO Consumers International on its Zero Hunger program. The FAO announcement highlighted Consumers International's previous work on world hunger and added that it looked forward to building more "sustainable and equitable food systems" with the group. **See more.**

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

North America

News: Monsanto, Syngenta technology leads share seed innovation projects with Iowa Farmer Today, note plans to expand insect traits, improve herbicide gene stacking, explore RNAi

Commentary: Andrew Kniss of University of Wyoming and William Price of University of Idaho write for The Breakthrough Institute in response to recent paper on biodiversity, they argue that more understanding of biodiversity in agriculture is needed, and that ideal biodiversity on and off the farm may not be the same or even compatible

Commentary: Writing for March Against Monsanto, AltHealthWORKS founder warns Houston is next battleground for GMO mosquitoes to 'fight zika virus'; suggests modified animals are profitable 'solution' to problems that have been blown out of proportion

News: The Dallas Morning News reports Dallas County considers using GM mosquitoes to fight zika virus; commissioner says it could save lives while another worries about "unintended consequences"

Commentary: GMO Answers' Commodity Crop Series posts profile on cotton, reports cotton production has doubled since 1950 due largely to improved varieties resistant to insects, herbicides

News: Quebec's Agence Science Presse amplifies paper published in Nature Communications journal arguing GM crops have had positive impact in regards to reducing herbicide use, overall toxicity; notes discussion of glyphosate links to cancer, allegations of EPA-Monsanto collusion persist

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Kenyan news station reports Biosafety Appeals Board dismissed claims of GM crops in the food supply, professor refutes cancer claims on GM products

News: Ugandan Radio Network reports on farmers' rejection of Ag Ministry's intervention in fall armyworm attacks as inadequate, criticizing the Ministry for failing to subsidize or distribute free pesticides, following announcement that it has received 4.5 billion Shillings for pesticides, motorized spray pumps and awareness meetings

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Indian news site reports Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council granted new intellectual properties for improved crop varieties

News: Press Trust of India reports GM mustard was not on the agenda at recent Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) meeting, Environment Ministry has received over 700 comments from various stakeholders thus far, and a sub-committee will submit a final report to GEAC after reviewing all comment

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News release: John Innes Center announces it has been awarded £77.9m as part of new strategic program investments by UK Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC), which will fund four new research programs including one geared towards developing improved wheat varieties

Commentary: Opinion article in Nature Correspondence argues that lengthy debate in Europe over regulating gene editing is failing scientists, noting that while debates are important, they often end in deadlock in the EU, hindering progress, believes that regulating products of gene editing as GMOs will cause further delays

Commentary: Czech Republic health news site contributor highlights economic cases for opposition to GMOs in Europe, but says benefits of allowing countries to choose whether they cultivate GMOs outweighs the risks

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: In Huffington Post, Food First director promotes Day of Peasant Struggle, March for Science

[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 new amparo lawsuit filed by Greenpeace Mexico accusing regional authorities of ignoring illegal GM soy cultivation. In Nigeria, a government minister told local news outlets that his agency was meeting to finalize recommendations on GM crop production in the country.

Consolidated highlights include:

- Activists in Mexico launched new actions in the ongoing controversy over GM soy cultivation in the Yucatan Peninsula. Greenpeace announced that it had still not received a response from its report to the Servicio Nacional de Sanidad, Inocuidad y Calidad Agroalimentaria (Senasica), which had informed the agency of possible GM soy cultivation despite a judicial stay on commercialization. As a result, the NGO said that on April 7 it had filed for an amparo trial in order to force the agency to respond. Meanwhile, Yucatan legal counselor Carlos Pavón Flores said that he had presented local beekeepers' arguments against GM soy cultivation before the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation. **See more.**
- In Nigeria, the minister of science and technology told a local news outlet that the science, agriculture and environment ministries had plans to meet to discuss the country's stance on GM crop and animal cultivation. The agencies would coordinate and present a final recommendation to the Federal Executive Council "soon," Minister Ogbonnaya Onu told the *Daily Trust*. The news follows continued activism on Nigeria's recently passed biosafety law, including a claim published yesterday in which a political commentator accused the government of trying to "kill" the reputation of anti-biotechnology activists. **See more.**

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North America

Commentary: University of Wyoming weed scientist Andrew Kniss summarizes his recent paper published in Nature Communications, argues that GM crops have had a positive effect on herbicide use intensity and mammalian toxicity; notes that if glyphosate were eliminated, other herbicides would take its place

News: Montana newspaper reports State Senate Bill 155 has passed both House and Senate and awaits Governor's signature; bill keeps local communities from banning GM crops

News: The Oregonian reports State House Bill 2739, which would allow legal action against the patent-holder for cross-contamination of GM crops, is scheduled for a work session (April 18)

News: Catholic news site amplifies Pope's message asking scientists to use new genetic technologies carefully and with 'humility,' says science must focus on health and not profits

Commentary: Food Babe Vani Hari promotes launch of Food Democracy Now's "Glyphosate Residue Free" label, tells readers label will keep them from getting poisoned from Roundup, notes first verified product is Leaf & Love Organic Lemonade

Commentary: Undark contributor examines Monsanto's search for a "Corporate Web Journalist," questioning what defines a "journalist," arguing that the job description is more for a marketing or communications specialist

News release: General Mills announces progress on global corporate social responsibility; report includes addressing issues ranging from consumer choices which include growing organic market and GMO labeling to stewardship including water quality, antibiotic-use and pollinator protection initiatives

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Nigerian news outlet reports Federal Government will soon take a final stand on whether or not to allow production and sale of GM crops and animals in the country, Minister of Science and Technology, Dr Ogbonnaya Onu argued that it doesn't make sense to import what can be produced locally

Report: African Centre for Biodiversity publishes report on three ag industry mega-mergers, voices concern that resulting research will be geared towards high-profit proprietary products rather than products that are appropriate for Africa and South Africa's farmers, arguing that industry consolidation will increase prices for farmers

Commentary: South African news outlet contributor criticizes organic movement as being "based on instinctive fear of progress and anti-scientific ignorance," noting those that promote organic have never faced hunger, points out irony in their acceptance of plants produced via mutagenesis, but not by more precise GE techniques

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Indian newspaper reports Delhi High Court stays lower court's decision, temporarily allows Monsanto to avoid restoring sub-licensing agreement with Nuziveedu Seeds in dispute over patented Bt cotton technology; parties ordered to submit written briefs

News: Bloomberg - ChemChina to redistribute agrochemical assets to its Adama unit after Syngenta takeover; notes Adama is expected to strengthen its crop-protection products with better technology from ChemChina

News: Vietnamese news outlet reports on consumer concerns that GM food is harmful to health and may cause cancer, Nguyen Lan Dung of Hanoi National University's Institute of Microbiology and Biotechnology noted genes present in GM food are destroyed at high temperatures, arguing that is why GM foods are safe for consumers

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Report: European Food Safety Authority publishes Panel on GMOs explanatory note clarifying scope and methodology for literature searching performed to prepare applications for market authorization of GMOs

News: Italian news outlet reports regional governor shared his beliefs during EU agriculture minister's visit that Europe should support local farmers and not multinational corporations by saying no to GMOs

News: Italian news outlet reports on EU Parliament resolution against authorization of Syngenta's GM maize variety, highlighting argument that European Food Safety Authority failed to consider impact of the several subcombinations, and Parliament's call on EU Commission to withdraw its plans for authorization

Interview: In interview with Hungarian radio station, General Director of National Agricultural Research and Innovation Center advocates creating a GMO-free National Protein Feed Program to decrease amount of GM crops being imported from the U.S.

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Yucatan news outlet reports on State Legal Counsel, Carlos Pavón Flores' recent presentation of allegations of Yucatecans against transgenic cultivation in the state before the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation (SCJN), pointing to negative impact on beekeepers whose honey shipments have been contaminated

News: Mexican news outlet reports on lawsuit filed by Greenpeace alleging that National Service of Sanitation, Safety and Food Quality (Senasica) violated its right to petition and information regarding claims of illegal GM soy cultivation in Campeche, arguing that Senasica failed to initiate inspection and monitoring to verify legal compliance

News release: Greenpeace Mexico and other NGOs file lawsuit alleging that National Service of Sanitation, Safety and Agroalimentary Quality (Senasica) has failed to communicate with local communities about any inspections or findings regarding illegal GM soy cultivation in Campeche, violating right to petition

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News release: Commenting on Australia-EU free trade agreement negotiations, GrainGrowers notes price premiums for GM-free canola exported to EU are increasing due to ability to ensure no GM canola detected in the supply chain

News: Australian news outlet reports farmers agree with University of West Australian researcher's opinion that current regulations for GM crops and gene editing are "inhibiting future growth," relaxing the regulations could help produce climate-resistant crops at a faster pace

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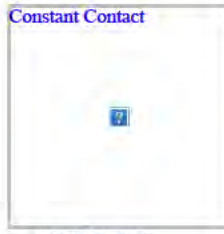
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 Date: Monday, April 10, 2017 9:00:39 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included a statement from Pope Francis urging caution on the technology. In the U.S., the Department of Agriculture announced plans to trial a GE virus designed to resist citrus greening. Media outlets and international activists continued to amplify news on ChemChina's pending purchase of Syngenta.

Consolidated highlights include:

- During a speech at the Italian National Committee for Biosafety Biotechnology and Life Sciences, Pope Francis warned against the careless use of biotechnology. He urged scientists, companies and regulators to approach the subject of biotechnology with "humility" and warned that few can accurately predict the full consequences of powerful new technologies. [See more](#).
- Syngenta announced that it received approval from Mexican regulators for ChemChina's purchase of the Switzerland-based company. Though details were limited, the company said that this ensured the deal remained on track to close in the second quarter. Activists in Europe continued to criticize the EU's recent approval of the acquisition. [See more](#).
- USDA announced that it had approved limited testing of a new genetically modified virus that would protect citrus trees from citrus greening. Reporting on the news, Politico noted that the method did not require multi-agency approval because it was not a GM crop. Instead, as a plant virus, it would require permits for any future application. A report in Brazil's Canal Rural amplified the news, though it appeared to conflate the new approvals with previously reported efforts to design a greening-resistant tree. [See more](#).

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

North America

Announcement: USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) announces plans to conduct Environmental Impact Statement for release of GE citrus tristeza virus, with goal of combating citrus greening disease, a public comment period is open until May 10

News: Politico's morning ag roundup reports on USDA's review of potential environmental impact of a GE virus that can be used in citrus trees to combat citrus greening, as well as Natural Resources Defense Council's plans to target antibiotic use in pork

Report: University of Wyoming plant scientist Andrew Kniss examines long-term trends in intensity and toxicity of herbicide use, finds that herbicide increases are more rapid in non-GE crops, while chronic toxicity has decreased

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project contributor suggests if synthetic biology could improve world "beyond food," people might lose fear of GMO food; notes anti-GMO activists have exploited people's ignorance

News release: Research by the University of British Columbia, Université catholique de Louvain

(Belgium) and Delft University (The Netherlands) creates mathematical formula to better calculate how far GM pollen travels for cross-pollination

Commentary: Civil Eats contributor questions timing of Monsanto's investment in CRISPR technology as it and other large ag firms seek mergers, voices concern that more accessible gene editing technology will not be used to create more sustainable food systems, examines regulatory debate surrounding gene editing

More North America items

Africa

News: Kenyan news site reports the National Environmental Authority is requiring an environmental impact assessment of all field sites before field trials are approved for Monsanto's GM corn

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project contributor reports Gates Foundation has released \$10.46 million grant to fight cassava diseases by using genetic engineering, conventional breeding

Commentary: 2015 Cornell Alliance for Science Global Leadership Fellow and Open Forum on Agricultural Biotechnology, Nigeria program assistant Modesta Nnedinso Abugu recounts recent panel discussion of role of GM crops in African food security, highlights her remarks on potential for biotech to boost Nigeria's economy

Commentary: Political economist writes for Nigerian environmental news outlet, accuses government of attempting to discredit environmentalist Nnimmo Bassey, following National Inter-Religious Council (NIREC) report which found that GM crops do not boost yields or reduce pesticide use, and that they pose health and environmental risks

Commentary: Nigerian professor Mk Othman continues with part three of series on role of biotech in Nigeria's food security, examines several developments to improve nutrition and stress tolerance, believes Nigeria is on its way to achieving food self-sufficiency using biotech, but that fear hinders advancement

More Africa items

Asia

News: Indian newspaper reports Delhi High Court stayed judge's order preventing Monsanto from terminating sub-licensing agreements with three seed companies

Commentary: Indian NGO issues letter urging Competition Commission of India to reject application for Dow-Dupont merger, claiming CropLife India misled CCI by submitting information prepared by companies

Commentary: International Food Policy Research Institute and Monsanto executives speak at Chinese ag development forum, recommend China invest in research, technological innovations

News: Indian business newspaper reports Delhi High Court upholds Monsanto's termination of Bt cotton sub-licensing agreements with seed manufacturer; court ruling overturns judge's stay that kept license agreements in force

Commentary: Vietnamese news outlet contributor examines debate over GM safety, points to several Vietnamese experts who argue that GM crops reduce pesticide use without sacrificing nutrition, as well as Americans who worry about lack of safety testing and rise in chronic health disorders, gives consumers tips on identifying GM products

More Asia items

Europe

News release: Pope Francis calls on biotechnology committee to be accountable in developing

technology, avoid putting profits ahead of citizens of poorest countries

News: Vatican Radio reports Pope Francis cautioned biotechnology scientists and companies against misuse of power, putting profits ahead of poor populations

News release: Syngenta announces its acquisition by ChemChina has been approved by Mexican competition authority

Commentary: German anti-GM NGO amplifies response from government official addressing the group's environmental concerns about spread of GMOs with genome editing or synthetic biology, official believes current regulations are suitable for now

Commentary: Swiss anti-GMO NGO Schweizer Allianz Gentechfrei voices concern about EU approval of ChemChina's proposed acquisition of Syngenta, claiming that increased industry consolidation and seed control will lead to reduced biodiversity, promotes upcoming "March against Monsanto & Syngenta"

Report: European Food Safety Authority Panel on GMOs issues Scientific Opinion on Monsanto/Bayer application for authorization of GM glufosinate and glyphosate tolerant oilseed rape and subcombinations, the panel found no food and feed safety or nutrition risks, and no environmental risks in the event of accidental release

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News release: Embrapa researcher to discuss how GM can change people's lives as part of the International "Pint of Science" festival (May 15-17) in Brasilia

News: Brazilian news outlet reports on USDA's planned testing of potential environmental impacts of a GE virus designed to combat citrus greening in citrus trees, US orange production has dropped 50 percent since 2008 due to the disease

News: Mexican news outlet reports on Ensenada residents' support of project, "Sobre ruedas Orgánico Ensenada," where vendors can sell organic foods and promote environmentally friendly products, the event also hopes to familiarize people with vegan and vegetarian products

[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: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - April 10, 2017
 Date: Monday, April 10, 2017 4:56:04 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

This week's Favorable Outcomes newsletter features a series of articles that dissect misleading, inaccurate and biased claims by environmental activist groups. Richard Levine and Hank Campbell offer pieces dismantling claims from a recent Center for Biological Diversity "Pollinators in Peril" report claiming that numerous bee species could face extinction. Alex Berezow of the American Council for Science and Health gives a profile of the Center for Media and Democracy's SourceWatch while David Zaruk asks more broadly why NGOs are able to keep their influence despite clear issues with their financing, conflicts of interests and beyond. There's also a feature from Politico on a businessman who is a key funder of activist groups such as Corporate Europe Observatory and Friends of the Earth, which have been vocal opponents of pesticides and biotechnology, amid new scrutiny of NGO funding in the EU.

To view items on this newsletter, first log in to your profile on the [Bonus Eventus Community](#) page. If you have not yet created a Bonus Eventus account, simply [fill out the Request Membership form](#) on the front page of the site. To share articles, simply 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: GMO Inside



The GMO Inside campaign aggressively lobbies for mandatory GMO labeling initiatives throughout the U.S. and encourages members to purchase or download "caution" labels they can use in stores to brand products that do not support GMO-free labeling.

The campaign was founded in 2012 by John Roulac, the CEO of organic, non-GMO

■ Stories Worth Sharing

[Richard Levine: Bee researchers deem NGO's claims about extinction threat unsupported, misleading, not credible](#)

[Alex Berezow: SourceWatch is politicized, unscientific Wikipedia that takes "dark money" to attack Monsanto, glyphosate, GMOs](#)

[Kevin Folta: Non-GMO whiskey taking advantage of how poorly consumers understand risk](#)

[Hank Campbell: Center for Biological Diversity using "guesswork" to claim hundreds of bee species face extinction threat](#)

[David Zaruk: How do activist campaigns get away with lying about finances and conflicts of interest?](#)

[Capital Press: Oregon lawmakers should let FDA and USDA regulate farm antibiotic use, defeat "troubling" bill](#)

[Paul Driessen: By allowing bumblebee to be listed as endangered, Interior secretary opened "Pandora's box"](#)

[Cereal Growers Association chairman: Kenya's deputy president should honor "unfulfilled promise" to lift GMO ban](#)

[Tim Barker: U.S. EPA decision reversed chlorpyrifos ban](#)

hemp, coconut and palm oil company Nutiva. Its original stated goal was responding to the California Prop 37 defeat to get mandatory GMO labeling. Maharishi movement follower Jeffrey Smith and "Food Babe" Vani Hari are among individuals previously listed as members of the group's steering committee.

GMO Inside now shares offices - as well as a campaign director - with the NGO Green America

To learn more about GMO Inside, [CLICK HERE](#).

[CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES](#)

[recommendation based on questioned studies](#)

[Stephan Neidenbach questions how much money Mother Jones' Tom Philpott receives from organic industry to stay "on message"](#)

[Politico: Lebanese businessman's funding of Corporate Europe Observatory, other NGOs under scrutiny in Brussels](#)

[Founder of Washington pollination business: "Neonics are our friends"](#)

[Wisconsin Republican Party official: EPA chlorpyrifos ruling "restored a 50-year track record of a proven farming tool"](#)

[CLICK FOR BONUS EVENTUS MONITORING](#)

What's Trending?

[University of Iowa/USGS study finds neonics in Iowa drinking water / Embargoed USGS study to highlight mixture of pesticides, antibiotics in water](#)

[KFC to end use of medically important antibiotics in its chicken supply by end of 2018; activists demand pork industry follow suit](#)

[Activists respond to U.S. EPA chlorpyrifos decision with lawsuit, demands for California to ban the chemical](#)

[EU, U.S. regulators allow ChemChina-Syngenta deal to move forward](#)

[Supreme Court to hear arguments on jurisdictional dispute over Waters of the United States rule](#)

Calendar highlights

April 10-11	April 10-13	April 11-12
Plant Genomics and Gene Editing Congress: Asia	Water for Food global conference	Consumer Federation of America National Food Policy Conference
April 11	April 17	April 18-19
French Senate Committee on European Affairs colloquy on endocrine disruptors	International Day of Peasant Struggle promoted by La Via Campesina	Second International Conference on "Biotechnology in Agriculture" (Albania)

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

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Catch up on the latest news and other developments impacting regulations on agriculture.

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - April 7-9, 2017
 Date: Sunday, April 9, 2017 9:03:44 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 Swadeshi Jangran Manch asking Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to ban Monsanto from the country. Oregon news sites reported a state committee this week will discuss a bill giving local governments the ability to regulate GMOs.

Consolidated highlights include:

- Indian news outlets reported RSS affiliate Swadeshi Jangran Manch and Vandana Shiva appealed to the Indian prime minister to prohibit Monsanto from operating in the country, claiming it illegally introduced glyphosate-tolerant crops noting glyphosate has been declared a probable carcinogen by the International Agency for Research on Cancer. Monsanto officials pointed out the crops were introduced only after approval by regulatory authorities. **See more.**
- Oregon's Senate Environment Committee will discuss during Wednesday meetings a bill that would restore the ability to regulate GMOs to local governments. **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: We Love GMOs and Vaccines' Neidenbach column criticizes anti-conventional agriculture Mother Jones' "journalist" Tom Philpott for participating in organic industry sponsored event

News: Oregon CBS affiliate reports on Senate Bill 1037 and House Bill 2739 which would protect farmers in Jackson and Josephine counties from cross-contamination from GM crops, HB 2739 needs more support by April 7 or it will die, Elise Higley of Our Family Farms emphasized farmers' right to be protected from GMOs

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project contributor dismisses common anti-GMO argument about patented seeds, noting organic growers frequently purchase patented seeds, and have other strategies for protecting their breeding products

Commentary: American Council on Science and Health contributor claims SourceWatch is a politicized, unscientific Wikipedia that takes dark money to fund smear articles on people, groups it opposes, citing articles on Monsanto, GMO, glyphosate

Report: Review in AAAS publication Science examines potential for ChemChina's takeover of Syngenta to speed up GM commercialization in China, as the country would have a large state-owned company with competitive seed lines, highlights challenge of winning over public opinion

News: Food Navigator reports during confirmation hearing, FDA commissioner nominee agreed with Sen. Roberts on concerns new nutrition labeling should coincide with GMO labeling requirements; food industry trade associations worried two years not enough time to implement

 More North America items

Africa

Commentary: Writing in Kenyan news source, Egerton University crop expert says armyworms are ravaging hundreds of farms in nation, lists bio-pesticides, Bt maize among viable solutions

News: Kenyan business news site reports state agencies disagree on GM maize field trials; National Biosafety Authority says field trials must go on and GM maize found safe, while ational Environmental Authority director demands safety assurances

Commentary: David Makumi of Kenya Network of Cancer Organisations writes for local news outlet, criticizes health ministry's views against GMOs, noting they are safe for human consumption, and necessary for food security in face of drought, notes alcohol is a proven carcinogen, but is viewed as socially acceptable

News: Ethiopian news site reports Haramaya University opens biotechnology forum with other stakeholders to provide credible information

More Africa items

Asia

Commentary: Filipino news outlet contributor profiles scientist Frank A. Shotkoski, and his belief that biotech has great potential to boost food security and improve human health and nutrition, highlights his GM crop research at University of the Philippines at Los Baños

Report: Review in AAAS publication Science examines potential for ChemChina's takeover of Syngenta to speed up GM commercialization in China, as the country would have a large state-owned company with competitive seed lines, highlights challenge of winning over public opinion

News: Pakistani news outlet reports on recent meeting for stakeholders on Biosafety Regulatory Framework, where Federal Minister for Climate Change Zahid Hamid announced plans to strengthen National Biosafety committee to make it more effective and improve coordination between provinces, health impacts of GMOs were also discussed

News: Indian news outlet reports on Sangh Parivar affiliate Swadeshi Jagran Manch's (SJM) investigation of Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's influence on India's health policies, its draft paper coming soon after RSS affiliate Bharatiya Kisan Sangh lobbied for government control of cotton seed prices to break Monsanto's monopoly

More Asia items

Europe

News: Reuters reports on recent global conference on synbio in London, where experts spoke about the fast pace of development as well as public uncertainties, highlights Friends of the Earth's condemnation of synbio vanillin as "extreme" genetic engineering

News: Politico profiles Ayman Jallad, biggest supporter of NGOs Corporate Europe Observatory and Friends of the Earth, is on crusade against European Commission and GM crops, says "killing people is less a crime than chopping down trees"

Report: Report in Environmental Research examines environmental impacts of GM plants, highlights problems of herbicide and insecticide resistance and negative impact on off-target species and biodiversity, authors call for more in-depth research

News: Irish ag news outlet reports on MEPs' opposition to EU Commission plans to authorize food and feed imports from an herbicide and pest-resistant GM maize variety, adopting a non-binding resolution by 426 votes to 230, objecting to lack of data on the many sub-combinations of the variety

News: EurActiv reports on European Biopharmaceutical Enterprises (EBE) report which found that the EU is lagging behind in biotech due to lack of support from investors, universities or research institutions, making it difficult to keep up with the US

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Interview: Mexican news outlet interviews Chihuahua Secretary of Rural Development Rubén Chávez Villagrán, he laments lack of public education about GMOs, pointing to health benefits of biotech applications such as insulin production, however he warns that planting transgenic maize could contaminate native varieties

Commentary: Mexican news site contributor evaluates GM crops in light of bioethics and what they contribute

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News release: New Zealand Parliament announces Resource Management Act amendments withdrawn; would have prevented local governments from regulating GMOs, notes Hawkes Bay producers worked to keep region GE-free

News release: New Zealand's Maori Party announces its recent Mana Whakahono-a-Rohe agreements, and successful negotiation of Resource Legislation Amendment Bill to prevent ministers from overriding local councils' restrictions on GMOs

[More Oceania items](#)

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: CORRECTION: Global Biotech Snapshot - April 6, 2017
 Date: Friday, April 7, 2017 4:34:32 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

Resending with correction noted below in red.

Today's global biotechnology developments included a European Parliament resolution asking the European Commission to deny approvals for herbicide- and pest-resistant crops. The Center for Science in the Public Interest claimed the Grocery Manufacturers Association is "undermining public health" by asking to delay revised nutrition labels in the United States.

Consolidated highlights include:

- An EU Parliament resolution asked the commission to reject herbicide- and pest-resistant GM crop authorizations. The resolution also called for reforming the EU's crop licensing procedure and objected to a lack of data on variety sub-combinations. **See more.**
- Center for Science in the Public Interest accused the GMA of "undermining public health" by asking to delay revised nutrition fact labels until the U.S. Department of Agriculture rolls out GMO labels. **See more.**

An earlier version of Global Biotech Snapshot mischaracterized the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) as opposing biotechnology. We regret the error.

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North America

News: Food Safety News reports that during confirmation hearing, potential FDA commissioner discussed timing new nutrition labeling with new GMO labeling requirements; reviewed GE salmon approval

Commentary: On Medium, pro-biotech blogger argues that Chipotle's decision to remove GM ingredients from its menu is short-sighted, relies too much on IARC designations and lack of understanding on pesticide use

News: New York Times reports on EU Commission approval of ChemChina's proposed acquisition of Syngenta, which will require significant divestitures to avoid competition concerns, highlights challenges as China moves forward on GMOs, as Chinese consumers are still wary of the technology

Commentary: Natural News contributor examines evidence of alleged conflicts of interest in National Academy of Sciences' panel on GMOs, pointing to biotech industry ties of several panel members, claims NAS has been "totally corrupted"

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science amplifies research on transgenic bananas successfully resisting nematodes and bacterial wilting disease, says small-scale farmers in Africa stand to benefit

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: ISAAA notes Kenyan youth farmers urge government to approve water-efficient GM maize, believe it is the answer to drought plaguing Kenyan farmers

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: Vandana Shiva describes recent farmer protests and criticizes debt 'colonialism' by multinationals; highlights upcoming Satyagraha Yatra with goal of making India "poison free, debt free and suicide free"

News: Times of India reports on upcoming Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) meeting on April 12, where members will discuss pending applications for different varieties of GM crops, an official noted that once confined field trials are authorized, states must grant no-objection certificates

Video: Iranian news station reports on biotech crops as an "efficient and effective tool" in agriculture, notes potential for helping with salinity and drought issues

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: CropLife International CEO, chairman say farmers need continued access to crop protection, biotechnologies to meet meet goal of eradicating hunger by 2030

Commentary: Rob Verkerk of Alliance for Natural Health International voices concern about Court of Justice of the European Union's (CJEU) recent ruling that will make it more difficult for member states to invoke the 'safeguard clause' to ban GM crop cultivation, claims industry influence over EFSA may make proving "clear" evidence of harm more difficult

News: Italian news agency ANSA reports EU Parliament passed resolution asking Commission not to authorize GM, herbicide- and pest-resistant crops; highlights lack of data on sub-combinations of maize, calls for Commission to revamp GMO authorization process

Announcement: EFSA panel on GMOs finds Bayer's two-event stack soybean is "as safe as the non-genetically modified (GM) comparator" in terms of potential effects on health and environment

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Bolivian news site reports two groups form new NGO, Scientific Committee on Biotechnology, to counter those interested in introducing GMOs; trade official criticizes new NGO, notes GMOs useful in other countries

Commentary: Mexican news site columnist says planting GM maize in Mexico would be environmental, cultural disaster and do not increase yields; says challenge will be to prevent NAFTA from requiring Mexico to accept GM maize cultivation

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: New Zealand business news outlet reports on National Party's concessions to Maori Party to allow local councils to create GE-free regions, to facilitate passage of Resource Legislation Amendment Bill, highlights reactions of various other parties

News: New Zealand farming news outlet reports on lobby group Pure Hawke's Bay's claimed victory in

fight for local councils to maintain GE-free status with reforms to Resource Management Act, Federated Farmers president William Rolleston believes the law will create a "mess" with a lot of uncertainty

News: New Zealand Herald reports on Maori Party co-leader Marama Fox's successful deal re reforms to Resource Management Act to allow local councils to ban GMOs, Soil and Health chair Marion Thomas noted they wanted ability to ban GE animal trials as well, but Environment Minsiter Smith argued that could hinder important medical research

News release: New Zealand anti-GMO group GE Free Northland praises Maori Party for successfully blocking government from passing changes to the Resource Management Act that would block local councils from restricting GMOs, the group voices concern about GE animal research

[More Oceania items](#)

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 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - April 6, 2017
 Date: Thursday, April 6, 2017 9:01:00 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - April 5, 2017
 Date: Wednesday, April 5, 2017 9:00:44 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 announcements from U.S. and European regulators approving ChemChina's purchase of Syngenta. New Zealand's Resource Management Act also continued to generate controversy.

Consolidated highlights include:

- The U.S. Federal Trade Commission and the European Commission announced that they had approved ChemChina's purchase of the European agricultural company Syngenta. European regulators noted that both companies would be required to sell off some of their crop protection businesses in order to meet anti-monopoly requirements. **See more.**
- Activists in New Zealand continued to encourage supporters to engage on the proposed changes to the Resource Management Act, particularly its provisions limiting regional districts' ability to ban GM crop cultivation. The New Zealand Soil and Health Association praised the Maori Party for pushing National Party negotiators to allow regional crop bans to continue. **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 ChemChina received EU antitrust approval for its takeover of Syngenta, one day after receiving U.S. approval, deal expected to be finalized by the end of June despite still needing approval from Chinese antitrust authorities

Commentary: American Antitrust Institute president says agribusiness mergers will impact growers, consumers through higher prices, fewer choices

News: Politico reports on FDA commissioner nominee Scott Gottlieb's suggestion that he may be willing to push back the Nutrition Facts label update deadline to align it with USDA's GMO labeling regulation, highlighting importance of consolidating the label changes

Audio: Marketplace reports on China's slowing of approval of U.S. GM crop exports, as it eases its own restrictions on GMOs to meet increased meat consumption demands of its growing middle class, Peter Phillips of University of Saskatchewan believes the slowing of export approvals may be strategic

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: New Telegraph contributor reports NABDA-CGAL collaboration could make Nigeria a 'hub' for increased crop productivity; quotes NABDA director general on need for agriculture to utilize biotechnology

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: AP reports U.S and EU regulators have approved ChemChina's acquisition of Syngenta pending the divestiture of several pesticides for anti-monopoly complaints, hopes to increase Syngenta's presence within China

Audio: Marketplace reports on China's slowing of approval of U.S. GM crop exports, as it eases its own restrictions on GMOs to meet increased meat consumption demands of its growing middle class, Peter Phillips of University of Saskatchewan believes the slowing of export approvals may be strategic

News: Vietnamese news site reports Vietnamese agency asserts country does not grow GM corn commercially, says rumors spread that GM corn is in market and causes cancer

News: Fiji Times reports individuals overseeing imports of GM crops into the country received more training, officials concerned with potential impacts of GM crops with current subsistence and organic methods

News: Manila Standard reports on protest against Department of Agriculture's proposed Masagana 6000 program with goal of boosting rice yields using hybrid varieties, Cris Panerio of MASIPAG claimed IRRRI's past varieties have failed to boost production and have damaged soil health

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News release: Syngenta and ChemChina announce they have received approval from EU Commission for proposed acquisition of Syngenta by ChemChina, they expect the transaction will close in the second quarter of 2017

News release: Syngenta announces U.S. trade commission has approved ChemChina acquisition of the seed company, deal expected to happen in second quarter of 2017

News release: Friends of the Earth Europe claim European Commission's approval of ChemChina-Syngenta and Dow-DuPont mergers threatens bees, environment, food security; urges Commission to reject Bayer-Monsanto purchase

News: Feed Navigator reports on debate over whether or not new breeding techniques such as CRISPR could be used in organic systems to help close productivity gap, International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) believes products of NBTs should be regulated as GMOs

Commentary: Helena Paul and Ricarda A. Steinbrecher of EcoNexus and Elisabeth Bücking of Gene-ethical Network write for The Ecologist, arguing that products of Synbio and New Breeding Techniques (NBTs) are distinct from GMOs, posing new risks that warrant more stringent regulation, such as off-target effects

Commentary: The Risk-Monger David Zaruk says in part 3 of NGO series that NGOs continually lie, break rules, laws, have conflicts of interest on studies, plot to overthrow industry and conventional agriculture, but do not face consequences of their actions due to dogmatism of today's "eco-religion"

News release: EU Parliament announces resolution opposing Commission's GM maize authorization proposal, calls for reform to GM crop licensing procedure, object to lack of data for sub-combinations

Report: Quaker United Nations Office calls on governments to support small-scale farmers, embracing agricultural biodiversity and their seed systems; claims industrial agriculture is harming the environment

News: WikiAgri reports French presidential candidates' stance on environment, biotechnology; notes some candidates favor bans on GMOs, neonicotinoids, endocrine-disrupting chemicals

[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

Commentary: Former state Farmers and Graziers Association CEO amplifies Australia's Productivity Commission report, says agricultural boom held back by red tape such as GMO bans

News: Hawke's Bay Today reports the North Island region is one step closer to staying GMO-free following an agreement between the National and Maori Parties over resource management law updates

News release: New Zealand Soil and Health Association welcomes change to Resource Legislation Amendment Bill to prevent Minister for the Environment from allowing cultivation of GM crops in regions that want to remain GE-free, praises Maori party but notes concern that GE animals are not mentioned

Letter to the editor: Maharishi Foundation consultant criticizes NZ Parliament for trying to curb regional GMO bans; compares legislators to Nazis and claims GMOs are human experiment

News: Australian Broadcasting Association reports Monsanto's Bollgard 3 may be the answer for cotton that can withstand northern Australia's insects during wet season

[More Oceania items](#)

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Apr. 4, 2017
 Date: Tuesday, April 4, 2017 9:04:10 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 commentary included ongoing response to recent reports examining how Europe should regulate new plant breeding techniques, while activists in Mexico asked the country's Supreme Court to support their rejection of GM soy cultivation.

Consolidated highlights include:

- European commentators continued to discuss recent reports on whether to regulate "gene edited" crops as traditional GMOs. In Germany, academics with the European Academies Science Advisory Council (EASAC) published a commentary on a recent EASAC report addressing the issue; the researchers note that, in order to avoid constraining innovation, EASAC had recommended regulatory efforts focus on the specific application of new plant breeding techniques rather than focusing on the technology as a whole. In France, the country's Parliamentary Office for the Evaluation of Science and Technology (OPECST) had issued a similar report last week; the report's recommendations were discussed in new commentary today from anti-biotechnology group Inf'OGM. **See more.**
- In Mexico, activists associated with EDUCE, AC issued an open letter to a minister of the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation, urging him to support governments in the Yucatan peninsula in their efforts to stop the cultivation of GM soy. The group cited the IARC report on glyphosate, claiming that the chemicals used in commercial GM soy production put the local Mayan community at an increased risk of cancer. They also warn that soy cultivation requires deforestation and would harm local farmers and beekeepers. **See more.**

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

North America

News release: American Seed Trade Association announces "Storm the Hill" event April 5 in Washington D.C. to push several legislative policies, highlights plant breeding regulation and key USDA research programs

Audio: Being Skeptical podcast focuses on dispelling many of Vandana Shiva's myths about biotech, including her claims about negative impact of the Green Revolution, farmer suicides, control of multinational corporations, terminator seeds and glyphosate

Commentary: University of Florida professor notes contradiction of whiskey manufacturers promoting alcohol as non-GMO for consumer safety despite selling a product the IARC labels as a group 1 known carcinogen

News: Tech news site reports study from North Carolina State University finds significant shortfall in "refuge" cropland being planted in North Carolina, likely increasing rate at which crop pests will evolve and safely devour Bt crops

Commentary: Friends of the Earth writer summarizes Future Food-Tech Conference, questions next

generation of GM products such as Arctic Apple and Impossible Burger; says technology is moving faster than regulators can assess

More North America items

Africa

Commentary: Nigerian environmental news site guest columnist, with Health of Mother Earth Foundation, says NGO disputes claims GM crops offer higher yields, more profits as 'mostly mere propaganda'; animal studies cited purporting GMO feed lead to organ damage, gastrointestinal and immune system disorders, infertility

More Africa items

Asia

Commentary: MASIPAG criticizes International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) for taking traditional rice varieties from around the world and replacing them with seeds that require intensive chemical applications, claiming IRRI's farming system has led to increase in hunger and rural poverty

News: Indian textile industry news site reports Punjab Agricultural University develops two varieties of BT cotton and is first agriculture institute to develop reusable seeds; adds varieties could be available to farmers by 2018 cotton season if approved by GEAC

Commentary: Former USDA biotechnology regulator, writing in Indian magazine, says local activism and government apathy is undermining food security in the country, notes benefits of biotechnology

Commentary: CropLife International managing director shares economic and environmental benefits Bt eggplant crops have provided for Bangladeshi farmers, highlights reduced insecticide use

News: Vietnamese news site reports country plans to allow GM crops by 2020, focusing on corn, cotton and soybean; adds GM food already sold in Vietnam

News: Vietnamese news outlet reports on government efforts to dispel misinformation being circulated on social media about GM sweet corn in Vietnam, leading to health concerns and calls for boycott, Nguyen Thi Thoa of Hanoi ag department noted the only GM maize varieties currently in use are for animal feed

News release: RIKEN Center for Sustainable Resource Science announces development of GM rice strains that are resistant to drought in real-world situations, yielding more than unmodified rice when subjected to stress caused by natural drought

More Asia items

Europe

Commentary: French anti-GMO NGO Inf'OGM criticizes recent Parliamentary report which recommends that products of gene editing should not be regulated as GMOs, arguing that insertion of foreign DNA is not a prerequisite for the status of GMO in EU law

News: French environment news outlet reports on Parliamentary Office for the Evaluation of Scientific and Technological Choices' (Opecst) new report recommending that plants derived from new breeding technologies do not constitute GMOs, and calling for field trials

Commentary: European Academies Science Advisory Council researchers explain recommendation that regulators focus on specific applications of genome editing techniques versus the broader technology, say regulation must be evidence-based

News: EurActiv reports on draft EU parliament report questioning how EU allocates funding for NGOs and calling for transparency and to de-fund groups that spread 'untruths,' quotes Friends of the Earth and EuropaBIO reps on the recommendations

Interview: L'Indro reporter speaks with agronomy professor Eddo Rugini about GMOs, researcher says misguided activism has forced the EU to rely on other countries for innovation and food imports; calls for Italy to invest in the field

Commentary: British Society of Plant Breeders CEO discusses uncertainty for British agriculture under Brexit, notes separation from EU could allow for pursuit of biotechnology but clarity needed on country's IP framework

News: French news outlet reports on anti-GMO NGO Vigilance OGM 36's recent general assembly, in which it outlined plans to continue warning the public about "hidden GMOs" derived by mutagenesis

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Campaign: Mexican human rights NGO and several other organizations and individuals write letter of opposition to proposed General Law of Biodiversity, claiming it affects biocultural heritage and threatens traditional knowledge of indigenous communities

Campaign: Mayan communities write open letter to Minister of the Supreme Court, Eduardo Tomás Medina-Mora Icaza, asking for ruling to cancel permits granted to Monsanto for GM soy cultivation, pointing to health, environmental and economic risks of GM crops and their associated pesticides

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News release: GE Free New Zealand says it's 'crunch time' for GM Free regions as critical stage of the Resource Legislation Amendment Bill looms; notes the Maori Party is expected to help protect GM Free regions

[More Oceania items](#)

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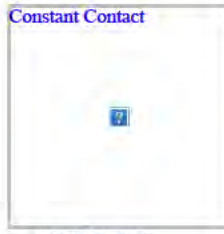
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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - April 3, 2017
 Date: Monday, April 3, 2017 9:02:56 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included a statement from NGOs in France calling for the High Council on Biotechnology to incorporate their concerns about new plant breeding techniques. In Africa, controversy over Kenya's delayed GM maize field trials continued.

Consolidated highlights include:

- European activists, nearly a year after resigning from France's High Council on Biotechnology (HCB), issued a letter explaining that they would be willing to rejoin the organization if their concerns about novel plant breeding techniques were addressed in official HCB documents. The letter, provided to French environmental news outlet Actu Environnement, claimed that concerns about technologies such as gene editing had been censored in the HCB's official monograph on the subject. **See more on the HCB concerns. See more on NBTs in Europe.**
- Speaking with Kenya's Business Daily, the director of the country's National Environment Management Agency (NEMA) countered criticism of his department for its delay of GM maize field trials. NEMA Director General Geoffrey Wahungu told the news outlet that his agency's opposition had been mischaracterized and that the agency was delaying the licenses until they could determine the safety of the process. He added that consumers had raised concerns about cross-contamination of local varieties and illegal sales of the crops in local markets. **See more.**
- In a new series of articles, Slate magazine examined the potential and the concerns around synthetic biology. The articles review applications ranging from ethanol production to developing medicinal compounds, adding that the technology raises many of the same consumer concerns that genetically modified organisms and new gene-editing technologies also raised. **See more.**

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

North America

Commentary: Editorial director for Manitoba Co-operator defends value of Ag in the Classroom Canada against opponents of GMO technology, who see program as pro-GMO propaganda

Event: South Dakota State University student group promotes Julie Borlaug visit to discuss biotechnology controversies April 12 at South Dakota State University; event sponsored by campus organizations, industry partners

Commentary: As part of Futurography series, Slate examines synthetic biology, notes applications encompass genetic engineering, pharmaceutical manufacturing, and molecular chemistry

Commentary: As part of Futurography series, Slate offers cheat-sheet guide to understanding synthetic biology, including key players, the big debates and lingo; adds there are few to no legal standards specific to synthetic biology

News: Alternative news site Inquisitr reports We Love GMOs and Vaccines' founder launches petition asking Chipotle to follow anti-GMO logic by not serving beef, pork after IARC classified red meat as

carcinogenic

Campaign: Green America urges supporters to sign petition calling on grocery store CEOs to reject genetically engineered Arctic Apples; petition claims GE apples may pose health hazard

News: Canadian ag news outlet reports on organic wheat's resistance to fusarium head blight, in spite of not using fungicides; quotes organic grower who says organic system that protected his crop from mycotoxin, while conventional systems were impacted

More North America items

Africa

News: Kenyan business news outlet reports on National Environmental Management Authority (Nema) Director General Prof Geoffrey Wahungu's recent statement that national field trials of GM maize will not begin until an experimental design for GM maize has been tested, warns of cross-pollination risks

News: Kenyan newspaper reports university chancellor says public debate over GMOs should be based on facts, not emotion; chancellor maintains GMO technology key to self-sufficiency in food production

Commentary: Kenyan news outlet contributor writes in support of GMOs, noting Kenya's agriculture is being prevented from keeping pace with development, points to success of GMOs in other nations

More Africa items

Asia

News: Vietnamese news site reports Vietnam Institute of Applied Medicine says there is no scientific evidence confirming GM food is harmful to health; adds law requires all packaged GM food sold in Vietnam must have a GM label

More Asia items

Europe

News release: Network for GMO-free food and feed in Norway releases findings of recent survey on consumer opinion on GMOs, a majority of consumers do not want GMOs in the market, but believe that if GMOs are released, they should be labeled; consumers also voiced health and environmental concerns

News: French environment news outlet reports on conditions of seven organizations that resigned from the High Council for Biotechnology (HCB) last year in protest, they are willing to join again, but only if the council will take into account products of new breeding techniques, such as gene editing

Commentary: Turkish news site contributor says GM and gene edited foods cause health issues like allergies, cancer and physiological disorders; calls for ban on genetic modification, education to make people aware of risks

News: Fresh Fruit Portal reports Israeli company is conducting trials of GM banana that shows resistance to leaf spot disease; company science director fears GMO stigma in marketing new banana

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Dominican Republic news site reports on debate surrounding GM food safety, cites WHO assessments of 'no proven effects on human health'; interviews local nutritionist who says GM crops have same nutritional value as non-GM food, but notes concerns they may cause allergies and cancer

Commentary: Peruvian news site columnist says Cargill's new partnership with Non-GMO project and need for non-GM options could benefit Peru given its moratorium on GM crops and difficulty/cost separating GM and non-GM crops in major producer countries

News: Cayman Islands newspaper reports plan for national release of GM mosquitoes raises concerns; Institute for Responsible Technology questioned safety, highlights bacterial alternative

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 - April 3, 2017
 Date: Monday, April 3, 2017 4:03:10 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

Already investigating U.S. funding of the International Agency for Research on Cancer for similar reasons, Congress has now begun a probe into tax dollars being invested in cancer research by the Italy-based Ramazzini Institute. In a piece published by National Review, Jeff Stier and Julie Kelly describe how the Ramazzini Institute received more than \$300 million from the U.S. government since 1985. Just since 2009, National Institutes of Environmental Health Sciences head Linda Birnbaum has funneled at least \$92 million toward the institute and its fellows; Birnbaum is also one of the group's fellows.

The article is below in the Stories Worth Sharing section, along with pieces on U.S. Department of Agriculture funding of organic industry marketing and the potential of gene drive technology. The Ramazzini Institute is also featured in our Stakeholder Spotlight this week.

To view items on this newsletter, first log in to your profile on the [Bonus Eventus Community](#) page. If you have not yet created a Bonus Eventus account, simply [fill out the Request Membership form](#) on the front page of the site. To share articles, simply 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: Ramazzini Institute



An Italian-based enigmatic society and research institute is in the news for its role evaluating the carcinogenicity of pesticides and associated advocacy using U.S. tax dollars.

Last week, the U.S. House Science Committee [announced an investigation](#)

Stories Worth Sharing

[Julie Kelly and Jeff Stier: Congress right to examine funding of Ramazzini Institute, IARC amid allegations of politicized science](#)

[Henry Miller and Julie Kelly: U.S. should end subsidies for National Organic Program, which has become "massive special-interest bonanza"](#)

[Farm Babe: If California considers glyphosate carcinogenic, what about fishing poles and Disneyland?](#)

[Andrew Porterfield: 10 anti-GMO groups that put ideology ahead of science](#)

[Federal agriculture critic concerned Canada's proposed imidacloprid is political, has "huge gaps" in science](#)

[Salon's Angelo Young: Gene drive technology has potential to fight malaria if public can get past idea GMO is a "dirty word"](#)

[Kavin Senapathy: Sexism rampant in non-GMO movement](#)

[Douglas Wolf: Current endocrine disruptor tests "fully capable of detecting and characterizing potential adverse effects"](#)

into more than \$300 million in National Institutes of Health funding for the Ramazzini Institute and to members of its affiliated society, the Collegium Ramazzini - which include several high-ranking U.S. government officials.

Ramazzini-linked activists, working with its listed "partner" organization - the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) - have been in the news for lobbying California, the U.S. and the European Union to restrict or ban glyphosate and other chemicals for alleged low-dose links to cancer and other health risks.

To learn more about Ramazzini, [CLICK HERE](#).

[CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES](#)

David Zaruk: Cargill decision to work with Non-GMO Project will "promote more unscientific food fears" [?](#)

Steve Savage: U.S. EPA making progress in pesticide regulations, but concerns remain about integrity surrounding IARC and pollinator health [?](#)

International Institute of Tropical Agriculture director general: Biotech scientists "on the brink of a deluge of new discoveries" [?](#)

Pakistani newspaper explores potential benefits of biotechnology for growers of cotton, corn and other crops [?](#)

Perdue Farms VP: Time for agriculture stakeholders and NGOs to end "food fight," focus on ways to help Chesapeake Bay and Delmarva environment [?](#)

Financial Express: Nobel laureate gives lecture in Bangladesh on potential for GM crops to address hunger in developing countries [?](#)

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What's Trending?

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency rejects NGOs' petition seeking ban of chlorpyrifos, citing return to "sound science in decision-making"

Canada's special review finds presence of atrazine in groundwater does not pose risk; new review to examine drinking water

Indian court rules against Monsanto in dispute over cotton seed royalties

Discussion of proposed European EDC criteria planned at Friday meeting

Trump administration reportedly pushing for new version of WOTUS by end of year

Calendar highlights

April 3-6	April 4-5	April 4
National Institute for Animal Agriculture annual meeting (Columbus, Ohio)	European Chemicals Agency stakeholders day	SynBioBeta London conference
April 5-6	April 5	April 6
Deutsche Biotechnologietage 2017	University of Sussex bee researcher Dave Goulson presentation at Portsmouth Cathedral	NGOs host Burkina Faso forum on GM seeds
April	April	April

7	10-13	11-12
Member states competent authorities meeting on proposed EU EDC criteria	Water for Food global conference	Consumer Federation of America National Food Policy Conference

[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.	Bonus Eventus community Connect with academic experts and researchers, journalists and agriculture allies.
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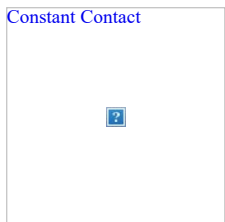
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 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - March 31-April 2, 2017
 Date: Sunday, April 2, 2017 9:01:38 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

This weekend's global biotechnology developments included news that France's Parliamentary Office for the Evaluation of Scientific and Technological Choices (OPECST) released a report on gene editing. The European Court of Justice advocate general's released an opinion that would limit use of the precautionary principle in banning GM cultivation.

Consolidated highlights include:

- French media reported the OPECST released a report on gene editing that calls for public debate and regulatory clarification. It takes the stance that gene-edited products should not be regulated as GMOs. **See more.**
- EU Court of Justice Advocate General Michal Bobek suggested countries must prove GM crops are "a serious and evident risk likely to endanger health and the environment" to use the precautionary principle in banning GM crop cultivation. **See more.**

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North America

Commentary: Agricultural economist Jayson Lusk summarizes working paper to be presented in May, says changing climate conditions mask yield improvements attributable to GM corn adoption

Commentary: Environmental activist Evaggelos Vallianatos writes for Huffington Post, praising Canadian activist Tony Mitra's analysis of Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) data on glyphosate residues in food, highlights Mitra's argument that glyphosate-tolerant GM crops are less poisonous than non-GM crops desiccated with it

Commentary: Farming blogger responds with disappointment to news another company (Cargill) has given into anti-GMO hype, partnered with Non-GMO Project instead of speaking up for farmers and supporting GM crops

Commentary: Rice University student examines public opposition to GE mosquito trials in Florida, highlighting the opposition's attempts to control public discourse on the topic, believes public health professionals can learn from such deceptive tactics to better increase public awareness about health initiatives

Video: Genetic Literacy Project amplifies Science Says video on the genetic modification process, arguing that the process is not "unnatural"

Commentary: Biology Fortified's Karl Haro von Mogel's April Fool's Day column gives tongue-in-cheek credit to Monsanto for helping him renovate his kitchen, mocking how activists claim he is an industry "shill"

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Study: African, UK researchers develop GE banana resistant to wilt disease, nematodes; diseases heavily impact productivity on bananas that are a staple for African diets

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Filipino news site reports Cornell professor says biotechnology can provide much needed answers to food crisis

News: Indian news site reports continued delays in commercializing GM crops hinder research, development in agricultural technology

Commentary: Suman Sahai of Indian research and advocacy group Gene Campaign criticizes Maharashtra government's support of field trials for five GM crops, claims proper regulatory framework is not in place, highlights difficulty in developing a program for GMO labeling

News: Vietnamese news outlet reports on consumer unease and misconceptions about GMOs, Le Huy Ham, Director of the Vietnam Institute of Agricultural Genetics, noted many products perceived to be GMOs, such as sweet corn, are not, noting GMOs are very costly to develop

News: The New Indian Express quotes Able-Ag executive director on the need for a modernized regulatory process on GMOs, notes locally developed crops in limbo due to field trial restraints

News: Indian magazine reports the International Soybean Growers Alliance is interested in exporting GM soybeans into India despite current regulations blocking import

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Dutch ag news outlet reports on Commission on Genetic Modification's (COGEM) environmental risk assessment of import and processing of an herbicide-tolerant GM maize variety, COGEM found that environmental risks were negligible, and that it is highly unlikely that it could spread in the wild

News: Courthouse News reports EU high court adviser gives 'limited' go-ahead to ban GMO cultivation, requiring proof of serious, evident risk, adding it's much more difficult to pass precautionary legislation on GMOs since EU law requires them to be rigorously vetted

News: Agence France-Presse reports on French Parliamentary Office for the Evaluation of Scientific and Technological Choices (OPECST) report in support of gene editing technology, OPECST President Jean-Yves Le Déaut lamented that France is lagging behind in biotech, noting they do not support a research moratorium

News: French media report on Parliamentary Office for the Evaluation of Scientific and Technological Choices (OPECST) report on gene editing, which calls for public debate and regulatory clarification, points to many potential benefits of the technology, and argues its products should not be regulated as GMOs

Report: EuropaBio creates a consumer-friendly report outlining major benefits to GM crops, highlights safety of GM foods, global challenges it can help minimize, and remaining regulatory issues facing GM crops in the EU

Video: Belgian anti-GM activist group posts YouTube video detailing how field trials of GM poplar trees will affect the biodiversity of the region, highlights concerns about cross-pollination

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News release: Mexican Senate announces approval of expansion of National Fisheries Institute's (INAPESCA) powers, enabling it to collaborate with National Health, Food Safety and Quality Service (Senasica) for risk assessment when using GMOs for aquaculture or repopulation of bodies of water

News: Brazilian ag news outlet reports on Biotechnology Information Council's (CIB) recent release of database of all GMOs currently approved in Brazil, with goal of increasing public awareness about the technology

News release: Oxitec announces second successful field trial of GM mosquitos in Brazil to combat Zika and other diseases, mosquito population suppressed by 80 percent compared to untreated areas

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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 Date: Thursday, March 30, 2017 9:05:29 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included a European Court of Justice announcement that the advocate general released an opinion that European Union member states must establish a clear risk to health or environment in order to adopt emergency measures regarding GMOs. A Greenpeace report claimed there are 30 links between Argentine President Mauricio Macri's government and large agribusinesses.

Consolidated highlights include:

- EU Advocate General Michal Bobek released an opinion regarding a lawsuit involving the Italian government and biotech advocate Giorgio Fidenato. The opinion, which is not binding on the European Court of Justice, is that countries must establish a "clear and serious risk to health and the environment" before using emergency measures for GM crops. Fidenato planted GM corn after the Italian government issued a decree banning cultivation of the EU's only authorized GM crop, MON 810. **See more.**
- Argentine news site *La Izquierda Diario* documented a Greenpeace report claiming President Mauricio Macri's government has 30 links to large agribusinesses, such as Monsanto and Syngenta, and suggesting those links are why a proposed seed law favors the businesses. The links included Secretary of Commerce Miguel Braun, who was founder and executive director of the Center for the Implementation of Public Policies for Equity and Growth, which received nearly 20 percent of its funding from Syngenta and Dow. **See more.**

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

North America

[Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project contributor writes a "Worst 10 List" of anti-GMO advocacy groups that put ideology over science](#)

[Commentary: Science communicator Kavin Senapathy says disinformation campaigns organized by the organic industry, many of them 'mired in sexism,' are contributing to a sharp rise in non-GMO market share](#)

[Campaign: NFU president Roger Johnson pens letter to President Trump urging him to oppose the Dow-DuPont merger; says it will be nearly impossible to 'remedy' agricultural consolidation](#)

[Commentary: Farm and Dairy contributor examines debate on GMOs, points to several benefits of the technology, lists allergenicity and pesticide resistance as disadvantages, advocates further education of the public about potential advantages and disadvantages](#)

[News: Pennsylvania newspaper highlights positive comments on the health and environmental benefits of biotechnology from Penn State agriculture professor at local Farm Bureau meeting; notes drought tolerance, pesticide reduction, increased yields](#)

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Ghanaian news outlet contributor accuses Food Sovereignty Ghana of hypocrisy, noting they should not question credibility and qualifications of Ag Minister Dr. Owusu Afriyie-Akoto, unless they can produce a concrete plan to make Ghana food secure via organic, non-GMO agriculture

News: Kenya News Agency reports on scientists and scholars' arguments in favor of biotech to help boost food security, Chancellor of University of Embu, Paul Musili, highlighted environmental benefits of the technology, and pointed to impact of climate change on food production

News: Ugandan news source reports ag minister threatens to imprison fake seed, pesticide dealers during agricultural expo in Jinja

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Filipino news outlet reports on Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Negros Occidental's passage of resolution requesting that Coca-Cola FEMSA provide certification that the High Fructose Corn Syrup used in its products are sourced from non-GMO materials

Report: USDA GAIN Report notes, on Feb. 4, Korea began enforcing biotech labeling requirements; notes ongoing exemption of mandatory biotech labeling for products that do not contain foreign DNA or protein

News: Pakistani newspaper reports representatives of cotton, maize, corn growers believe country could benefit financially and reduce pesticide usage by embracing biotech crops, highlights potential to increase yield to prepare for growing population

Commentary: Dhaka Tribune contributor quotes visiting Nobel Laureate, who rhetorically asks why children must suffer for anti-GMO activist agendas; counters that GMOs could still be threat for Bangladesh since 'real winners' will be big corporations

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: German news site reports Croatia bans GM crops but abstained from EU vote on GM maize authorizations; Croat Parliament Members, NGO officials object to abstention

News release: Testbiotech criticizes German agency for concluding not all plants produced using CRISPR-CAS technology must be regulated as GMOs, says opinion discounts other expert opinion and case in European Court of Justice

Commentary: ETC Group executive director writes in Europeansed article that big agricultural mergers such as Bayer-Monsanto give cause for concern over world food security

News: Euronews reports Friends of the Earth campaigners demand the EU to reject Bayer purchase of Monsanto, call it "marriage made in hell"

News: French news site reports Parliamentary Office for Assessment of Scientific and Technological Choices says new biotechnologies are not GMOs, recommends more research on NBTs, says they have many applications for ag

Report: Review in Current Opinion in Biotechnology finds that bioavailability studies have demonstrated efficacy of several 'golden' crops in maintaining vitamin A status, presents current developments and areas that need further study

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Mayan Regional Council calls on Supreme Court to "restore rule of law" by protecting their land and livelihoods from GM crops

Commentary: Mexican news site columnist notes Mexico imports a third of the corn it consumes, but its production is 38 percent lower than average; notes it could significantly increase production using GM maize

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: Feed Navigator reports on development of omega-3 producing GM canola variety by Nuseed, a subsidiary of Australian company Nufarm, Nuseed is awaiting approval for commercialization in the US, Canada and Australia, as they are key canola growing regions

More Oceania items

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - March 29, 2017
 Date: Wednesday, March 29, 2017 9:01:56 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 Delhi High Court had ruled that Monsanto should not have canceled a seed licensing agreement with a local marketer. In Africa, an International Institute of Tropical Agriculture researcher highlighted the potential of gene-edited crops in the region and called for a fresh debate on plant technologies.

Consolidated highlights include:

- Reuters and Indian news outlets reported on a Delhi High Court decision against Mahyco Monsanto Biotech (MMB) over a terminated seed licensing agreement with local marketer Nuziveedu Seeds. MMB had accused the local seed marketer of using its patented cotton seeds after the contract was canceled. However, the court ruled that MMB should not have canceled the license in the first place and was now required by law to reduce its trait fees. **See more.**
- Writing for InterPress Service, IITA Director General Nteranya Sanginga highlighted the potential of gene-editing in creating crop varieties tailored to the African region. Sanginga noted that new gene-editing tools allowed IITA to explore new crops with drought tolerance or improved nutrition and argued that these developments are changing the region's policy debate over GM crops. **See more.**

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

North America

News: [Houston Chronicle reports local officials considering being one of first U.S. locations using GE mosquitoes to curb the mosquito population; working with Oxitec, officials hope the GE mosquitos could provide another tool in the fight against Zika and other mosquito-borne illnesses](#)

Commentary: [High Plains/Midwest Ag Journal columnist questions Cargill's involvement with the Non-GMO Project and certification that gives "tacit approval" of the organization's anti-GM stance despite Cargill's belief that GM foods are safe](#)

Commentary: [Intellectual property law firm analyzes draft Oregon bill that would allow farmers to sue GMO patent holders for trespass if a GMO is discovered on land without permission of its owner, opponents say bill stifles innovation and punishes patent holders for end user actions](#)

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: [Ugandan news site reports pressure mounts to pass Ugandan biosafety bill; proponents believe once bill is passed, GMOs will solve country's hunger issues](#)

Commentary: [International Institute of Tropical Agriculture Director General Nteranya Sanginga writes](#)

for Inter Press Service, highlighting potential for gene editing to contribute to sustainable agriculture, emphasizing importance of informed debate

Commentary: Nigerian news outlet editorial praises Nigerian Biosafety Management Act, highlighting importance of GMOs for boosting food security, especially in face of challenges presented by aflatoxin contamination and fall armyworm attacks, notes GMOs are safe for human consumption

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Reuters reports on Delhi High Court's ruling against Mahyco Monsanto Biotech (MMB) in its legal battle with Hyderabad-based Nuziveedu Seeds, finding that MMB should not have canceled its licensing contract, and that it now must reduce royalty payments in accordance with new Indian government policy

News: Indian media report on Delhi High Court ruling that Monsanto's termination of its sub-licence agreement with Nuziveedu Seeds was illegal and arbitrary, reinstating the agreement, and ordering reduction in trait fees per government policy

News: Times of India reports on Punjab Agricultural University's (PAU) development of two Bt cotton varieties whose seeds can be reused, enabling farmers to potentially save up to Rs 1,600 per acre

News: Bangladeshi finance news outlet reports on Nobel Laureate Sir Richard John Roberts' recent lecture at North South University (NSU), where he discussed importance of GMOs for agricultural growth and solving hunger problems in developing countries like Bangladesh

News: Bangladeshi news outlet reports on recent workshop organized by Global Network of Bangladeshi Biotechnologists (GNOBB) at Dhaka University, where Dr Abidur Rahman of Japan's Iwate University explained immense potential of CRISPR-Cas9 technology for speeding up breeding of stress and disease-tolerant plants

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: American Interest editorial welcomes failure of EU member states to block GM maize varieties up for authorization or renewal, points to scientific consensus on GMO safety, argues that GMOs are safer for the environment than their non-GMO counterparts, as they require less pesticide use

Commentary: GenØK responds to EU renewal applications for GM corn varieties; claims glyphosate cropping systems present health, environmental risks and that none were assessed for "justifiability, social utility and sustainability"

Commentary: Russia's Sputnik reports former genetics director says country's GM ban will allow it to do without GMOs for next 50 to 100 years; another official says real GMO issue is West's use of agrochemicals on the crops

News: Croatian news site reports country's first product labeled "non-GMO" is released; notes Croatia bans GM cultivation but products from animals fed GMOs do require labels, and GM feed imports are allowed

News: Bloomberg reports Dow and DuPont's successful research portfolios were a roadblock in EU antitrust review, notes region is trying to encourage investments in research and development

[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: Australia's Productivity Commission recommends no labels for GM food, repeal GMO ban in states, eliminating Queensland's sugar industry regulations, general easing of agricultural restrictions without health, safety, or economic reason

Commentary: New Zealand sheep and beef farmer writes for local farming news outlet, voices opposition to introduction of GE technologies with goal of reducing farm animal emissions, arguing it will damage New Zealand's export market

More Oceania items

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - March 28, 2017
 Date: Tuesday, March 28, 2017 9:04:18 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 continued activist response to the European Commission's decision to approve the merger between Dow and DuPont. A Brazilian NGO launched a new petition protesting the country's proposed changes to regulations on GMO labeling.

Consolidated highlights include:

- Activists in the U.S. and Europe issued statements and spoke to media outlets about their opposition to agricultural industry consolidation. The Guardian reported that Friends of the Earth had warned that the merger would undermine food security, noting that farmers will need greater seed variety to combat changing climate conditions. German environmentalists launched an open letter calling on the commission to reject this and future agricultural industry mergers. Meanwhile, the European Commission announced it had begun its review of ChemChina's proposed purchase of Syngenta. **See more on the Dow-DuPont decision. See more on the ChemChina-Syngenta review.**
- Brazil's Instituto Brasileiro de Defesa do Consumidor announced a new petition calling on the National Congress to reject a bill that would relax GMO labeling requirements. The group argued that consumers had a public health right to precise information on GMO ingredients and said that reducing labeling requirements could harm farmers who wanted to market their products as non-GMO. **See more.**
- Bloomberg reported on a wave of farmer criticism following Cargill Inc.'s decision to work with the Non-GMO Project on sourcing certified non-GMO ingredients for food manufacturers. The article quoted an Alberta-based farmer who said that Cargill was undermining farmers by supporting an activist group that promoted GMO fears. Cargill responded, saying that options for non-GMO certification were limited but that it did not support the Non-GMO Project's claim that there was no scientific consensus on GMO safety. **See more.**

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North America

News: Bloomberg reports that Cargill's partnership with Non-GMO Project drawing criticism from farmers, says Non-GMO Project works with unscientific anti-GMO activists

News release: Market research group says global market for agricultural biotechnology reached \$29.2 billion in 2016, should reach \$32.1 billion in 2017, \$53.7 billion in 2022; markets analyzed were biotechnology tools, genomics enabled products, biologicals

News: EcoWatch reports on recent EU vote on GM maize authorizations, while a majority of member states voted no, the lack of qualified majority means the final decision rests with EU Commission, highlights calls from Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, and other NGOs to reject authorization

Commentary: PLOS Synbio Community contributor promotes new Societal Risk Evaluation Scheme (SRES) model developed by Christopher Cummings and Jennifer Kuzma, designed as a tool to help regulators handle new synbio products; believes researchers should identify synbio topics needing more

public engagement

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Interview: Leadership Nigeria speaks with National Biotechnology Development Agency chief Lucy Ogbadu about country's efforts to develop high-performing crops, says biotechnology needed to diversify agriculture

News: Malawi news source reports on agricultural field day in Chitipa District where an agriculture minister praised farmers for adopting new technologies and Karonga Agriculture Development Division manager said his office is fighting fall armyworms by intensifying spraying of cypermethrin, deltamethrin

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Reuters reports on dispute between Monsanto and M. Prabhakara Rao of Nuziveedu Seeds Ltd regarding Bt cotton seed royalties, and support from Hindu nationalist group Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), and Monsanto's decision to withdraw application for approval of a new cotton variety

News: UK's The Times reports Japanese scientists are developing rice that flowers on demand, allowing farmers to better control the quality of the harvest, prolong growth and get a better yield

News: Pakistan news site reports textile, cotton industry groups call on government to establish safeguards on cotton crop from virus attacks, pests, use of uncertified seed; add only developers and licensees should be allowed to market GM seeds

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: EU Observer reports on former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's keynote speech at Forum for the Future of Agriculture in Brussels, where he noted that EU's stance on GMOs has a large impact elsewhere, highlighting recent rejection of shipments in nations suffering from famine

News release: European Commission head says it has approved the Dow-DuPont merger based on significant commitments the companies offered to meet competition concerns; EC adds competition essential for affordable prices, continued innovation

Campaign: German anti-GMO NGO coalition sends open letter asking EU Commission to stop series of agribusiness mergers, arguing they will unfairly concentrate the market, further problems with industrial agriculture

Campaign: Testbiotech joins federally-funded pilot project to collect information on socio-ecological risks associated with GMO cross-contamination of; will take closer look at GE oilseed rape and olive flies and plants and animals with gene drives

Announcement: Belgian environmental NGO Federation Inter-Environnement Wallonie announces upcoming agroecology training week from May 8-12, organized by new agroecology academy, Agrotopia

News release: Italian MEP Marco Affronte voices relief at Italy's vote against authorization of GM maize varieties at the EU level, following Minister Lorenzin's January vote in favor

News release: The Greens/European Free Alliance reacts to recent vote on GM maize authorizations, spokesperson Bart Staes argued EU Commission cannot approve the varieties in question, as EU Parliament is against it, member states could not reach a qualified majority, and several of them have domestic bans

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Campaign: Brazilian consumer rights NGO launches petition against proposed bill to relax GMO labeling standards, arguing that labeling transgenics is a public health measure, and claiming that the bill violates rights of farmers seeking to grow GMO-free crops

News release: Brazilian ag ministry-affiliated ag research group launches two GM soybean cultivars with resistance to glyphosate and caterpillar pests; experiments show yield 8.7 percent higher than the average

Commentary: Chilean environmental group promotes Stop GE Trees visit to Chile, noting presentations conclude March 29, focus on showing transgenic trees aren't the solution to pests, disease, drought, other problems, hopes to correct misinformation

News: Argentinean news site reports national ag-tech institute announces plans, institutional support to introduce GM crops into the country; experts have been working on disease resistance, fiber quality

News: Mayan news outlet reports on Democratic Revolution Party's (PRD) request that Governor Alejandro Moreno Cárdenas expedite declaration of Campeche as a GM-free region, PRD's William Mena Flores voiced lack of confidence in government institutions, and called for punishment for illegal GM soy cultivation

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Commentary: Writing in Hawke's Bay Today, Green Party candidate says local communities are fighting back against government efforts to restrict control over GMO cultivation

[More Oceania items](#)

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 Date: Monday, March 27, 2017 9:02:17 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included European Commission approval of a proposed merger between Dow Chemical and DuPont. European lawmakers also voted against approving three GM maize varieties for cultivation, though the vote fell short of a qualified majority.

Consolidated highlights include:

- Wire services and political news outlets reported that the European Commission approved a proposed merger between Dow Chemical and DuPont, pending the companies' sale of several of agricultural chemical divisions as well as the divestment of research and development activities. The European Competition Commission said that the agency was focused on ensuring price competition on existing pesticides and supporting innovation in future products. **See more.**
- A majority of European governments voted against the approval of three GM maize varieties for cultivation, though the vote fell short of the "qualified majority" needed to block the commercialization. The European Commission explained that the vote therefore was registered as a "no opinion" and would leave the commission with the ultimate authority to approve the crops. Advocacy groups throughout Europe called for the commission to vote with the majority countries and stop the authorizations. **See more.**

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North America

News: Monsanto, Syngenta technology leads share seed innovation projects with Iowa Farmer Today, note plans to expand insect traits, improve herbicide gene stacking, explore RNAi

Commentary: GMO Answers' Commodity Crop Series posts profile on cotton, reports cotton production has doubled since 1950 due largely to improved varieties resistant to insects, herbicides

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Announcement: African Centre for Biodiversity releases new reports outlining advocacy concerns about seed policy legislation in the region; says current approaches criminalize small-scale farming

Commentary: Nigerian environmental news outlet publishes Health of Mother Earth Foundation director Nnimmo Bassey's recent speech at Media Training on Biosafety event, he claims GMOs do not boost yields and reduce pesticide use, points to problem of herbicide-resistant weeds, and evidence linking glyphosate to cancer

News: Kenyan news outlet reports on Kenya University Biotechnology Consortium (Kubico) researchers' accusation that Agriculture Cabinet secretary Willy Bett is misguided in his opposition to proposed GM

field trials, noting that the trials will be safely conducted, and questioning whether he is aware of his own ministry's regulations

More Africa items

Asia

News: Japanese chemical industry newspaper reports Tokyo University study found GM crop imports brought \$1.8 trillion yen in economic benefits

News: Press Trust of India reports on Navdanya's welcoming of Competition Commission of India's request for a new application for proposed merger between Bayer and Monsanto, Vandana Shiva called the move a great victory for Indian farmers and citizens

News: Press Trust of India - RSS-affiliated group sends letter requesting ag minister lower price of Bt cotton to relieve farmers suffering low yields of the crop

More Asia items

Europe

News: BBC reports European Commission has given green light to Dow Chemical, DuPont merger; DuPont has agreed to sell off global pesticide business to allay fears of reduced competition

News: Italian environmental news source reports Italian consumer groups praise MEP decision to oppose EU GM maize authorizations, claiming position aligns with Italian public concerns that GMOs will threaten biodiversity, organic production

Announcement: French Green Party amplifies EU appeals committee vote against GM maize commercialization, quotes Michele Rivasi and Jose Bove

News: Italian environmental news source reports Italian consumer groups praise MEP decision to oppose EU GM maize authorizations, claiming position aligns with Italian public concerns that GMOs will threaten biodiversity, organic production

News release: Greenpeace Europe says that, although qualified majority was not reached, most countries reject GM maize cultivation; calls on the European Commission to instead support 'ecological farming'

Announcement: Friends of the Earth Germany (BUND) warns that European Commission could approve GM maize cultivation, says Germany's abstention on the vote eroded trust in the agriculture ministry

News release: German organic food promotion group criticizes country's representative for abstaining from European vote on EU maize cultivation, says lack of qualified majority could mean crops are approved

Announcement: Friends of the Earth Europe responds to EU appeals committee vote on GM maize authorizations, says pressure will be on Juncker to side with the majority's rejection

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Mayan news outlet reports on recent fifth meeting of Indigenous Consultation on GM soy cultivation; says agreements included guaranteed community role in proposals for monitoring illegal GM soy cultivation, but participants were frustrated by lack of high level officials in attendance

Commentary: Latin American news outlet contributor believes Mexican indigenous communities' defense of native maize varieties from contamination by GMOs serves as a valuable example for the rest of Latin America, amplifies recent report by Mexican NGO Union of Scientists Committed to Society

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: Australian Broadcasting Corporation reports on Nufarm subsidiary Nuseed's new GM canola variety, designed to provide a sustainable, land-based source of omega-3, to reduce pressure on fish stocks, it would be the first GM canola variety with output traits rather than productivity traits

[More Oceania items](#)

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - March 27, 2017
 Date: Monday, March 27, 2017 4:04:13 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

Various industry groups, media and researchers effectively defended the use of biotechnology and conventional farming practices in traditional and social media amid new advocacy campaigns alleging pesticide (glyphosate) risk and industry collusion claims and Cargill's announcement that it will use [Non-GMO Project](#) services to verify additional non-GM ingredients. These pieces, plus several high-profile commentaries highlighting the lack of standards among today's journalists and academic studies, are featured in this week's Stories Worth Sharing and What's Trending sections.

Trending topics also highlight EU regulatory efforts seeking a full ban on neonics due to concerns about risks to bees. Meanwhile, on the other side of the pond, the U.S. Department of Agriculture published a report finding the number of bee colonies and honey production has increased since 2015.

To view items on this newsletter, first log in to your profile on the Bonus Eventus Community page. If you have not yet created a Bonus Eventus account, simply fill out the Request Membership form on the front page of the site. To share articles, simply 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: Green America



Green America was founded in 1982 by fair trade activist Paul Freundlich and originally known as Co-op America. It has close ties to the organic and natural products industries and claims some 100,000 - 270,000 members who claim they support the creation and maintenance of a "green economy."

Green America hosts the

Stories Worth Sharing

Kevin Folta: Asserts U.S. Right to Know advances agenda by using public records requests to obtain emails from academic scientists, selectively passes stories to lazy journals

Stephan Neidenbach: Addresses bogus anti-biotech claims made by Center for Biological Diversity in open letter

David Tribe: Explains all foods, regardless of source, contain natural mutations; highlights Canadian literature review in response to GM plant concerns raised during a local town hall

Hank Campbell: Contends "Green 20" political NGO "RICO-like" efforts suppress scientific dissent via disparagement of academic relationships with private sector research and innovation

Wackes Seppi: Criticizes 29 European Parliamentarians for signing letter targeting European Commissioner Jean-Claude Juncker urging him not to reauthorize glyphosate and Global 2000 glyphosate report

Amanda Zaluckyj: Argues Cargill's partnership with Non-GMO Project hurts its farmer suppliers, Non-GMO Project's roots go deep into anti-GMO movement

GMO Inside initiative and has sponsored a wide range of consumer boycott and business protest campaigns targeting GMOs, including campaigns against General Mills (Cheerios), Chobani yogurt, Whole Foods Markets, Girl Scout Cookies, infant formula and other initiatives.

[LEARN MORE](#) about Green America.

[CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES](#)

[Alex Berezow: Criticizes Cargill's recent announcement of partnership with Non-GMO Project, pointing to widespread backlash on Twitter](#)

[USFRA CEO Randy Krotz: Maintains food system flourishing, not broken; offers GMO crops as example of technology that makes farms more efficient](#)

[USDA statistics indicate U.S. honey production increased 3 percent in 2016, number of honeybee colonies increased 4 percent](#)

[Mary Lee Chin: Justifies consulting work with Monsanto; calls for combination of best practices to meet food demands, saying "conventional farming will not kill you" in response to critical Mic piece](#)

[Steven Savage: Promotes recent Science Advances study on development of aflatoxin-resistant GM corn variety, highlights severe health risks of consuming aflatoxin-contaminated food](#)

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What's Trending?

[EU member states vote today on whether to approve three GM strains of maize produced by Monsanto, Dow-Pioneer and Syngenta](#)

[Austrian NGO Global 2000 report "Glyphosate and Cancer - Purchased science" details alleged industry influence over glyphosate assessment and regulation in Europe](#)

[European Commission submits draft regulations proposing full ban on neonics based on risk assessments by the European Food Safety Authority that expressed concerns about effects on bee colonies](#)

[Cargill announces use of Non-GMO Project services to verify additional non-GM ingredients, drawing response from both sides of the debate](#)

Calendar highlights

March 27-28	March 28	March 28
Chemical Watch's annual Safer Chemicals in Products (San Francisco, California)	2017 International Conference on Biotechnology and Agriculture Engineering (Osaka, Japan)	Forum for the Future of Agriculture (Brussels, Belgium)
March 28	March 28	April 1-4
International Bee Conference (Berlin, Germany)	Health and pesticides conference hosted by director of NGO Generations Futures (Strasbourg, France)	Endocrine Society annual meeting and expo (Orlando, Florida)



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

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 Date: Sunday, March 26, 2017 8:41 04 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Global biotechnology developments over the weekend included commentary on Cargill's announcement it will use the Non-GMO Project to verify ingredients. Italian ministers announced they would vote against approving three GM maize varieties in an upcoming European Union committee meeting. The Maori Party announced it reached a deal to overhaul the Resource Management Act.

Consolidated highlights include:

- Monsanto's Vance Crowe, bloggers Stephan Neidenbach and Amanda Zaluckyj, and the American Council on Science and Health's Alex Berezow **criticized Cargill's use of Non-GMO Project services** to verify non-GM ingredients, saying the move essentially funds the anti-GMO movement. A Cargill statement indicated the move was solely for marketing purposes in response to consumer demand. A GMWatch editorial criticized the responders as being "full of hate." **See more.**
- Several Italian news sites reported **Italy's ministers agreed to vote against approval for three GM maize crops** in a European Appeal Committee meeting on Monday. The ministers drew criticism when they voted in favor of approval during a previous vote on the issue despite GM cultivation being banned in Italy. Italy's approval and a German abstention caused the vote to fall short of a qualified majority, keeping the application alive for a decision by the European Commission, which has been more open to biotech crops. **See more.**
- After the Maori Party **announced a deal to overhaul the Resource Management Act**, party co-leader Marama Fox said they **"had not put aside concerns" regarding GE-free zones**. Later, an ACT political party release criticized environment minister Nick Smith, saying the deal "betrays" National Party supporters, calling it "an affront to property rights and democratic principles." **See more.**

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

North America

Commentary: IPWatchdog contributor says Oregon bill allowing property owners to sue GMO patent holders is driven by 'hysteria' over GM creeping bentgrass from field trials

News: Wall Street Journal reports ChemChina's Syngenta purchase fuels Chinese GMO fears, made worse by citizens' distrust of food industry due to past scandals

Commentary: BizPac Review columnist says Whole Foods downturn due to increased competition offering lower prices, but also criticized for not taking stronger stance against GMOs, GM labeling, pesticides, hormones

Review: EcoWatch founder recommends 7 environmental documentaries to watch, including Neil DeGrasse Tyson's "Food Evolution"

News: Western Producer reports American corn breeder says consumer concern about safety of GM food stems from lack of understanding about plant breeding; adds genetic engineering just the newest tool

More North America items

Africa

News: Ugandan news site reports COMESA official says Uganda's inability to pass biosafety law is a setback for 18 other countries in COMESA, but adds that biotech crop cultivation in Africa "is a matter of time"

News: Ugandan news site reports Prime Minister Rugunda says NGOs, politicians spread false information to block national biotechnology, biosafety bill for Uganda

News: UK's Agrimoney reports USDA officials say South African corn production unaffected by fall armyworm as most varieties are GE and government moved quickly to allow pesticides

News: South African news source quotes Biowatch manager Lawrence Mkhalihi who says a 'rapid transition to agro-ecological farming methods' is the way to eradicate the armyworm pest

News: Zambian news outlet reports on Higher Education Minister Nkandu Luo's dismay that in spite of several pieces of legislation on GMOs and capacity built for GE, there is a lot of misinformation on the topic, noting her ministry, through the National Biosafety Authority, has launched a public awareness initiative

More Africa items

Asia

News: Times of India reports state of Rajasthan ag minister opposes GM mustard, but agricultural experts argue the GM crop is way to increase productivity, denying technology to farmers is "injustice"

News: Press Trust of India reports on Competition Commission of India's request for re-submission of application for approval of proposed Bayer-Monsanto deal, specific reasons behind CCI's request are unknown

News: Local news source reports the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI) will release three more Bt brinjal varieties 'infused with a pest-resistant gene'

News: Bangladeshi news outlet reports on recent workshop where speakers recommended commercial cultivation of Bt eggplant, after making sure all precautions for human and environmental protection have been put in place, noting farmers are showing growing interest in the technology as it reduces pesticide use

More Asia items

Europe

Campaign: FIAN Belgium calls on activist NGOs to sign appeal in opposition to upcoming Forum for the Future of Agriculture (FFA) on March 28, claiming industrial ag model with GMOs and pesticides is not the solution for feeding the world, promotes rally to protest FFA

Commentary: Roberto Defez of Institute of Biosciences and Bioresources - CNR of Naples writes for Italian news outlet, criticizing Italy for maintaining its GM crop ban while voting to approve three GM maize varieties at the EU level, criticizes spread of fear around GMOs and glyphosate

Commentary: Italian News outlet contributor voices support for gene editing, pointing to its increased precision and noting that no foreign genes are inserted, hopes the technology will help Italy get around its "stupid" GMO ban

News: Swiss news site reports National Science Committee refuses to allow GMO research on varieties with resistant genes; committee says decision based on too much environmental risk

Commentary: British business site posts opposing views on Princess Anne's support for GM crops; quotes Adam Smith Institute executive director and Chasing Rainbows author Tim Worstall

Study: European Food Safety Authority risk assessment of Syngenta GM maize variety, with focus on subcombination of stacked events, finds that it and its subcombinations are as safe as their conventional counterparts for human health and the environment

Commentary: Editorial in The Guardian examines exciting potential of gene editing, believes decisions on its use should not be left just to scientists and the companies funding them, points to significant regulatory challenges ahead

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Mexican news site reports Mayans say Mexican court will not stop Monsanto from planting GM soy in region, which they say threatens honey production; Greenpeace says agrochemicals are contaminating the water

News: La Jornada Maya reports on Yucatan-based activists who presented before country's Supreme Court on Mar. 22; groups say current process has allowed illegal GM soy cultivation despite required consultations

News: La Jornada reports Mayans claim Monsanto plants and sells GM soy despite court order against cultivating the crop

Commentary: Bolivian news site columnist says to achieve Bolivia's goals for increasing agricultural production in midst of climate change, farmers must use GM crops to fight weeds, insects, drought; notes Nobel Prize winners say biotech crops are safe

News release: Greenpeace announces report release, claims 30 links between Argentine government and agribusinesses, resulting in seed law proposal that favors the businesses, does not address farmer, indigenous, or academic concerns

News release: Greenpeace Argentina says new law, promoted by the government, aims to limit the free use of seeds for the benefit of large companies, didn't address requests from family farmers, peasants, indigenous people, academics, universities

News: Mexican news site reports Mayan representatives criticize Supreme Court's "indifference" to enforcing its own order against GM soy cultivation in Quintana Roo

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News release: ACT New Zealand political party says Environment Minister Nick Smith struck deal allowing Maori Party to rewrite Resource Management Act, says it "betrays" National Party supporters

News: New Zealand news outlet reports on concerns about Resource Management Act reforms bill's passage through second reading, following Maori Party vote in favor, co-leader Marama Fox noted the party has not dismissed concerns about GE-free regions, garnering criticism from Ikaroa-Rawhiti MP Meka Whaitiri

News release: New Zealand Maori Party announces it has reached a deal to support Research Management Act Reforms, heading off rival bid by United Future and the Act Party, including framework for protecting iwi rights, after previously holding out over concerns about local councils' restrictions on GMOs

News: Australian Broadcasting Corporation reports on University of Western Australia (UWA) researcher Dave Edwards' recent paper arguing that Australia's current definition of GMOs is hindering development of gene editing, which would help meet consumer demand and address challenges

presented by climate change

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 European Academies Science Advisory Council releasing a report on gene editing, making regulatory recommendations. Commentary continued on Princess Anne's statements supporting biotechnology. The European Union Green Party announced its opposition to a proposal to authorize a GM maize variety for import.

Consolidated highlights include:

- **EASAC issued a report on gene editing**, examining potential benefits, risks, and ethical issues, recommending trait-based regulation rather than process-based regulations. The report also recommends gene-edited products not be regulated as GMOs. **See more.**
- Anti-biotech **NGO GM Freeze and the European Union Green Party criticized Princess Anne** for her comments supporting GMOs. One UK news site contributor believed Prince Charles and Princess Anne are wrong about GMOs. **See more.**
- The EU Green Party issued a news release **opposing the European Commission's proposal to authorize a Syngenta maize variety**, which they claim could allow "more than 20 variations" to be imported into the EU. **See more.**

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North America

Commentary: Kevin Folta criticizes US Right to Know's continued assault on academics and "lazy" journalists' willingness to print the story they want told, points to recent piece on Food.Mic pointing to allegations of a connection between Monsanto and dietician Mary Lee Chin, calls on journalists to follow up with targeted scientists

News: U.S. news magazine reports University of Arizona researcher finds altering RNAi prevents production of deadly aflatoxin production in corn, could save 16 million tons of corn each year in Asia, Africa

News: Pulitzer Center for Crisis Reporting follows cycle of cotton, including issues growing GM cotton in Burkina Faso, notes farmers turned to GM cotton to avoid pesticides, notes Monsanto's GM cotton declined in Burkina Faso and was phased out

Video: Gaia's Beyond Belief with George Noory features Jeffrey Smith as guest, Smith reiterates claims about GM crops and herbicide use, outlines plan to put power back in hands of consumers

Commentary: The Hill runs op-ed by analyst from Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy listing eight questions for Sonny Perdue's confirmation hearing as USDA secretary, including what is replacement plan for WOTUS to ensure clean water for rural areas, how USDA will help farmers cope with climate change

More North America items

Africa

News: Pulitzer Center for Crisis Reporting follows cycle of cotton, including issues growing GM cotton in Burkina Faso, notes farmers turned to GM cotton to avoid pesticides, notes Monsanto's GM cotton declined in Burkina Faso and was phased out

News: Ugandan news outlet reports on Uganda Human Rights Network's (UHRC) concerns about biosafety bill, questioning proposal to divide the country into different zones to accommodate GM crops, noting lack of uniformity in public preference, including in designated GM areas

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Korean news site reports local council adopts resolution supporting GM labeling by Korean Parliament

News: Agence France-Presse reports China continues GMO research, ChemChina buying Syngenta in effort to feed its people despite hostility from public due to past food scandals

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News release: UK NGO GM Freeze announces it has lodged a formal complaint, as part of group of 33 organizations, objecting to proposed open air field trials of GM potatoes, claiming they are "untested, unwanted and unnecessary," claims the potato's stacked traits increase risk of unexpected interactions with unpredictable outcomes

News release: The Greens/European Free Alliance voices opposition to EU Commission proposal to authorize Syngenta's new GM maize variety, which they argue amounts to authorizing 20 different varieties, some of which do not yet exist, due to combination of five different traits

News: Agence France-Presse reports country banned GM cultivation but imports GM soy for feed, claims "no consensus" on health impact; French animal producers complain they pay more for non-GM feed, increases price of their livestock

News: Dutch food industry news outlet reports on Environment MEPs' opposition to EU Commission plans to authorize an herbicide and pest resistant GM maize variety, pointing to lack of data on various sub-combinations of the variety that would also be authorized, and calling for reform of GMO authorization process

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Argentine legal news site reports federal court dismisses case seeking ban on GMOs, glyphosate; judge notes agencies found no significant environmental, health damage from GM crops or glyphosate

News: Paraguayan news site reports Ministry of Agriculture approves GM maize varieties for commercial release

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Stuff reports that government, Maori Party have reached a deal to pass Resource Management Act reforms; unclear whether changes have been made to GMO regulations

Commentary: Sheep breeder, New Zealand news site contributor says decision on GMOs should be made at national level; notes cross-pollination risk could come from outside local districts, making GMO-free claims "bloody stupid"

More Oceania items

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology statements included a BBC interview with **British Princess Anne**, who told the news outlet that **GM crops had 'real benefits.'** Also in Europe, Hungarian news sites reported that the country was considering a more relaxed standard for labeling GM ingredients. U.S. activists called on supporters to sign petitions and work to block the President's nominee for Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Consolidated highlights include:

- Following an interview with the BBC, UK media outlets and international news wire services reported that Britain's **Princess Anne had noted the potential benefits of GM crop use.** These news outlets noted that Princess Anne's brother, Prince Charles, has been a long-standing opponent of biotechnology in agriculture and is a patron of the anti-GMO advocacy group the Soil Association. The Princess added that opposition to the technology was 'not practical.' **See more.**
- **Hungarian** news outlets reported that the country's **agriculture ministry was considering whether to loosen the standard for required labeling of GM ingredients.** The current standard requires labels on anything containing 0.1% or more GM-developed ingredients; the new rules would raise that standard to 0.9%. The Hungarian Society of Conservationists was quoted opposing the change, warning that the new standard could violate consumers' right to avoid GM foods. **See more.**
- U.S. advocacy groups **Friends of the Earth and Food Policy Action both issued calls for supporters to oppose President Trump's nominee for the U.S. Department of Agriculture.** Food Policy Action warned that the nominee was too close to agricultural business interests. Friends of the Earth said the nomination of Sonny Perdue would enable the department's "takeover" by corporate interests. **See more.**

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North America

Commentary: Steven Savage writes for Forbes, promoting recent Science Advances study on development of aflatoxin-resistant GM corn variety, highlights severe health risks of consuming aflatoxin-contaminated food, points to potential application in various crops

News release: Friends of the Earth says Sonny Perdue wrong choice to head USDA, argues he would further open door to Big Ag takeover in Washington; NGO asserts it will continue pressuring USDA to safeguard pollinators, fight for clean food grown without synthetic hormones, routine antibiotics, GMOs, toxic pesticides

Campaign: Food Policy Action urges people to tell the Senate to reject Trump's nomination of Sonny Perdue for USDA Secretary, says Perdue supports factory farming and denies climate change

Commentary: Mic food writer uses USRTK-supplied emails via FOIA to examine Monsanto's relationship with dietician Mary Lee Chin regarding GMO outreach, questioning whether paid consultants should make ties more publicly known; report includes mention of Chin's correspondence with Jon Entine

Commentary: Cape Cod news site columnist says recolonizing mixed forests with blight-proof GM chestnut trees bodes well for forest health; applauds scientists at State University of New York

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Farmer writes for Ugandan news site, amplifies Steven Cerier article noting African countries are poised to adopt GMOs to increase yields, but false claims impede progress despite no credible evidence that GMOs harm health

News: Tunisian news site reports US Agriculture Department documents US plans to increase GM soy imports into Tunisia, which has no legislation governing GMOs; increased imports will meet growing demand

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News release: CropLife Asia issues statement on importance of conservation practices and biotech in observance of World Water Day, highlighting benefits of herbicide use and no-till practices in reducing agricultural water consumption, as well as development of drought-tolerant biotech crops

News: Science and Development Network reports on Monsanto's Global Health and Nutrition Outreach director Milton Stokes' recent statements against mandatory GMO labeling in the Philippines, which he argues will unnecessarily scare consumers and raise food prices, voicing support of voluntary labeling

News: Associated Press reports on American Chamber of Commerce in China's request for relaxed import restrictions on GM seeds and other biotech products, highlighting complaints that Beijing is blocking market access, the Chamber's Agriculture Forum co-char and Monsanto executive Yong Gao noted it will boost the whole industry up

Commentary: UK news site columnist says China has modern agricultural machinery and biotechnology among its priorities; GM food crops less common due to public fear, but this likely to change

News: Iranian TV news site reports rather than ban GM foods, Iranian government supports organic food; notes biotech supporters say GM food risks remain theoretical, no evidence to show harm

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: UK media amplify Princess Anne's recent statement in support of GMOs, highlighting criticism from Green MPs

News: BBC reports on Princess Anne's recent statements in support of GMOs, she noted there are not many downsides to the technology, but that there are many benefits, she argued that avoiding GMOs "just in case" is not a practical argument

News: Reuters reports on Princess Anne's recent statements about benefits of GM crops, in stark contrast to opinion of her brother, Prince Charles, who has described GMOs as an "environmental disaster," Princess Anne noted accepting the technology is important for "producing food of the right value"

Commentary: Danish news site guest columnist and researcher says regulatory frameworks for GM crops must be able to accommodate scientific innovation as well as the public's skepticism towards GMO foods

Commentary: Hungarian news outlet contributor criticizes Ag Ministry proposal to relax GMO labeling requirements, noting the increased tolerance to 0.9 percent GM content will mean that consumers inevitably end up eating GMOs, which he claims violates basic rights to physical and mental health

News: Hungarian news outlet reports on Ag Ministry's proposed relaxation of GMO labeling requirements, moving the labeling threshold from 0.1 percent GM content to 0.9 percent, Hungarian Society of Conservationists opposes the move

News: Russian news site reports Russian monitoring agency will study GMOs' impact on health, environment; claims other studies detected that biotech crops had health, environmental impacts; will show "Genetic Roulette" film on TV, interview Jeffery Smith live on March 23

News: Agra Europe reports European Parliament environment committee asks EC not to adopt proposals to renew EU cultivation authorization for GM maize; "no opinion" outcome expected during March 27 vote

Commentary: Italy-based NGO Slow Food says EU reps need to recognize that 'citizens do not want GMOs in Europe'; launches appeal to reject GM maize authorizations during March 27 vote

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Brazilian radio news site notes "Transgenic Crops" book claims more than 750 studies show GMOs, pesticides negatively impact health, environment, but says studies are overlooked by GMO promoters

News: Agencia EFE reports Princess Anne argues in favor of GM crops, says avoiding them "just in case" isn't practical, and it makes sense to continue improving crops

News release: Brazilian ag company held technical course to offer cotton training for farmers and local industry professionals with aim to bring new technologies, herbicide resistant cotton, to state producers

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Australian Associated Press reports Nufarm expects to commercialize GM canola to produce omega-3 by 2019

[More Oceania items](#)

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Mar. 21, 2017
 Date: Tuesday, March 21, 2017 9:41 53 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 a majority in the European Parliament had voted to reject the importation of several GM maize varieties. Brazil's agriculture committee could vote as early as Wednesday, Mar. 22 on whether to loosen the country's labeling requirements on GM foods. In Turkey, local news outlets reported that GM soy had been detected in bread.

Consolidated highlights include:

- In a news release, the Greens/EFA reported that a **majority of the European Parliament had votes against authorizing the importation of several GM maize strains**. The group warned that safety data on the varieties, which include stacked-trait varieties, was not adequate; the issue will go before an appeals committee scheduled to meet on Mar. 27. **See more.**
- Brazil's Senate issued a statement indicating that the Committee on Agriculture and Agrarian Reform (CRA) may vote on **reforming the country's transgenic labeling requirements** as early as Wednesday (March 22). The proposed reforms would remove the yellow "T" icon and replace it with a label indicating that the product contains GM ingredients. **See more.**
- Turkish news outlet Hurriyet, acting on a tip from a food engineer, reported that **GM soy had been discovered in bread** imported into the country. The news prompted a statement from the Food, Agriculture and Livestock Ministry, which reaffirmed that GM foods were only allowed in animal feed in the country and not in products intended for human consumption. **See more.**
- Prominent U.S. news outlet Newsweek amplified **University of Arizona research on how to prevent aflatoxin** development in corn. The article noted that aflatoxin is a significant health problems in developing countries, where advanced maize storage systems aren't always available, and quoted one of the researchers who worried that consumer resistance to the genetic engineering process could prevent its commercialization. **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: Newsweek reports on Arizona Genomics Institute research on GM corn that is resistant to developing aflatoxin, highlights severe health impacts of consuming food contaminated with aflatoxin, especially in developing nations

Commentary: International Food Information Council employee honors National Ag Day by raising awareness of the safety, benefits of GM foods, says biotechnology has positive impact on environment by growing more food on less land

Interview: Agrologist and industry consultant Rob Saik tells Successful Farming he is making a GMO-focused movie to help educate consumers about a technology he trusts, argues farmers have a role to promote ag technologies to the public

Commentary: EWG's "Planet Trump" blog lists 10 questions for president's nominee to head USDA, Sonny Perdue, including how he will address farm pollution of drinking water, whether he supports cuts to USDA programs to clean up rural water supplies, stance on GMO labeling

Event: Tulane University to host "Soil Not Oil" lecture by Vandana Shiva on fossil fuel-based industrial agriculture (March 23)

More North America items

Africa

News: Nigeria's Business Day reports National Biosafety Management Agency scientists have begun to analyze selected store products suspected to contain GM ingredients, calls it a focus on consumer safety

Commentary: Writing in EnviroNews Nigeria, Nigerian anti-GMO group director Nnimmo Bassey reacts to research scientist's column questioning his anti-GM stance, arguing his refusal to worship government agencies' support of a failed technology does not make him anti-patriotic

Commentary: Writing in EnviroNews Nigeria, research scientist Dr. Hannah Nnadi criticizes anti-GMO activist Nnimmo Bassey for efforts to discredit government agencies trying to improve Nigeria through biotechnology, calls out errors in his claims

News: Kenyan news outlet reports on Agriculture Cabinet Secretary Willy Bett's statement that Kenya is not yet ready for open GM crop field trials, arguing that there is no mechanism in place to prevent cross-pollination and contamination of non-GM crops

Commentary: Senegalese news outlet contributor examines both sides of GMO debate, highlights environmental benefits such as reduced pesticide use, amplifies sustainable ag organizations' concerns about coexistence with non-GM crops, notes fear has replaced legitimate scientific debate

More Africa items

Asia

Commentary: Indian news outlet contributor responds to criticism of her recent article on problems with GMOs, points to Brazilian Ministry of Agrarian Development's analysis of 750 studies which found that there is no scientific consensus on GMO safety, as well UN rapporteur report on dangers of pesticides

News: Indonesian news site reports official from Lamongan attended CropLife Pan-Asian farmer event in Philippines to promote improved corn variety developed in his region, says seeds are ready to enter the export market, expects adoption from neighboring nations

News: Reuters - American Chamber of Commerce ag group co-chairman and Monsanto China president says China decision to approve fewer GM crop imports hurts trade, hampers launch of new products globally

More Asia items

Europe

News release: Greens-EFA announce that the a majority of the European Parliament has voted against authorizing new GM maize varieties for import, citing lack of safety data; decision now goes to appeals committee

Announcement: European Commission Directorate General for Health and Food Safety posts agenda for March 27 appeal committee meeting, group will review GM maize authorizations

News: Dutch news outlet reports on US government approval of three GM potato varieties by JR Simplot, developed using gene editing techniques, notes Wageningen UR has developed a similar variety, but that it cannot be released due to Europe's ban on GMOs

News: Bloomberg BNA reports UN rules for EU to amend legislation to allow individuals, groups to challenge EU environmental decisions in EU Court of Justice; notes non-binding recommendation could impact decisions on GMOs, pesticides

Commentary: Contributor for French anti-GMO NGO Inf'OGM argues that ISAAA data on GM crop adoption are inconsistent with USDA and FAO data, pointing to discrepancies in data on GM cotton in Pakistan and Sudan

More Europe items

Latin America

News release: Brazilian Senate announces Committee on Agriculture and Agrarian Reform (CRA) must vote on proposed bill to reduce GMO labeling requirements, the bill requires disclosure when over one percent of the product contains GMOs, and eliminates the yellow triangle symbol, replacing it with text labels

News release: Maya Regional Council of Bacalar reiterates opposition to Monsanto's GM soy in the region, prior to upcoming Supreme Court hearing, highlighting health and environmental risks of associated pesticide use, and threat to beekeepers' livelihoods

Commentary: ETC Group researcher Silvia Ribeiro writes for Mexican news outlet, amplifying recent UN rapporteur report on health and environmental dangers of pesticide use, notes the report provides context for current struggle of indigenous communities in the Yucatan Peninsula against GM soy cultivation

News: Mexican economy news outlet reports on producer and Protransgenics Alliance member Pedro Ortiz's explanation of Mexico's potential to increase yellow maize production by up to five million tons in the near future using GM seeds, significantly reducing reliance on imports

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: Australian Broadcasting Corporation reports on new Western Australian Ag Minister Alannah MacTiernan's stance on GMOs, MacTiernan noted WA will defer to federal government regulations on GMOs, explaining that GM canola is probably "here to stay"

More Oceania items

More Bonus Eventus Resources

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

Events calendar

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Mar. 20, 2017
 Date: Monday, March 20, 2017 9:02:44 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 include a new campaign by British anti-GMO activists. In Bolivia, agriculture groups continued to stress the importance of liberalizing the country's biotechnology regulations.

Consolidated highlights include:

- Anti-biotechnology NGO Beyond GM, writing for an organic industry publication, emphasized the need for Britain's chefs and restaurant workers to take the lead on resisting GM foods and crops. Activist Pat Thomas previewed a new outreach campaign to gain insights into how food workers perceive GMOs, highlighting the importance of resisting so-called "new" GMOs developed via synthetic biology and other new plant breeding techniques. **See more**.
- In Bolivia, news outlets continued to report on the government's decision to import GM maize following a season of drought and insect infestations. Local reports noted that farming groups in the country, including the Agricultural Chamber of the East (CAO), had called on regulators to allow GM crop cultivation in order to meet counter the country's environmental pressures. **See more.**

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North America

Commentary: American Society of Plant Biologists' president warns against members ignoring White House's anti-science attitudes; encourages members to show value of science, clarify misinterpretations

News: Futurism reports CRISPR gene editing technology has applications for improving agriculture, selecting traits for animals; notes FDA regulations block gene editing to cure pet diseases

News release: Supporters of Agricultural Research Foundation releases new report on agricultural research breakthroughs; calls for increased federal support and notes USDA research receives only half of authorized funding

Commentary: Global Harvest Initiative executive, writing in The Hill, urges increased funding in federal budget for USDA's Agriculture and Food Research Initiative; notes public investment in research has declined 6 percent since 2000

Commentary: "Food Babe" Vani Hari dismisses arguments that organic food is an expensive scam, amplifies recent EU Parliament report on benefits of organic as well as UN rapporteur report on dangers of pesticides, compares anti-organic messaging to anti-GMO labeling movement

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Nigerian news outlet reports on National Biosafety Management Agency Director General Rufus Ebegba's announcement of partnership with media to improve public awareness about GMOs, especially regarding safety and benefits of the technology

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Times of India reports Indian Council of Agricultural Research director sees GM crops as pathway to increasing food production, improving food safety, boosting economic, social situations of farmers

News: Agrow reports Agricultural Academy of Japan calling for more field trials of GM crops to demonstrate technology advantages to farmers

News: Indonesian news site reports Monsanto Indonesia president says company plans to make GM corn available in Indonesia and throughout Asia Pacific region, adding GM corn can produce nearly double yield of traditional corn

News: Vietnamese news outlet reports on new export opportunities for the nation in GM maize deals with Monsanto and Syngenta, as Southern Thailand and the Philippines have not yet adopted the technology

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Campaign: Director of anti-GMO group, writing in organic trade magazine, launches campaign to collect restaurant workers' and public's views on GM food in restaurants; warns against new types of GM foods

News: European Seed magazine reports on successful completion of recent UC Davis professional certificate program, European Plant Breeding Academy (EPBA), in Almeria, Spain, where students and instructors were hosted by University of Almeria, Monsanto Vegetable Seeds and Rijk Zwaan Ibérica

Report: Report in GM Crops & Food examines need for revision of EU biotech regulatory process, advocating product-based risk assessments rather than process-based, and arguing against regulating products of new breeding techniques as GMOs

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Bolivian news outlet reports on farmers' call on government to approve more transgenic seeds to help boost yields, Agricultural Chamber of the East (CAO) noted it will be impossible for Bolivia to compete with other nations without biotech crops, highlights current high levels of pesticide use on maize

News: Argentinian news outlet reports on Monsanto Argentina President Juan Farinati's recent statements in context of Expoagro in San Nicolas, he noted that now is the moment for new agriculture in Argentina, highlighting importance of the seed law to promote innovation and increase choices for producers

[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.

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - March 20, 2017
 Date: Monday, March 20, 2017 4:02:52 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

The European Chemicals Agency's announcement that it does not consider glyphosate to be a carcinogen adds to a consensus among regulators in the United States, Germany, Canada, Australia and elsewhere, along with the European Food Safety Authority and the World Health Organization. That announcement last week is featured prominently in several of this week's Stories Worth Sharing.

Other pieces examine the scaremongering behind Environmental Working Group's annual "Dirty Dozen" list, a misleading bee-centered campaign from General Mills and the prospects of Bt maize helping Kenyans avoid armyworm issues that have hit other areas of Africa hard.

To view items on this newsletter, first log in to your profile on the [Bonus Eventus Community](#) page. If you have not yet created a Bonus Eventus account, simply [fill out the Request Membership form](#) on the front page of the site. To share articles, simply click on the Twitter icon.

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

In This Issue

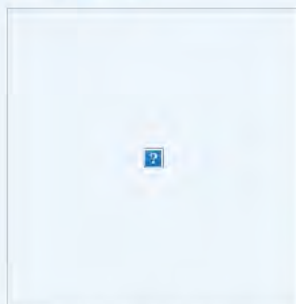
[Stakeholder Spotlight](#)

[Stories Worth Sharing](#)

[What's Trending?](#)

[Calendar highlights](#)

Stakeholder Spotlight: Stacy Malkan



Stacy Malkan is the media director for U.S. Right to Know and former campaign consultant for the California Prop 37 initiative seeking mandatory GMO food labeling.

Malkan's campaigns include using public records filings to smear public university researchers who have written

Stories Worth Sharing

[Andrew Porterfield: European Chemicals Agency joins growing consensus finding glyphosate to be safe](#)

[Steven Savage: What's really dirty about Environmental Working Group "Dirty Dozen" is Big Organic's marketing scare tactics](#)

[David Zaruk: Commissioner Andriukaitis must be a leader, stand up for science showing - again - that glyphosate is safe](#)

[Iida Ruishalme: How I went from "Monsanto is pure evil" to questioning my defense of organic farming](#)

[Alex Berezow: New York Times' Danny Hakim using "distorted information" to drive opposition to glyphosate, GMOs](#)

[Amanda Zaluckyj: Honey Nut Cheerios bee campaign seems "innocent enough," actually spreads misinformation about bee population](#)

[Kenyan scientists see Bt maize as having potential to prevent armyworm issues plaguing southern Africa](#)

[Royal Society president's speech highlights potential of gene editing, biofortified crops](#)

[New Zealand farming editor: Pro-organic Safe Food Campaign ignores](#)

favorably on plant biotechnology issues. She recently claimed that corporate agribusiness and the chemical industry are engaged with independent academics in propaganda campaigns masquerading as sound science.

[LEARN MORE](#) about Maliken.

[CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES](#)

[Use of "dangerous" chemicals that go unregulated on organic farms](#)

[Veterinarian: Discovery of antibiotic-resistant bacteria in cave 1,000 feet underground should discourage critics from jumping to conclusions about use in livestock](#)

[Nicholas Staropoli: Embracing next-generation GMOs would "revolutionize the local food movement"](#)

[Hank Campbell: Claims that pesticides are lowering sperm count in French men disputable as pesticide use declines](#)

[National Pork Board member: Collaboration between government, farmers, veterinarians improving antibiotic use stewardship](#)

["Food Evolution" documentary screened at Washington, D.C., film festival](#)

[CLICK FOR BONUS EVENTUS MONITORING](#)

What's Trending?

European Chemicals Agency review determines glyphosate does not meet criteria to be deemed carcinogenic

Conservation groups ask Supreme Court to deny Trump administration's request to scrap briefing schedule on jurisdictional case

U.S. Government Accountability Office recommends FDA be required to set antibiotic use durations for food animals, revise Veterinary Feed Directive

Unsealed documents allege collusion between Monsanto and U.S. EPA over International Agency for Research on Cancer glyphosate review

Industry groups ask U.S. government to delay decision on bumblebee's endangered species status until January; action due this week

Calendar highlights

March 20-30	March 20-24	March 21
Pesticide Action Week (Week of Alternatives to Pesticides) in Europe	Convention on Biological Diversity Asia-Pacific Workshop on the Detection and Identification of Living Modified Organisms	"Partnering for Growth" biotech forum focused on CRISPR technology (Iowa)
March 21	March 22	March 22
Forbes "The Fight for the Fork" mixing bowl event in New York City	Pope Francis Vatican address marking World Water Day	U.S. Department of Agriculture releases annual managed bee

		population figures
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[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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 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - March 17-19, 2017
 Date: Sunday, March 19, 2017 10:16:00 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Global biotechnology developments over the weekend included news on an Oregon bill that would allow GMO patent holders to be sued for non-GMO crop cross-breeding, and another state bill that would allow local governments to regulate GMOs. In Africa, scientists called for prompt approval of Bt maize varieties to help battle the armyworm, which has been causing significant damage to crops.

Consolidated highlights include:

- Reporting and commentary continued on the Oregon state legislature's biotech-related bills. One proposed law would hold GMO patent holders responsible for GMO contamination of non-GMO crops. Oregon Farm Bureau President Barry Bushu warned the law would stifle innovation. **See more on the liability bill.** Another bill would allow local governments to restrict or ban GMOs. **See more on local GMO control.**
- Ugandan news site The Sunrise reported field trials proved Bt maize controls the armyworm, but farmers cannot use the variety due to lack of regulatory approval. The East African reported scientists are calling on regulatory agencies to approve the GM crop to protect crops from extensive damage caused by the pest. **See more.**

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

North America

Commentary: BIO posts letter to FDA requesting an extension on deadline to respond to draft guidance on gene-edited animals, says delaying responses until June would allow time for additional scientific review

Video: Organic Consumers Association's Ronnie Cummins promotes Regeneration campaign, emphasizing importance of creating a united force to achieve consumer rights goals, laments passage of federal GMO labeling law last year

News: MIT Technology Review reports on new National Academy of Sciences report on new biotech products that US regulators are not prepared for, NAS committee member Jennifer Kuzma notes all of them have potential to be beneficial, includes gene editing and gene drives

News: Oregon television outlet reports on recent hearings on two new GMO bills, one which would hold GMO companies liable for contamination of non-GM crops, and the other would reverse the state's preemption of local GMO restrictions, Oregon Seed Association notes a patchwork of laws would make it difficult for farmers

News: Western Producer quotes Bayer spokesman who says Europe will not budge on anti-GM stance, so it is critical that scientists explain new technologies such as gene editing and address consumer fears early

Study: Study in Ecology and Evolution found differences in structure of arthropod food webs between Bt

and non-GM maize fields, however, findings indicate that neither Bt trait nor glyphosate applications contributed to those differences

[More North America items](#)

Africa

[News: Ugandan news source reports Bt maize trial proves successful in controlling armyworm, but farmers cannot yet access the variety due to regulatory roadblocks; notes worms have shown "unique ability" to resist common pesticides](#)

[News: Researchers in eastern and southern Africa call for Bt maize approval to give farmers protection against armyworm devastation](#)

[News: South African business news site reports anti-biotech group African Centre for Biodiversity claims Monsanto's drought-tolerant GM maize is "Trojan horse" that takes advantage of farmers to get its "risky gene" introduced; Monsanto official says they're trying to help farmers](#)

[News: France-based African news outlet reports on Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa's \(Comesa\) plans to develop and import GMOs, with 19 Comesa members setting up infrastructures in line with Cartagena Protocol recommendations, Comesa will provide technical biosafety opinions](#)

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

[Commentary: US-based Asia Pacific current affairs magazine contributor profiles frontrunner for WHO director-general, Pakistan's Sania Nishtar, says patchy oversight of IARC is one problem organization faces, cites glyphosate classification as example of "secretive" methodology resulting in public confusion, scrutiny of the panel](#)

[News: Philippines news site reports Negros Occidental provincial board passed resolution supporting Sugar Regulatory Administration in its attempt to regulate HFCS importation' Negros Occidental; Save-Sugar Industry Movement says Coca-Cola is "arrogant," concerned with corporate greed](#)

[News: Science news site reports Monsanto's Milton Stokes warns GMO labeling will be taken as a health warning while studies show no safety issues; labeling raises product costs for consumers](#)

[News: Indian financial news outlet reports on government decision to keep Bt cotton seed prices and licensing fees the same as last year, highlights Mahyco Monsanto Biotech's \(MMBL\) legal challenge of 2015 price control order which reduced trait values and capped seed prices, Delhi High Court has yet to make a decision](#)

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

[Commentary: German anti-GMO NGO Testbiotech responds to SDP member positions on its "Genetic Engineering Boundaries!" project, Environment Minister Barbara Hendricks highlights importance of preventing uncontrolled spread of GMOs into the environment, but Testbiotech finds her wording vague](#)

[Report: European Food Safety Authority publishes EFSA Scientific Committee opinion addressing the criteria through which it can 'increase the speed and effectiveness' for updating EFSA scientific assessments](#)

[News release: German NGO No Patents on Seeds announces public appeal by 32 civil society organizations demanding prohibition of granting of patents on plants and animals derived from conventional breeding, following European Patent Office's patents granted to Carlsberg and Heineken for conventional barley varieties](#)

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Bolivian news site reports CIAT studies impact of GM crops on Bolivian soil, analyzes impact on yields; CIAT official describes biotech as tool to achieve better results

News: Brazilian news site reports farmers claim GM crops drop their seeds in field, become herbicide-resistant pests that damage crops in next planting season

News: Mexican news site reports Toledo meets with senator to discuss concerns regarding GM maize and risk presented for native maize

News: Malaysian wire service Bernama reports on Bolivian government decision to import GM corn from Argentina, due to short domestic supply caused by drought and insect infestations, small producer Freddy Taboada noted paradox in Bolivia allowing GM corn imports, while restricting domestic production to one GM soy variety

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: New Zealand news outlet reports on recent meeting between a delegation from GM-Free Hastings and Environment Minister Nick Smith to discuss proposed reforms to Resource Management Act, which they believe will destroy their export markets if prevented from keeping their region GM-free

[More Oceania items](#)

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - March 16, 2017
 Date: Thursday, March 16, 2017 9:22 56 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

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Today's global biotechnology developments included a Mexican Supreme Court judge ruling authorities must cancel Monsanto's permit to plant GM soy in certain municipalities. Tax-exempt NGO Environmental Working Group released a report, "Growing Organic," to lobby Congress to provide support to farmers who switch to organic production.

Consolidated highlights include:

- La Jornada reported that a Supreme Court justice in a draft opinion ruled authorities must cancel Monsanto's permit to plant GM soybean in the municipalities of Othón P. Blanco, Bacalar and Quintana Roo because of GM soy's potential impact on indigenous communities, biodiversity and animal and plant health. **See more.**
- Environmental Working Group, a tax-exempt NGO funded by the organic food industry, released a report to lobby Congress on the benefits of changing to organic production from "pesticide-dependent" practices. **See more.**

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North America

Campaign: [Alt news site amplifies Organic Consumers Association campaign seeking help from readers to locate Midwest stores selling GM Arctic Apples; the apples will have a label identifying the brand](#)

Commentary: [Cornell Alliance for Science reports researchers raising money for a 120-acre GM American chestnut restoration forest in New York; scientists will use site to assess environmental impacts of the GM chestnut trees](#)

News release: [EWG, a tax-exempt NGO which receives millions from organic marketing industry, issues report used to lobby Congress on Farm Bill urging changes to benefit organic production to replace "chemical pesticide" ependent practices by non-organic growers](#)

News release: [House ag subcommittee on Biotechnology, Horticulture, and Research summarizes ag research hearing, says witnesses stressed crucial role research plays in ensuring American agriculture remains competitive](#)

Comnentary: [Cornell Alliance for Science posts photo-essay reporting that Tanzania, following strict biosafety regulations, burned GM maize material from Water Efficient Maize for Africa trial](#)

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: [Xinhua reports African trade group COMESA ready for development, importation of GMOs in eastern, southern Africa; ISAAA official says miscommunication, costly regulatory processes delay African nations from using biotechnology](#)

News: Zimbabwean news site reports researchers say by 2050 Africa will struggle to grow enough food; call for improvements, including grain varieties adapted to local conditions, better disease control

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science posts photo-essay reporting that Tanzania, following strict biosafety regulations, burned GM maize material from Water Efficient Maize for Africa trial

News: Kenyan news outlet reports on Agriculture Cabinet Secretary Willy Bett's explanation that government reluctance to approve GM field trials is due to objection to Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organisation and the African Agricultural Technology Foundation's handling of the process, and concerns about cross-pollination

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Indonesian news site reports CropLife influences government to draft biotech seed regulations to improve ag efficiency

Commentary: Assignment Editor of Bangladeshi news outlet writes in support of gene editing, emphasizing importance of investing in the technology locally and making the public aware, promotes upcoming workshop on CRISPR-Cas9 organized by Global Network of Bangladeshi Biotechnologists (GNOBB)

News: Press Trust of India reports on new investigation launched by Competition Commission of India following new complaint against Monsanto filed by Andhra Pradesh-based Sri Rama Agri Genetics, alleging that it abused its dominant market position by imposing unfair and discriminatory conditions in Bt licensing agreements

Commentary: Third World Network amplifies GeneWatch's report voicing concerns about Oxitec's planned expansion of GE mosquito release in the Cayman Islands, highlights concerns about cost-effectiveness, health and environmental risks, and combining GE mosquito releases with other vector controls

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Italian news site reports EFSA director notes if agency's decisions meet a group's political agenda they praise the EFSA, if it is contrary, they claim it has conflicts of interest; says groups should stop attacking, examine EFSA's work quality

Report: European Food Safety Authority Scientific Panel issues opinion on application by Dow AgroSciences for commercialization of GM herbicide-tolerant soybean variety, they found that it poses no health risks and is as nutritious as its conventional counterpart, and that chances of environmental risks are very low

Report: Spanish environmental NGO GRAIN publishes report highlighting its 2016 activities, including efforts to combat proposed ChemChina/Syngenta merger, and promotion of agroecology

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Argentine farming news site reports drought, pest damage force Bolivia to import GM maize; Bolivian farmer complains they are not allowed to cultivate GM maize, says they cannot compete with GM maize from Argentina

News: Costa Rican news site reports Frente Amplio party presents bill to mandate GM product labeling; party director claims there are doubts about GMO health effects

Commentary: Center for Investigative Journalism author in part 2 of series reviews Puerto Rico's tax

incentives to biotech firms, questions if incentives were worth it, says 'government gave companies 16 times more than they contributed to the tax authorities'

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: New Zealand Herald reports on debate surrounding proposed reforms to Resource Management Act which would ban local councils from regulating GMOs, Maori Party co-leader Marama Fox stated its ongoing support hinges on National Party amending the clause related to ministerial powers

More Oceania items

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: [Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS](#)
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Mar. 15, 2017
 Date: Wednesday, March 15, 2017 9:01:02 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 an updated Australia touring schedule for biotechnology critic Michael Antoniou of King's College. In Portugal, the People Animals Nature Party announced it would be debating a bill to require GMO labels on animals fed genetically modified feed.

Consolidated highlights include:

- Friends of the Earth Australia updated its scheduled speaking events for King's College lecturer Michael Antoniou, who will be speaking about the potential risks of allowing new plant breeding techniques to escape current regulations on genetically modified foods. In contrast, NZ Farmer reported that speakers at the Future Farms conference highlighted the potential benefits of gene-edited plants and animals. **See more.**
- Portugal's People Animals Nature (PAN) Party announced that they would bring a bill to Parliament requiring that products from animals fed GM feed be labeled as GMOs. The group claimed that GM products were still under review for safety and added that consumers has a "right" to information about the use of GMOs in production. **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: Monsanto's Robert Fraley writes in Huffington Post that considering onslaught of fake news on GMOs, consumers must question news source as well as content, notes scientists must pay attention to science of communication rather than performing "fact dump"](#)

[News: Canada's Grainews reports Simplot working to identify Canadian potato farmers willing to begin planting Innate potato lines in 2017; less bruising and lower amounts of acrylamide make it appealing](#)

[News: The Scientist reports on University of Arizona research on development of maize variety capable of resisting development of aflatoxin, USDA Corn Host Plant Resistance Research group researcher Marilyn Warburton noted genetically engineering resistance is the most economically effective control method](#)

[More North America items](#)

Africa

[News: Nigerian newspaper reports regional biotech center director believes biotech crops are vital to improving food security in Nigeria, however lack of labor and equipment have kept biotechnology from increasing acceptance](#)

[News: Nigerian news outlet reports on National Biosafety Management Agency GMO Detection Laboratory's analysis of certain products from Nigerian superstores thought to contain GMOs, lab](#)

head Amedu Josephine noted importance of making sure that any inserted sequences do not pose health risks

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

[News: Egyptian news site reports professor, ministers discuss ways to use GE products while reducing environmental risks, including those associated with GMOs](#)

[Commentary: Citing a 'new study,' Natural Blaze contributor says golden rice is a 'flop' that doesn't do what it was 'allegedly intended to do'; claims corporations don't care about starvation in Third World](#)

[News: Press Trust of India reports GEAC decides not to loosen requirements for obtaining a state government No-Objection Certificate for field trials of GM crops](#)

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

[News: Portuguese news site reports People, Animals, Nature party to bring bill requiring labeling of products from animals fed GMOs, says bill will inform consumers about controversial GMOs that are "being hidden"](#)

[News: Portuguese news site reports People, Animals, Nature party to debate bill that would require labeling products from animals fed GMOs; party officials say consumers have right to the information even though risks are "under study"](#)

[News: French newspaper reports protestors gathered in support of Eric Olivie, who was arrested last November for cutting down field trials of mutagenic rapeseed; judgment on the case should come in September](#)

[News: Italian news site reports regional ag minister says CETA opens door for GMOs, cheaper and lower quality food to compete against Italy's higher quality food](#)

[News: France's Actu Environnement reports Fraud Control finds 18 percent of food labeled non-GMO does not conform to regulations](#)

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

[News: Mexican news site reports poster contest will promote "defense of maize" against GMOs, an initiative started by artist and activist Francisco Toledo](#)

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

[News release: New Zealand Soil and Health Association warns supporters that local communities' right to GE-free zones is threatened by "dictator clause" in proposed amendment to Resource Management Act, would allow Environment Minister to prevent councils from creating GE-Free food producing zones](#)

[Announcement: Friends of the Earth Australia announces forum dates and locations for Dr Michael Antoniou's Australian tour, where he will discuss his concerns about new GE techniques; claims products of new breeding techniques could potentially enter the market without safety testing](#)

[News: New Zealand farming news outlet reports on recent Future Farms conference where Dairy Companies Association of New Zealand exec noted the country cannot pretend to be an "agricultural Silicon Valley" without embracing genetic modification, noting there are many different types of GM](#)

News: New Zealand farming news outlet reports on Livestock Improvement Corporation scientist Bevin Harris' call for investment in gene editing research, even if the country doesn't end up using it, so that scientists can better understand how it works and its potential benefits

More Oceania items

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - March 14, 2017
 Date: Tuesday, March 14, 2017 9:03:28 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 Swiss Council of States had backed a farmer proposal to ease regulations on GMO-free labeling. In China, a former CCTV reporter and prominent anti-biotechnology activist spoke with Agence France-Presse about censorship of his media accounts. International NGOs promoted various efforts and programs to encourage agroecology as an alternative to so-called corporate agriculture.

Consolidated highlights include:

- Switzerland's Council of States passed a motion directing the country's National Council to allow Swiss farmers to label their meat and dairy "GMO free" even if the animals are fed GMO grains. The effort was supported by the Swiss Farmers Association, which said that local farmers were at a disadvantage because neighboring countries had not been as strict about the non-GMO label. The motion, while nonbinding, should prompt additional hearings on the issue. [See more.](#)
- Chinese anti-biotechnology activist and TV personality Cui Yongyuan told Agence France-Presse that the Chinese government had removed some of his social media posts and "blacklisted" him due to his outspoken resistance to GM crop cultivation. Yongyuan, who spoke at the tail end of the Two Sessions parliamentary event, said that Communist Party officials were in danger of falling into the same sort of blind obedience that had characterized the Cultural Revolution. He vowed to maintain his opposition to the technology. [See more.](#)
- In a series of unrelated posts and publications, international activist groups promoted agroecology as a necessary alternative to resource-intensive farming models. French activist group Secours Catholique-Caritas France published an English-language version of its report on agroecological methods, noting that the model emphasized established local farming practices over corporate or western-influenced agriculture. Third World Network amplified the report, and highlighted recent academic studies that examined the variety of ways agroecology had been defined and implemented. [See more.](#)

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North America

Event: Green Film Network to screen "Food Evolution" at its D.C. Environmental Film Festival with follow-up panel featuring Cornell biologist Davidson Evanega; event promoted by Washington Post (March 17)

News: Politico reports seed, biotech firms seek more time to respond to FDA request for comments on proposed gene-editing regulations

News: Politico reports on legislation reintroduced by Sens. Chuck Grassley and Debbie Stabenow to make secretaries of Agriculture and Health and Human Services permanent members of Committee on Foreign Investments in the United States (CFIUS), highlights CFIUS' recent approval of ChemChina's proposed acquisition of Syngenta

Commentary: Environmental industry lawyer responds to NAS report on future biotechnology products,

acknowledging recommendations for regulatory clarity and more funding in regulating biotech products, worries diminished EPA funding will keep recommendations from implementation

Commentary: Rural Vermont organizer's op-ed in VT Digger presents case for shift to regenerative ag model, describing the ecological, economic harm caused by the industrial system, promotes NGO's Groundswell campaign/tour to promote activism in state

Commentary: REALfarmacy.com contributor warns that new GMO ingredients are being 'slipped into your food'; links to Jeffrey Smith video and Synbiowatch database of products 'to avoid'

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Campaign: African Centre for Biodiversity calls on supporters to sign petition to block commercial approval of Monsanto's "bogus" drought tolerant GM-maize variety in South Africa, claiming it is a "Trojan horse" that will introduce a risky gene into the food supply

News: Stat News reports on possible release of GM mosquitoes in Burkina Faso as part of anti-malaria initiative; notes locals' experience with GMOs mostly limited to poor performing Bt cotton

Report: African Center for Biodiversity comment submission to Competition Commission on Bayer-Monsanto merger outlines NGO's concerns on impacts of agribusiness mergers, noting deals could limit ag-tech competition, threaten biodiversity by narrowing seed/crop resources

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: AFP reports Chinese delegate is upset China is investing in GMO research and calls out other delegates for refusing to take action, claims he is being blacklisted for his anti-GMO stance

Report: La Via Campesina report in Journal of Peasant Studies examines Zero Budget Natural Farming peasant agroecology movement in Karnataka, India, emphasizing ways in which peasant movements can successfully scale-up agroecology

Commentary: Third World Network amplifies Europe report claiming "agricultural intensification and pesticide use are among the main drivers of biodiversity loss," further claims herbicide-resistant crops are "no option for a sustainable agriculture"

Commentary: Third World Network promotes Secours Catholique-Caritas Europe report the benefits of agroecological to smallholder, indigenous groups, as method to reduce world hunger, achieve food sovereignty

Commentary: Third World Network amplifies literature review by Coventry University researcher arguing agroecology is being reworked into climate-smart agriculture to conform to the dominant industrial food system and viewed as climate-smart agriculture

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Swiss news outlet reports on Council of States' passage of motion to amend law on GMO-free labeling in food, stipulating that animal products must not be produced with GM feed, Swiss Farmers' Association is pleased with the decision

News: Swiss news outlet RTS reports on recent tests on imported animal feed which found that they are 100 percent GMO free, just prior to federal vote on GMO-free labeling, National Councilor and director of Swiss Farmers Union, Jacques Bourgeois, noted farmers incur higher costs with non-GMO feed

Report: French smallholder advocacy group publication argues future of humanity, food sovereignty

depend on movement to agroecology; outlines NGO projects to help transition from industrial to agroecological food system

Commentary: UK financial news site columnist shares highlights from Royal Society president speech promoting opportunities in genetics technology, including high yield, drought-resistant, biofortified crops; argues public should keep open mind in exploring this new technology

Commentary: EuropaBio Secretary General says EU comitology reform 'threatens innovation,' but adds that the current system is also problematic; criticizes politicians who listen to GMO scaremongering rather than 'actual facts'

More Europe items

Latin America

Event: Latin American, Brazilian agroecology groups to host Latin American Congress on Agroecology to discuss public policies and ways to build more ecologically sustainable societies (Sept. 12-15)

Commentary: Pan-American news outlet contributor criticizes "natural" food movement, notes all food has chemicals in it, highlights Nobel Laureate letter endorsing GMOs, points out that organic industry benefits from consumer fear

News: Mexican news outlet reports on letter from Oaxacan scientific and artistic communities to Senate of the Republic, warning about entry of GM seeds and grains, claiming that GM maize contains carcinogens and threatens native maize varieties and the economy

News: Costa Rican news outlet reports on National Ecological Federation's (FECON) GMO labeling campaign as part of World Consumer Rights Day on March 15, pointing to President Luis Guillermo Solís' 2014 promise to pursue GMO labeling regulations

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 - Mar. 13, 2017
 Date: Monday, March 13, 2017 9:03:34 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 warnings from researchers in Kenya that the armyworm epidemic would require new strategies in order to prevent "disaster." Also today, a local agricultural news site analyzed the results of Western Australia's recent elections.

Consolidated highlights include:

- Food security scientists speaking at an event in Nairobi on Sunday said that a food "disaster" was imminent, citing the ongoing fall armyworm incursions in the region. During the event, a researcher involved in the Water-Efficient Maize for Africa project said that Bt maize could be a key strategy for managing the pest, citing successful results in South Africa and in Ugandan field trials. **See more on the field trials. See more on armyworm.**
- The African Centre for Biodiversity issued two new reports, criticizing claims that new plant breeding techniques such as gene-editing should not be regulated as traditional GMOs. The brief publications focused on CRISPR and gene-editing technology, and on RNAi and other in-development plant modification techniques. The group cited European activists, and claimed that the new technologies had not been adequately assessed for health and environmental risks. **See more.**
- Agricultural journalist Colin Bettles reported that the recent Western Australia elections - which resulted in a strong WA Labor Party showing - would likely mean significant obstacles for GM crop adoption in the region. Bettles reviewed the history of Western Australia's GM crops ban, noting that it was the result of a 2008 Labor/Greens coalition that looks to be repeated following Sunday's results. **See more.**

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North America

Commentary: Breakthrough Institute's Director of Conservation examines trade-off between yield and biodiversity in farming, highlights various strategies such as no-till, intercropping, use of Bt technology and cover crops, notes importance of locating agriculture in places where biodiversity losses are smallest and yield gains are greatest

News: Oregon news site reports House ag committee public hearing on bill to reverse law against law bans on GM crops, Senate committee hearing on bill to restrict antibiotic use in livestock set for March 16

Audio: Speaking to Agri-Pulse, USFRA CEO Krotz says Straight Talk campaign has taken low-key approach of reaching out to food companies about sustainability marketing, asserts company pledges that mislead consumers need challenged

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project contributor examines reasons why eating local is not necessarily sustainable, points to potential for biotech to revolutionize the local food movement, highlighting crops capable of withstanding stress of climate change, as well as benefits of no-till systems

More North America items

Africa

News: [Egyptian news site previews Third International Conference on Biotechnology and Environmental Safety](#), notes event will gather scientists and researchers to discuss developments in biotechnology, climate change, water conservation and the impact on biodiversity

News: [Kenyan news outlet reports on Water Efficient Maize for Africa project manager Sylvester Oikeh's call on government to allow planting of pest resistant GM maize variety, proven successful in field trials, to prevent food shortages caused by spreading fall armyworm outbreak](#)

News: [Uganda Broadcasting Company reports debate over health, environmental effects of GMO crops continues in parliament; notes no scientific study has shown GMOs hazardous to human health](#)

News: [News Agency of Nigeria reports Portuguese Minister of Science and Technology says country will offer technical support in biotechnology to enhance agriculture, food security in Nigeria](#)

News: [Nigerian news outlet reports on rising grain prices due to short supply, with experts noting reserves would be consumed in two weeks, Country Coordinator of Open Forum for Agricultural Biotechnology \(OFAB\), Rose Gidado, called on government to embrace biotech to boost domestic food production](#)

Report: [African Centre for Biodiversity publishes two reports on risks associated with novel plant breeding techniques such as gene editing, countering argument that the methods are safer and more precise, with special focus on RNAi](#)

[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

Announcement: [Norwegian Biotechnology Council announces agenda of March 14 meeting, which will feature discussion of various GM crop applications, including maize and canola varieties](#)

News release: [FAO announces U.S. joins International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture aimed to strengthen global food security through sharing and promotion of member countries' plant genetic resources](#)

Commentary: [Germany anti-biotech news outlet amplifies FAO Future of Food report, claims lack of GMO discussion suggest FAO does not consider biotech a viable solution to ending hunger](#)

Commentary: [Writing in Polish news site, Polish civil affairs NGO director claims biotech corporations are trying to "create a friendly image of NBTs" in Europe to increase profits for on GMOs, encourages financial support of his group's GMO awareness campaign](#)

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: [María Colín of Greenpeace Mexico and José Antonio Serratos Hernández of UACM write for Mexican news outlet, criticizing government draft health and environmental risk assessment requirements for GMOs, noting the document's focus on economic considerations does not correspond with environmental protection](#)

News: Argentinian news outlet reports on planned agribusiness mergers between Dow/Dupont, Bayer/Monsanto and ChemChina/Syngenta, highlights companies' reasoning that the mergers are necessary to boost production, adds great amounts of time and money needed to develop new seeds

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Australian newspaper reports Western Australia farmers' plans to plant more GM canola limited by seed shortage; oilseeds association exec says shortage caused by increased demand worldwide

News: Australian farming news outlet reports on concerns about biotech's future in Western Australia following Labor party victory as well as expanded Upper House crossbench in recent election, as Labor will unlikely be able to pass legislation without support from parties that mistrust GM crops

[More Oceania items](#)

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - March 13, 2017
 Date: Monday, March 13, 2017 4 05:54 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

A [report issued by the United Nations special rapporteur](#) on the right to food attracted widespread international media coverage and considerable amplification among anti-pesticide advocacy groups touting its claims that pesticides are not necessary for modern agriculture and usage of the chemicals should instead be considered a human rights violation. Today's newsletter includes a profile of the report's chief author, Hilal Elver, and details her association with activist groups and her reliance on their claims.

Another high-profile attack on pesticides came from Environmental Working Group's release of its annual "[Dirty Dozen](#)" list claiming there are dangerous levels of pesticide residues on produce. Several responses highlighting flaws in EWG's claims are included below.

Looking ahead, additional activism is expected around pesticides this week as the European Chemicals Agency is reportedly set to release the results of its [glyphosate evaluation](#) on Wednesday.

If you have not yet created a Bonus Eventus account, simply [fill out the Request Membership form](#) on the front page of the site. This will give you access to the articles below as well as a wealth of information on recent news coverage, research and stakeholder activity as well as the ability to network with others. To share articles, simply click on the Twitter icon.

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

Stakeholder Spotlight: Hilal Elver



The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food report asserting pesticide use is a violation of human rights and that pesticides and modern farming techniques are not needed to feed the world was

Stories Worth Sharing

[Hank Campbell: In creating "Dirty Dozen" list, Environmental Working Group "massages data to produce disinformation"](#)

[Matt Ridley: Exciting future ahead for gene editing, which is already saving lives of cancer patients and generating healthier crops](#)

[Amanda Zaluckyj: New USDA chief should unravel "unholy alliance" between media, government and Big Organic](#)

[David Zaruk: Unpublished document details "Berlin Slime Strategy" to manipulate facts and create negative perception of GMOs, pesticides](#)

[David Ropeik: After labeling debate of 2016, this year could be turning point in public acceptance of GM foods](#)

[SUNY researchers seek donations to fund \\$125,000 biotech blight-resistant American Chestnut forest restoration project](#)

[Steven Savage: Many people think that organic means "no pesticides" but that is simply not true](#)

authored by a longtime opponent of industrial agriculture who favors agroecology instead.

Hilal Elver, who was appointed to the post in 2014, is an activist attorney, research professor and co-director of the Project on Global Climate Change, Human Security and Democracy housed at the Orfalea Center at the University of California at Santa Barbara. Her report last week relies heavily upon citations from Pesticide Action Network, Beyond Pesticides, the International Agency for Research on Cancer, Charles Benbrook and other anti-pesticide sources to support her claims. She, meanwhile, has cast doubt on opinions of well-respected scientists.

LEARN MORE about Elver, who has also been critical of Monsanto and other corporations, opposing the enforcement of intellectual property rights. Last year, her spouse, Richard Falk, was an official ambassador for the Monsanto Tribunal held by NGOs.

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STAKEHOLDER
PROFILES**

Paul Vincelli: "Enormous scrutiny" for scientists accepting industry funding to research GM crops

Julianna LeMieux: Scientists should have their say during U.S. FDA comment period on gene editing

Hank Campbell: When science journalists are "paid to undermine science"

Shanthu Shantharam: Genetically modified crops are the future in India, return to traditional agriculture would bring back food scarcity and starvation

Kavin Senapathy: Nestle stands up to NGOs' "distraction strategy" calling for GMO labeling

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BONUS EVENTUS MONITORING**

What's Trending?

European Chemicals Agency reportedly set to release results of glyphosate review on Wednesday

UN special rapporteur claims pesticide usage violates human rights, advocates global treaty to phase out usage

As Canadian parliament committee holds hearings, health minister promises proposed imidacloprid ban will be implemented

Food & Water Watch, other groups file legal petition demanding EPA overhaul how it protects communities from CAFO water pollution

Environmental Working Group's annual "Dirty Dozen" report met with criticism about misleading claims

Calendar highlights

March 14	March 15-16	March 16-17
BIO Asia International Conference	European Crop Protection Association/Crop Care Association regulatory conference	Plant Genomics and Gene Editing Congress: Europe
March 20-30	March 20-24	March 22
Pesticide Action Week (Week of Alternatives to Pesticides) in Europe	Convention on Biological Diversity Asia-Pacific Workshop on the Detection and Identification of Living Modified Organisms	U.S. Department of Agriculture releases annual managed bee population figures

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

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - March 10-12, 2017
 Date: Sunday, March 12, 2017 9:04 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

Global biotechnology developments over the weekend included a report by the National Academies of Sciences indicating U.S. regulatory agencies are not ready to keep up with new biotechnology products that will be introduced over the next 10 years. Researchers promoted a genetically modified corn variety that shuts down aflatoxin production.

Consolidated highlights include:

- A new NAS report indicated U.S. regulatory agencies are not adequately staffed and have insufficient levels of expertise to keep up with an influx of new biotech products likely to enter the market in the next decade as a result of new breeding techniques. **See more.**
- Science and mainstream media reported University of Arizona researchers developed a GM corn strain that uses RNAi to inhibit aflatoxin production, potentially saving lives and millions of tons of grain. Researchers say the strategy could be applied to other crops. **See more.**
- A Center for Investigative Journalism reporter published a three-part series and news agency Agencia EFE reported on agribusinesses in Puerto Rico, noting the companies receive hundreds of millions of dollars in tax incentives, pay much less in taxes and use land they say should be used to alleviate food insecurity. The pieces also claim GMOs and pesticides are making employees sick. **See more.**

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North America

Commentary: American Council on Science and Health's Julianna LeMieux urges scientists to participate in FDA's open comment period on gene editing before April 19 deadline, noting less than 10 percent of the 191 comments received thus far support gene edited food, with most using words like "poison" and "toxic"

Commentary: Biology Fortified announces new series of infographics, GMO Revealed; first in series focuses on Bt corn, shows how the trait works visually to help consumers understand biotech process

Interview: Stanford Medicine interviews journalist Michael Specter prior to upcoming lecture, Specter laments fact that science denialism is getting worse, noting people continue to fear GMOs in spite of scientific consensus on their safety, believes ignoring consumers' concerns and anxieties is not the solution

Campaign: SUNY researchers issue Ten Thousand Chestnut Challenge seeking donations to fund \$125,000 biotech blight-resistant American Chestnut forest restoration project

Campaign: Organic Consumers Association calls for support in NGO campaign to 'uncover' which stores are selling the GM Arctic Apple in the Midwest; asks locals to 'hunt down' the stores

Commentary: Virginia permaculture farmer examines GMO debate, notes that while there is no evidence

of long term health and environmental risks, and in fact there are several environmental benefits, the real danger is that people are giving up their right to participate in agriculture

[More North America items](#)

Africa

[Commentary: Kenyan news outlet editorial criticizes ban on biotech research, noting research is what is able to allay any fears about safety, argues banning biotech research stifles creativity and innovation](#)

[News: France-based African commodity news outlet reports on collaboration between National Biosafety Management Agency \(NBMA\) and the Nigerian Customs Service \(NCS\) to ensure strict regulation of import of GM products](#)

[Commentary: Inf'OGM interviews Burkina Faso organic cotton collective trying to re-establish organic cotton in the country, counter Monsanto's Bt cotton](#)

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

[Commentary: Indian news outlet contributor examines several emerging trends in science and technology, highlights exciting developments in gene editing, noting potential to change consumer attitudes on biotech since no foreign genes are used, highlights potential economic, health and environmental benefits](#)

[News: Philippines business news site reports on benefits of golden rice to increase yields, improve health and increase profits for farmers, Monsanto official outlines cost savings for small farmers and emphasizes safety of Bt rice](#)

[News: India news site Mint reports GEAC sub-committee will draft rules on importing dried grains and solubles made using GM corn](#)

[News: Indian business news outlet reports Union Ag Minister Radha Mohan Singh skipped event organized by new Federation of Seed Industry of India \(FSII\), following Swadeshi Jagran Manch's \(SJM\) warning that government officials should not attend events representing multinationals that oppose government seed policies](#)

[News: Southern India news source reports local MP tells plant research seminar attendees that universities must educate rural populations about environmental issues, also notes potential health benefits of GE crops like golden rice](#)

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

[Commentary: Croatian news site reports Croatia one of nations that abstained on GM maize authorization vote despite banning cultivation in their country; notes Green Party claims GMOs offer no benefits, harm health and the environment](#)

[News: Italian news outlet reports on upcoming event on GM crops and their potential use in agriculture, speakers will address legal issues surrounding GM crop cultivation in Italy, as well as controversy surrounding new breeding techniques](#)

[News: Swiss news site amplifies PLOS ONE article claim that NAS study included scientists who had conflicts of interests, claims study funded by Monsanto](#)

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Announcement: Greenpeace Mexico and Autonomous University of Mexico City comment on GMO risk assessments, claims project does not meet Cartagena Protocol, Mexican biotech regulations, and other regulations

News: Bolivian news agency reports Bolivian trade official says if Bolivia allowed biotech crops, could would make \$150 million a year, crop would help farmers' financial condition

News: Monsanto Argentina president tells agricultural news site company is helping Argentina farmers regain competitiveness through new technology

News: Cuban news site reports Brazil authorizes commercialization of four GM crops, two other GM products

News: Peruvian news site reports Cornell researcher notes Peru's GMO moratorium means scientists in the country cannot complete research with field trials, says more research needed to remove doubts about biotechnology

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Campaign: Friends of the Earth announces Kings College of London's Prof. Michael Antoniou to visit Australia to speak on his concerns regarding new gene editing techniques, claims results of deregulating would be "catastrophic"

Commentary: Alan Broughton of Socialist Alliance and Organic Agriculture Association writes for Australian green news outlet, making claims about Monsanto's attempts to gain "agricultural domination," claims GMOs and their associated pesticides harm humans and the environment, and that GMOs do not significantly boost yields

News release: New Zealand NGO GE Free Northland voices opposition to National Party Minister's "arrogant power grab" in attempts to change Resource Management Act (RMA) to prevent local councils from creating GE-free zones, spokesman Martin Robinson noted importance of GE-free status for retaining access to premium markets

[More Oceania items](#)

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

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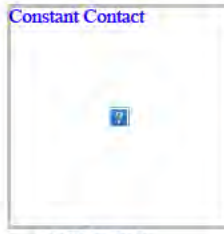
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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - March 9, 2017
 Date: Thursday, March 9, 2017 9:01:17 PM

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 a new bill in the Oregon state legislature that would allow the state to mediate in conflicts regarding cross-pollination. Center for Food Integrity research shows increasing consumer acceptance of GMO crops.

Consolidated highlights include:

- Capital Press reported the Oregon House of Representatives unanimously passed a bill that would restore the Oregon Department of Agriculture's ability to mediate in conflicts regarding cross-pollination. Oregon's lawmakers also had no objections to an ODA proposal that would allow the agency to enforce federal food safety laws with on-farm inspections. **See more.**
- Center for Food Integrity CEO Charlie Arnot wrote in a Genetic Literacy Project article that research shows public trust of GM food is growing due to increased transparency. **See more.**

The Bonus Eventus monitoring portal will be undergoing maintenance from 2 a.m. until approximately 4 a.m. Central on Friday, March 10. We apologize for any inconvenience.

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: Center for Food Integrity CEO says public acceptance of GM crops is growing due to new consumer transparency initiatives, highlights CFI's research showing shared values are the foundation for building trust

News: Successful Farming magazine reports that despite being a leader in agricultural innovation, the U.S. is falling further behind China in terms of government funding of food and ag research by a nearly 2-to-1 margin

Commentary: Jennifer Kuzma writes opinion piece for Nature, argues that debate over product vs process-based regulation of GE technologies is stalling progress, believes both should be taken into account, as well as concerns from various stakeholders, to establish system that values both science and citizens' values

News release: New York anti-hunger charity releasing a new book that highlights women around the world sharing their stories about topics like GMO, agrochemicals, and more as it deals with food sovereignty and sustainable communities

News: U.S. ag industry news service reports on comments made by key agribusiness lobbyist Tyson Redpath of the Russell Group pushing for federal GMO labeling law to be fully implemented by July 2018, warns any exemptions for sweeteners or vegetable oils will only dilute the law and give activist groups something to attack

More North America items

Africa

News: Local news reports Kenyan Health Cabinet Secretary asked to 'stop frustrating research' on GM crops, National Assembly's Agriculture committee working on a petition to push government support for modified crops research

News: Xinhua reports on spread of fall armyworm outbreak through western Tanzania from neighboring Zambia, ag official Permin Matumizi noted farmers' efforts to control the pest are failing as pesticides prove ineffective, Ag Secretary Mathew Mtigumwe noted they have been forced to procure new pesticides

Commentary: ISAAA reports on favorable opinions on GM cotton field trials in Swaziland from a member of the Swaziland Parliament, plan to work with stakeholders to try and enact legislation to allow for future growth of GM cotton within the country

Video: Ghanaian television outlet interviews Edwin Baffour of Food Sovereignty Ghana and Mumuni Abdulai of Savannah Agricultural Research Institute, Baffour voices opposition to Bt cowpea field trials, pointing to negative health and environmental risks, Abdulai disputes these claims, highlights education efforts

News: Sputnik reports on settlement between Monsanto and Burkina Faso regarding GM cotton dispute, with Burkina Faso retaining 75 of royalties, according to Wilfried Yameogo of cotton company SOFITEX, headline states Monsanto was "chased" from West Africa

More Africa items

Asia

News release: CropLife Asia promotes how biotech crops can help food security in Asia at its annual general meeting, discusses benefits of GM crops and crop protection products for smallholder farmers to increase yield, limit crop loss to pests and disease

News: Iranian financial news outlet reports on Iranian Genetics Society head Mahmoud Tavallaei's assessment that per capita pesticide consumption is much higher than in the EU and US, Samira Kahak, secretary of Biosafety Society of Iran's Consulting Council, noted GMOs can reduce pesticide consumption by 37 percent

News: The Hindu reports Punjab Agricultural University developed 3 Bt cotton varieties; university official notes farmers can reuse seeds, resulting in savings

More Asia items

Europe

News: Le Monde reports study in PLOS ONE says nearly a third of authors in NAS study have conflicts of interest due to accepting industry funding; financial ties not revealed in report

Report: Genok issues assessment on reapplication documents for GM oilseed rape GT73, highlights fact that it is banned in Norway to prevent contamination of wild relatives, notes health and environmental implications of glyphosate tolerance, acknowledges that Norwegian agencies have not identified any health risks to humans or animals

News: London Evening Standard reports on Syngenta's efforts to develop resilient and sustainable wheat varieties to meet London's soaring demand, heights its upcoming debate in conjunction with Syngenta on March 22 entitled "The Future of Food"

More Europe items

Latin America

Commentary: Center for Investigative Journalism writer in part 3 of series says Monsanto employees at Isabela Agricultural Experiment Station in Puerto Rico sickened from exposure to GMOs, pesticides

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Australian news outlet reports on Planned field trials of Monsanto's Bollgard III GM cotton technology in Ord Irrigation Scheme, Monsanto's Tony May notes it is designed to target a wider pest spectrum

[More Oceania items](#)

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - March 8, 2017
 Date: Wednesday, March 8, 2017 9:02:46 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 Monsanto had settled a lawsuit over the poor performance of Bt cotton seed distributed in Burkina Faso. Food and agriculture groups also celebrated International Women's Day.

Consolidated highlights include:

- Reuters reported that Monsanto had reached a deal with the cotton sector of Burkina Faso, allowing the SOFITEX trade group to keep most of the royalties from its introduction of GM cotton. SOFITEX had argued that the shorter fibers of Monsanto's Bt cotton variety resulted in an inferior quality product and blamed Monsanto for significant revenue loss. The Reuters article noted that Monsanto had promised to issue a statement on the settlement. **See more.**
- In celebration of International Women's Day, supportive and anti-biotechnology stakeholders profiled women working on issues of food security. Activist group WhyHunger highlighted the work of food sovereignty activists around the world in its new report, "Through Her Eyes." The International Potato Center profiled a Ugandan researcher working on blight-resistant GM potato field trials. **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: Harvard Extension School Environmental Studies instructor David Ropeik writes for Genetic Literacy Project, examines ways in which GMO labeling controversy and advent of gene editing transformed the GMO debate, gradually improving consumer acceptance

Commentary: Seeker contributor examines potential for CRISPR to help domesticate wild crops without introducing any foreign genes, echoing Michael Palmgren's frustration at public opposition to biotech, believes scientists must learn from past mistakes and put consumers' concerns first

News: Oregon House refers bill that would allow lawsuits against GE crop patent holders to judiciary, measure highlights cases of farmers dealing with unexpected GM crops found growing on farms

Commentary: Campaign to Stop GE Trees shares comments from Global Justice Ecology Project, calls GE chestnut a Trojan horse for commercial GE trees and asks readers to sign petition against the plant

News: Civil Eats reports on EU Parliament report on health benefits of organic foods, highlights claims about reduced pesticide exposure, and negative effects of pesticides, especially organophosphates, on human health, as well as its argument that organics can reduce antibiotic resistance

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Reuters reports Burkina Faso reaches agreement with Monsanto on GM cotton revenue losses, country keeps 75 percent of royalties; cotton producer says bad deal is "better than a bad court case"

News release: Biowatch claims industry statements that Bt corn resists armyworm are false, says tests have show armyworm is resistant to Bt crops, notes pest also proves resistant to pesticides

Commentary: International Potato Center (CIP) profiles researcher Anne Njoroge in recognition of International Women's Day 2017, highlighting her work on blight-resistant GM potatoes in Uganda, which have proven successful in field trials

News: Kenyan news outlet reports on recent meeting between African trade groups and International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA) Africentre in Ethiopia, where experts emphasized need to embrace biotech to improve food security, without compromising the environment

News: Nigerian business news outlet reports on Obafemi Awolowo University Community Health lecturer Femi Aluko's recent call on government to facilitate advancements in biotech to improve sustainability and food security, noting it would strengthen efforts toward economic diversification

News: Nigerian news outlet reports on National Biosafety Management Agency's (NBMA) recent meeting with Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) to strengthen their working relationship in ensuring strict regulation in importation of GM foods, NBMA director noted need for NCS to have access to all NBMA permits

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Chinese news site reports that China continues to be supportive of GM crops according to China's vice minister for agriculture, plans to continue GM technology research investments launched in 2008

Commentary: Third World Network amplifies Agricultural Economics study which found that herbicide-resistant weeds significantly increase weed management costs for GE cotton farmers, with an average increase of \$98 ha-1 following establishment of herbicide-resistant weeds

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: German news site reports plant breeders don't believe gene editing produces GMOs, want less restrictive regulations; says German authorities unlikely to reach decision, leaving it up to European Court of Justice

Commentary: London-based Agrimoney summarizes market trends for cotton worldwide, says increase in cotton yields unlikely due to "almost complete uptake" of current GM cotton varieties

Commentary: Belgian news site notes GM products require labels in Belgium, claims it's proven that GMOs and products from animals raised on GM feed harm human health, notes Belgian agency AFSCA does not recognize GMO health hazard; questions why non-GMO food cannot be labeled

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: U.S. grain industry magazine reports Peru expected to import 1 percent more soy in 2017-18, notes USDA report suggested labeling 30,000 products on its shelves that contain GM ingredients would be burdensome

News: Mexican news site reports research center develops portable kit to detect GM crops in the field

[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 - March 7, 2017
 Date: Tuesday, March 7, 2017 9:02:56 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 statements from Chinese agricultural officials on the potential benefits of GM technology. In Ghana, media outlets amplified positive results from a GM cowpea field trial, while activist group Food Sovereignty Ghana reiterated its opposition to the country's recently approved agriculture minister. U.S. academics continued to respond to a recent accusation that a National Academies of Sciences (NAS) review of GM crop safety was marred by conflicts of interest.

Consolidated highlights include:

- Speaking at a side event during China's Two Sessions political gathering, Chinese agriculture officials highlighted the country's commitment to agricultural biotechnology research. Vice-Minister of Agriculture Zhang Taolin added that the country would be aggressive with research but careful with GM crop deployment. Agriculture Minister Han Changfu added that the country had not yet approved any GM crops for commercialization. **See more.**
- In Ghana, My Joy Online highlighted the positive results of Bt cowpea field trials. Reporter Joseph Opoku Gakpo noted that the cowpea was on track for a commercial release on 2018. Meanwhile, Food Sovereignty Ghana issued a statement criticizing the chairman of the Parliamentary Appointments Committee. The group said that the chairman had unfairly accused it of misleading people on GM crop safety and highlighted criticism of GMOs from other advocacy groups. **See more on Ghana's biotech regulation. See more on the agriculture minister.**
- U.S. academics Marion Nestle of New York University and Paul Vincelli of the University of Kentucky both responded to recent accusations leveled against researchers working on a review of GM crop safety. Nestle, writing in her Food Politics blog, said that the NAS response to the claims was inadequate. She added that the activists behind the accusation were simply seeking "full disclosure." Writing for the Genetic Literacy Project, Vincelli emphasized that industry collaboration should not automatically discredit scientific research. He added that he reached the same conclusions on GM crop safety as the NAS panel, despite never taking industry funding, because that's what the evidence demonstrates. **See more.**

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

North America

News: Ag news site reports industry scientists praise gene editing as path to faster advancements, better focus on issues that plague crops; Dow technology expert says it allows researchers to discover, develop, commercialize traits with more precision, predictability

Commentary: University of Kentucky professor says concerns over professional conflicts of interest are 'particularly acute' with ag scientists researching GM crops; adds that industry-researcher cooperation does not undermine the science

Commentary: NYU professor Marion Nestle criticizes National Academies 'in-denial response' to report finding conflicts of interest among committee members studying GE crop safety, calls for 'full disclosure'

Commentary: Julie Kelly writes for National Review, voices hope that Trump administration will enable

approval of new biotech products, highlights benefits of hornless gene-edited cattle for both animals and farmers, as well as the arctic apple's potential to reduce food waste

Commentary: Paul Brewbaker of consulting firm TZ Economics writes for Honolulu Civil Beat, criticizing environmental groups' attempts to pass bills restricting pesticide use, highlights benefits of GMOs to medicine and Hawaiian ag, notes it would be foolish to deny local farmers proper crop protection methods

News: Canadian news site reports Prince Edward Island advocacy groups are warning the "Agriculture in the Classroom" program is promoting GM products, Arctic Apples to island students; CBAN rep calls it blatant corporate product promotion for the GM apple

More North America items

Africa

News: Ghanaian news outlet reports on Food Sovereignty Ghana's opposition to "false impression" given by Parliamentary Appointments Committee chairman, Joseph Osei-Owusu, during vetting of Ag Minister-designate Owusu Afriyie Akoto, that FSG is misleading various agencies, pointing to many other organizations that oppose GMOs

News: Ghanaian news outlet reports on planned release of GM Bt cowpea into the market, following successful results in ongoing field trials, according to research project Principal Investigator Dr Mumuni Abdulai, noting the modified cowpea has shown resistance to the pest, decreasing need for pesticide inputs

News: African news site amplifies Genetic Literacy Project columnist's assertions that African countries are pushing past opposition, showing greater interest in adopting GMOs, reports 11 African countries doing GMO field tests

Commentary: African social advocacy NGO shares highlights from its biotech communication clinic for journalists in Ethiopia; NGO's policy advisor told journalists improper communication with media has delayed adoption of biotechnology, misrepresented benefits of the technology

Commentary: African Agricultural Technology Foundation highlights Ugandan Minister for Science and Technology visit to NGO to discuss its projects, including the mandate to provide small farms with improved ag technology

Commentary: Alliance for Science fellow reports the first multi-location field trials of GMO BXW-resistant bananas were planted in Uganda in late February; notes biosafety bill would allow better testing locations

News: Sub-Saharan African data service provider Asoko Insight reports on Kenyan government decision not to lift GMO import ban in spite of grain shortage, Kenya Agriculture Research and Livestock Organisation (Kalro) director Eliud Kirger noted external support for biotech will not come to Kenya

More Africa items

Asia

News: China Daily reports Vice-Minister of Agriculture remarks at press conference ensure China will support GM food research by enabling development of domestic technological innovation

News: China Daily reports ag ministry press conference announces China has yet to approve any GMOs, though ensures safety of GM productions, notes country will continue biotech research and use caution when introducing and managing the technology

News: Chinese news site reports ag ministry official press conference says while China hasn't approved any GM grains, it continues to encourage transgenic research, despite strict management

News: India's Financial Express reports agriculture ministry likely to retain current maximum sale price

for GM Bt cotton seeds prices for next season; share of Bt variety in total cotton area sown declined to 83 percent in 2016-17 from 91 percent the previous season

Commentary: Writing in an Indian news outlet, former USDA biotech regulator says GM crops are the future, arguing widespread growth for 20 years proves their safety; adds efforts to connect farmers' suicides to cultivation of Bt cotton is a shameless act of the anti-GM lobby

Commentary: Pakistani news columnist questions if country investment in Monsanto seeds would be worth the reward, recommending country license seeds to demand seed quality standards in lieu of paying hefty technology fee upfront, cites concerns seeds harm bees, non-GM crops

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Interview: MEP Jan Huitema tells European Seed new breeding techniques have great potential to mitigate food challenges, adding GM varieties perfectly safe

Commentary: The Beijer Institute responds to December 2014 article on golden rice opposition; says misguided regulations in the case of Golden Rice have cost lives 'and billions of dollars'

Report: Document for Reclaim The Fields' European Assembly, held in January 2017, includes summary of anti-GMO efforts in several countries; note upcoming demonstration against Monsanto and Syngenta in Switzerland on May 20, and international assembly of resistances against GMOs in France from April 28-30

Commentary: GM Freeze director Liz O'Neill writes for The Ecologist, promoting 'Feed me the Truth' campaign targeting UK supermarkets launched in October, notes nine out of 10 supermarket chains have poor performances, criticize sale of unlabeled products from animals given GM feed

News release: Two French agriculture and agri-food players, Fleury Michon and Terrena, announce collaborative launch of the "J'Aime le poulet" program, in partnership with 10 breeders to produce chicken products raised without antibiotics of GM feed

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Writing in Puerto Rican news outlet, Center for Investigative Journalism reporter claims Puerto Rico has become the epicenter of GM seed trials that generate more subsidies for agribusiness firms than taxes paid to the government on an island in its worst fiscal crisis

News: Mexican news outlet reports on environmentalists' warning against modifying the General Biodiversity Law, which they believe promotes commercialization of nature, and the General Law on Sustainable Forest Development, which they claim violates indigenous peoples' rights

Commentary: Cuban news outlet contributors examine economic and environmental benefits of Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology's (Cigb) transgenic maize varieties, say goal of GMOs is to improve food security but "immoral monopolistic practices" of biotech firms is what garners media attention

News: Argentinian news outlet reports on provincial production minister, Gabriel Tortarolo's praise of decision allowing Instituto Nacional de Tecnología Agropecuaria (INTA) to release its domestically produced GM cotton seeds into the market, breaking the monopoly held by one supplier company

[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: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - March 7, 2017
 Date: Tuesday, March 7, 2017 10:00:45 AM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

This week's newsletter opens with Jon Entine examining recent New York Times coverage of bee health issues and neonicotinoids, suggesting that the newspaper should take a closer look at the science on the issue to prevent more reporting that is factually inaccurate. Similarly, Paul Driessen of the Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow breaks down questionable claims that led to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposing the rusty patched bumblebee gain endangered species protection - a move that could have impacts on farming and beyond.

From Europe, there are articles on gene editing and the regulation of biotechnology, along with a farmer's petition defending glyphosate. From Africa, a journalist calls for Kenya's GMO ban to be lifted and a fact-checking organization disputes claims - based on the International Agency for Research on Cancer's assessment - that glyphosate is dangerous.

There's also the latest piece in Genetic Literacy Project's "GMO: Beyond the Science" series, with Julie Kelly taking a look at how celebrities can have a damaging impact on the public perception of biotechnology.

If you have not yet created a Bonus Eventus account, simply [fill out the Request Membership form](#) on the front page of the site. This will give you access to the articles below as well as a wealth of information on recent news coverage, research and stakeholder activity as well as the ability to network with others. To share articles, simply click on the Twitter icon.

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

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[Stakeholder Spotlight](#)

[Stories Worth Sharing](#)

[What's Trending?](#)

[Calendar highlights](#)

Stakeholder Spotlight: Hawaii SEED



Hawaii SEED is a five-island coalition co-founded in 2002 by Hawaii Organic Farmers Association to battle GMOs and conventional agriculture research in the Hawaiian Islands.

The group has recently been

Stories Worth Sharing

[Jon Entine: New York Times should devote more time and resources to prevent more factually inaccurate reports on bee health, neonics](#)

[Kavin Senapathy: Forget "Frankenfoods," nearly everything we eat has been improved via genetics](#)

[Paul Driessen: Congress should review and repeal endangered species protection for rusty patched bumblebee after "suspicious" listing](#)

[Henry Miller: Proposed chlorpyrifos ban an example of NGO-driven EPA regulation that is "not based on science"](#)

[Kenyan journalist: Government should lift "ill-conceived" GMO ban that hinders pursuit of food security](#)

[Institution of Engineering and Technology: Unclear whether European Court of Justice has relevant expertise to rule on gene editing](#)

promoting Vandana Shiva's latest docu-drama "Seed: The Untold Story" and raising funds in support of ongoing legislative lobbying, litigation and public relations campaigns in Hawaii, alleging agricultural biotechnology and crop protection products are poisoning the region, displacing native plants and polluting local waterways.

[LEARN MORE](#) about Hawaii SEED.

[CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES](#)

[British farmer uses 38 Degrees platform to call for continued approval of glyphosate, fight "false science and misinformation" from anti-farm groups](#)

[Italian researcher explains product - not process - is what's important to scientists, regulators and society when it comes to biotechnology](#)

[Julie Kelly: Poorly informed celebrities can "sway public opinion in destructive ways" on topics such as GMOs](#)

[Nonprofit fact-checking organization examines complaint to South African Human Rights Commission about glyphosate, highlights research discrediting IARC's conclusions](#)

[Pennsylvania State University study identifies genes linked to immunity to pathogens deemed to be main cause of Northern Hemisphere bee deaths](#)

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What's Trending?

[Trump executive order starts process of reworking or removing Waters of the United States rule](#)

[European Green Party urges supporters to demand three genetically modified maize varieties be blocked](#)

[Coalition plans "Consumer Health, Consumer Action and Antimicrobial Resistance" event in mid-March in D.C.](#)

[Canadian Parliament agriculture committee schedules hearing Tuesday on proposal to ban imidacloprid](#)

[European Commission cancels EDC criteria vote, process could go to Council of Commissioners next](#)

Calendar highlights

March 9-10	March 9	March 9
2nd International Conference on BioScience and Biotechnology (Sri Lanka)	Minnesota NGO Pollinator Friendly Alliance hosts "Best Practices for Pollinators" summit	The Organic Center annual benefit dinner featuring National Public Radio podcast
March 10-11	March 12-16	March 13-15
Indiana Farm Bureau spring conference featuring discussions on GMOs, antibiotics	Society of Toxicology annual meeting and ToxExpo	American Society of Animal Science Midwest meeting featuring discussion of reducing antibiotic usage

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

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included the launch of new anti-biotechnology campaigns in Canada. In Africa, Nigeria's efforts to establish a regulatory framework around biotechnology remained controversial. Europe's food safety regulator issued a new call for input on approaches to include "weight of evidence" in decisions.

Consolidated highlights include:

- The Canadian Biotechnology Action Network (CBAN) -- along with activist groups Earth Action PEI, Council of Canadians and Kids Right to Know -- issued an open letter criticizing the webinar "Trashing Food Waste with Technology" for promoting biotechnology and corporate-controlled food. The group questioned that the only speaker in the program was a communications official for the local company Okanagan Specialty Fruits. **See more.** At the same time, CBAN issued a call for supporters to reach out to their MPs in support of GMO labeling. The group highlighted a scheduled House of Commons debate Friday (March 10). **See more.**
- Speaking to News Agency Nigeria, the Nigerian minister of agriculture and rural development said that the country had not adopted GM crops but was taking a "wait and see" approach to the technology. The minister added that Nigeria was "preparing" resources to begin developing its own local biotechnology programs. **See more** Meanwhile, a Reuters article today reviewed how Bt maize adoption in South Africa may be helping to slow the spread of armyworm in the country. **See more**
- The European Food Safety Authority called for input on the its efforts to account for "weight of evidence" and biological relevance in its assessments of new technologies. Feedback on the proposals is due by May 1. **See more.**

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

North America

Commentary: Forbes columnist Senapathy promotes Nestle's refusal to cave to Just Label It pressure to clearly label GM ingredients, adding an overly burdensome ideological regulatory atmosphere prevents GE solutions that can help farmers, the environment and people globally

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project contributor summarizes biotech development in Africa, arguing GM technology holds promise for Africa; adds while international and local NGOs are behind Africa's delayed GMO adoption, Nigeria biotech agencies are starting to push back against their efforts

Campaign: Canadian Biotechnology Action Network and other anti-GMO groups condemn "Agriculture in the Classroom" webinar as corporate propoganda designed to develop market for GM apple, highlights criticism by student activist Rachel Parent

Commentary: Canadian Biotechnology Action Network posts letter to provincial education ministers objecting to webinar featuring GM apple as "product placement"; urges removal from high school classrooms

Campaign: Canadian Biotechnology Action Network calls on supporters to contact their MPs in support of mandatory GMO labeling prior to March 10 House of Commons debate, points to polling demonstrating that over 80 percent of Canadians want mandatory labeling

News: Natural Blaze reports Canadian civil society groups sent letter asking Ministers to withdraw support for high school webinar the groups say markets the non-browning GM Arctic Apple; Council of Canadians says advertising masquerading as education is unacceptable

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Reuters reports on various cropping strategies for mitigating effects of drought across the globe, highlights development of drought-tolerant GM maize in Sub-Saharan Africa, references 2010 study which found that widespread adoption of drought-tolerant varieties could boost maize harvests

Commentary: African agribusiness NGO exec, writing in Huffington Post SA, warns that the agricultural sector must help farmers access seeds to improve yield, pest tolerance; notes climate change brings urgency to initiatives

News: South African news outlet reports on Africa Check's analysis of Inkatha Freedom Party's claims regarding health risks posed by glyphosate use on GM crops, Africa Check noted that while ag department does not routinely check for glyphosate residues in maize and soy, residues are unlikely to harm consumers

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project contributor summarizes biotech development in Africa, arguing GM technology holds promise for Africa; adds while international and local NGOs are behind Africa's delayed GMO adoption, Nigeria biotech agencies are starting to push back against their efforts

Commentary: Alliance for Food Sovereignty publishes declaration developed at Addis Ababa gathering that calls on policy makers to help shift food security narrative away from one that pushes industrial ag, biotech to one that promotes ecological, culturally appropriate food systems

News: Nigerian minister of agriculture says government taking wait-and-see approach to GMO technology, but government preparing institutes, universities to conduct research on boosting ag production and food security

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: University of Philippines student ag technology group explains how they promote biotechnology through initiatives such as extension programs to help farmers improve crop yields

Commentary: As part of GMO debate series, Indian news outlet contributor voices concern about GMOs, specifically with regard to monocultures and decline in genetic diversity, advocates caution in applying the technology, warning about unintended consequences

News: Vietnamese news aggregator reports Dekalb Vietnam agrees to biotech training, internship program with Vietnam National University of Agriculture; seed company attracted by success of Monsanto scholarship program

Commentary: Suleman Dawood School of Business, LUMS professor writes for Pakistani business news outlet, examines financial risks of purchasing Monsanto's cotton technology, highlighting problems of seed quality and pest resistance, believes government should ask Monsanto to specify yearly seed-sale targets

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News release: European Food Safety Authority seeks feedback from scientific community, risk assessors and EFSA stakeholders on two draft guidance documents on weight of evidence approach and biological relevance of observed effects, with goal of harmonizing methodologies and increasing transparency

Commentary: "Risk Monger" David Zaruk examines minutes of recent meeting involving 23 NGO activists and EU Parliament members, detailing strategies to use opposition to ag industry consolidation and push the public against conventional farming, pointing to collusion between NGOs and EU Parliament

News: Italian news site reports anti-GMO group held demonstration in Crotona, distributed flyers critical of CETA, alleging it will allow massive imports of GM food into Italy, warning GM foods pose health risk to citizens

News: UK's Agrow reports DuPont Pioneer makes limited commercial introduction of its GM insect-resistant Qrome (DP4114) maize to over 100 growers in the US western Corn Belt this year

Study: GenØk study examines stress-tolerant GM plants, claims other transgenes may interact with abiotic stressors, causing pleiotropic effects that affect plant physiology, resulting in product safety issues

Commentary: Author Matt Ridley writes for The Times (UK) on applications of gene editing, highlighting potential to make significant improvements in medicine and agriculture; believes Britain should take a more firm stance in its favor, notes the technology itself should be regulated, but not viewed as dangerous

[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

Commentary: Australian anti-GMO NGO Gene Ethics shares "GM-free scorecard" for upcoming Western Australia election on March 11, highlighting various parties' stances on GM issues, Green and Labor parties both intend to prevent new GM crops in WA, introduce farmer protection laws, amend GMO labeling laws

[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

This weekend's global biotechnology developments included the European Greens-European Free Alliance starting a campaign to oppose GM corn authorizations, along with continuing developments on agribusiness mergers.

Consolidated highlights include:

- The EU Greens-European Free Alliance Party called on Europeans to urge their ministries to block authorization of three GM corn varieties, noting that if enough ministries do not oppose the authorizations, they likely will pass. The European Commission will propose in mid-March that the member states approve the authorizations. **See more.**
- The U.K.-based Financial Times reported ChemChina's purchase of Syngenta is nearing EU antitrust approval. **See more on ChemChina-Syngenta.** An agricultural news site reported the Bayer purchase of Monsanto could be completed by the year's end. **See more on Bayer-Monsanto.**

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North America

Commentary: Daily Kos contributor hopes Simplot's potatoes genetically engineered to resist blight can help change public perception on genetic engineering; they will have reduced bruising and black spots

Commentary: Mother Jones' Tom Philpott notes researchers stress conflicts of interest in NAS study, acknowledges conflict of interest does not invalidate study, but says NAS has longstanding issue with conflicts of interest, questions NASEM's standards on issue

Campaign: Food & Water Watch urges supporters to contact USDA regarding improvements in approval process for GE crops; says current process full of loopholes and gaps, and entirely voluntary in some cases

Video: Cornell Alliance for Science produces video on Tanzania's field trials of drought-tolerant GM corn, with goal of helping farmers meet challenges posed by climate change

Study: Dow researchers examine biochemical composition of stacked-trait maize and non-GM hybrid maize, find greater differences between hybrid and parent versus stacked and parent plants; note implications for regulation

Review: Mashable promotes Netflix's movie 'Okja' that features GM creature sought by evil corporation; says it is "likely to be legendary"

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: The Guardian reports AATF researchers developing pod-borer resistant Bt cowpea; notes pest considerably damages cowpea, an important legume in Africa's dry savannas

Commentary: Nnimmo Bassey, director of Health of Mother Earth Foundation, voices concern about interconnectedness of National Biotechnology Development Agency (NABDA) and National Biosafety Management Agency (NBMA), claims NABDA's job is to put GMOs on the market whether Nigerians want them or not

News: News Agency of Nigeria reports ag minister says Nigeria has not embraced GMOs despite widespread acceptance in U.S., wants Nigerian researchers to find solutions

News release: South African Parliament member, president of Inkatha Freedom Party says he wants to investigate safety, human rights issues regarding GM food, pesticide use in the country; claims glyphosate danger is "incontrovertible"

News: Italian news site reports Burkina Faso cotton yields rebound after ditching Monsanto's Bt cotton, which produced lower quality cotton that sold for less; Monsanto says misuse of product was responsible for poor results

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Pakistani news site reports government negotiating with Monsanto to acquire advanced GM cotton technology, technical expertise for five years

News: U.K.-based Financial Times reports ChemChina's Syngenta purchase nears EU antitrust approval following concessions that include divestments in Syngenta's European businesses and small divestments in the US

Commentary: Vivian Fernandes of Smart Indian Agriculture writes for local magazine, examines widespread opposition to GMOs in spite of overwhelming scientific evidence supporting the technology, believes the technology will remain unavailable to developing nations until consumers in rich nations change their minds

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Italian research expert refutes framing of GMO regulation "reboot" thesis by social scientist Jenifer Kuzma; explains product - not process - is what's important to scientists, regulators and society when it comes to biotechnology

Study: Belgian researchers frame how scientists can communicate about biotechnology to "de-problematize GMOs," note the end product matters, not the production method; the it's easy to show criticisms not integral to the technology

News: Russian news outlet reports on Russian Academy of Sciences' defense of GMOs, highlighting Commission to Combat Pseudoscience and Falsification of Scientific Research's preparation of memo on dangers of pseudoscientific reports on GMOs, contrasts with opposition from government officials

Study: Belgian, IRRI researchers determine biofortified crops would benefit consumers economically, nutritionally; local supply chains would need to be upgraded

Commentary: French anti-GMO NGO Inf'OGM amplifies Plos ONE report claiming to demonstrate conflicts of interest in National Academies of Scientists' recent report on GMOs, claims it demonstrates a lack of independence and impartiality in reports published by National Research Council

Campaign: The Greens/European Free Alliance calls on citizens to tell their ministries to block approval of GM maize varieties, noting the regulations may pass unless enough member states' experts vote against

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Bolivian news outlet reports on Roberto Miranda of Vice Ministry of Defense of Consumer and Consumer Rights' recent statement regarding checks on all products containing GMOs, following passage of legislation requiring labeling of products containing GMOs

News: Chihuahua, Mexico news outlet reports on Sagarpa's consultation with indigenous peoples in Rosales and Delicias regarding cultivation of GM cotton in compliance with new rules, officials asked Tarahumara community for consent, noting GM cotton poses no health or environmental risks

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: U.K.-based legal news outlet Lexology reports on Queensland, Australia's Gene Technology Act (2016), which automatically adopts Commonwealth laws on gene technology, but allows Queensland to opt-out of future changes that aren't in the state's interests, highlights various biotech applications

Commentary: Australian news outlet contributor criticizes Green Party for promoting scientific consensus on issues like climate change, but ignoring it regarding GMOs, highlighting their call for a moratorium, notes they promote emotions over facts

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 report on European NGOs planning campaigns to oppose agribusiness mergers. The National Academies of Sciences announced it will seek executive committee members to develop strategy for the Science Breakthroughs 2030 initiative. NGOs announced an appeal to a ruling that upheld a European Commission decision to allow the import of Monsanto's GM soy variety.

Consolidated highlights include:

- Politico Pro Europe released meeting minutes from European NGOs -- including Friends of the Earth, INKOTA and Corporate Europe Observatory -- planning opposition to mergers in the seed and pesticide industry, including the Bayer purchase of Monsanto. **See more.**
- The NAS announced it is looking for nominations for an executive committee to develop strategy for the Science Breakthroughs 2030 initiative. The announcement said committee members will "gather insights from scientists and engineers in the traditional fields of science in food and agriculture, seek ideas from scientists in other disciplines whose knowledge, tools, and techniques might be applied to food and agricultural challenges and organize interdisciplinary dialogues to uncover novel, potentially transformational, approaches to advancing food and agricultural science." **See more.**
- Testbiotech, ENSSER and environmental organization Sambucus announced they would file an appeal in the EU Court of Justice to challenge a previous ruling upholding the European Commission's decision to allow imports of Monsanto's Intacta GM soy. **See more.**

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North America

Commentary: Karl Haro von Mogel of Biology Fortified describes new GMOs Revealed Infographics campaign, with goal of explaining how various GE traits work using accessible images and text backed by scholarly references, the first infographic examines the Bt trait, and future graphics will include virus resistance, non-browning traits, herbicide tolerance, and animal traits such as sterile mosquitoes

Commentary: Pro-GMO food writer Julie Kelly writes for Genetic Literacy Project, examines troubling trend of Hollywood celebrities spreading misconceptions about GMOs, notes they are filling in the information void left by scientists and ag communities who are reluctant to engage with the public

Commentary: Kristina Hubbard of Organic Seed Alliance writes for Montana news outlet, voicing opposition to state Senate's passage of bill that will eliminate local control over seeds, arguing it is an "indiscriminate reaction" to initiatives in other states that ban GM crops, believes Montana farmers can work out disputes themselves

Commentary: Canadian blogger, a biology professor, says anti-GMO organization Non-GMO Project uses false information to generate fear of GE crops and derived foods; says there's no valid evidence that existing GM crops are harmful

More North America items

Africa

News: Senegalese news site reports President favors GMO use but wants conditions to meet possible risks

Commentary: South African news outlet examines claims that organic foods are healthier, notes there is little evidence that organic foods are more nutritious than conventional, but notes that eating organic does reduce pesticide exposure, highlighting human health risks associated with pesticides

News: Bloomberg reports approval withheld for Kenya's GM corn trials due to confusion regarding whether the GMO import ban applies to controlled growing tests

More Africa items

Asia

Event: Indian news site reports a panel discussion on environmental issues related to GMOs, Bt cotton and organic farming will be held Mar. 3 in Mitramandal Chowk; farmer activist, representative from NGO Dharamitra among speakers

Announcement: US-China Economic and Security Review Commission announces public hearing scheduled for March 16 on "China's Pursuit of Next Frontier Tech: Computing, Robotics, and Biotechnology"

Interview: Vivian Fernandes of Smart Indian Agriculture interviews Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) joint director (research) KV Prabhu on development of GM mustard, he explains thorough trials and safety assessments, believes release of a summary of the biosafety assessment is sufficiently transparent

More Asia items

Europe

Report: USDA Foreign Agricultural Service reports European Commission proposed changes to comitology process; notes some fear changes will lead to longer approval process or de facto moratorium for GE products and pesticides

News: French news site science writer reports French farming association wants to increase land planted with non-GMO soy to 200,000 ha. by 2020, says it will take advantage of demand and replace some GM soy now being imported

News release: Testbiotech, ENSSER and environmental organization Sambucus announce joint filing of appeal in EU Court of Justice challenging General Court ruling upholding EU Commission decision to allow import of Monsanto's Intacta GM soybean variety, citing potential human health risks

News: Politico reports on recent meeting in Berlin where several NGOs, including Friends of the Earth, discussed strategy to opposing ag industry mergers, with focus on Bayer-Monsanto deal, Friends of the Earth and SumOfUs have already drafted a letter to be sent to Competition Commissioner Margrethe Vestager

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Brazilian farming news site reports US trials of conventional Brazilian corn varieties show high yields, have lower production costs than GM crops

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: New Zealand news outlet reports on recent Hawke's Bay Regional Planning Committee meeting, with discussion on proposed GMO moratorium, the committee recommended the council signal its intent to take a precautionary approach to GMO regulation, pending outcomes of several court cases throughout New Zealand

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 announcement from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Food and Drug Administration approving the commercialization of a new GE potato from J.R. Simplot. European news outlets highlighted the ongoing discussion over how gene editing and other new plant breeding techniques should be regulated in the European Union.

Consolidated highlights include:

- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Food and Drug Administration announced the approval of three new genetically engineered potatoes developed by J.R. Simplot. The Associated Press report on the development was widely syndicated in U.S. media. Initial advocacy response was limited. However, a Russia Today report criticized the claim that the potatoes would reduce chemical usage. **See more.**
- European news outlets carried commentary on the potential regulatory process for crops developed through gene editing and other new plant breeding techniques (NBTs). In the German-language publication Greenpeace Magazin, an organic agriculture researcher highlighted the potential environmental benefits of crops gene edited to resist drought or increase yields. In Engineering & Technology, a Belgium-based correspondent highlighted the European Court of Justice's history of conservative and contradictory decisions on new technologies and suggested the court is likely to stifle innovation in the region. **See more.**

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North America

News: Associated Press reports EPA, FDA approve three types of GE Simplot potatoes modified to resist the pathogen that caused the Irish potato famine; agencies say they will be available for sale fall 2017

News: Capital Press reports Amalgamated Sugar raising funds for GMO education campaign, with officials saying they have raised \$16M over one year in order to 'improve public perceptions' about GMOs

News: US ag site quotes Western Sugar Cooperative scientist who says food companies should be proud of GMOs; adds if consumers understand environmental benefits, they're more likely to accept the technology

Report: PLOS report authored by Council for Responsible Genetics board member Sheldon Krimsky and Food & Water Watch employee Tim Schwab claims to demonstrate conflicts of interest among committee members in National Academies of Sciences' recent GE crop study, cite financial and institutional links

News: Good Fruit reports GMO debate likely to become more confusing as new technologies blur lines between conventional crossbreeding and genetic engineering, challenges out-of-date regulatory strategies

News: Good Fruit reports Rutgers researchers experimenting with gene-editing technology to make wine grapes resistant to downy mildew; if successful, the research will create Chardonnay grapes that reduce fungicide use

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: Slow Food Uganda official says group is "sensitizing farmers against" using GMOs while promoting "best farming practices" to put products on the market; Italian ambassador says Ugandan products don't make world market in part because they are genetically modified

News: ISAAA reports Ugandan journalists at media workshop on Uganda's biosafety bill call for public campaign to promote GMO knowledge

News: Crop Protection News reports long-term project to introduce and develop GM drought-resistant maize in Africa billed a success by Monsanto, one of its drivers; critics say the project is a Trojan horse

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Indian news site reports Nobel laureate Venkatraman Ramakrishnan encourages robust, scientific debate on genetic engineering use, notes GE crop use can increase yields, help solve hunger problem

Commentary: Reporting that India does not yet have a precedent for SynBio product regulation, contributor to Mumbai-based Food and Beverage News says its 'high time' for regulators to determine the pathway to approve such products

News: China News Service reports on Ag Ministry's statement that GM farm products with government approval are safe to use, at recent conference on supervision of GM plants, the ministry noted developing transgenic technology is a national priority, calling on related departments to ensure safe use

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Interview: Germany's Greenpeace Magazine features head of Research Institute for Organic Agriculture, who outlines potential environmental benefits of gene editing; advocates case-by-case approach instead of demonizing gene editing

Commentary: Engineering and Technology contributor says European Court of Justice is slow moving and offers confused decisions, questions whether it's the right body to legislate gene editing; adds Court may stifle European research

Commentary: Researcher Marcel Kuntz criticizes 'Responsible Research and Innovation' approach to science governance, says emphasis on public engagement ignores reality of ideological activists and amounts to coercion

Commentary: Czech conspiracy theorist blogger claims agribusinesses discriminate against Eastern Europeans by selling them "inferior food" containing GMOs, vaccines to reduce population

News: Bosnian news site reports Serbian government testing finds no GMOs in food samples

News release: National Food Institute of the Technical University of Denmark says there is 'no evidence' that genetic material from the food we eat is absorbed into the bloodstream; says contradictory studies likely had errors

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Ugandan news outlet reports on Brazilian biotech expert Dr. Maria Jose Amstalden's advice to Ugandan MPs to leave gaps in National Biotechnology and Biosafety Bill to allow for adoption of new technologies, noting Brazil is currently facing a problem with technology overlap

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: ISAAA reports Australia's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator receives application for GM sorghum field test

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Today's global biotechnology developments included new regulator and media commentary on Nigeria's biosafety regulations. In Europe, an anti-biotechnology research group announced that it would begin efforts to help regulators enact a new approach to research and innovation.

Consolidated highlights include:

- Regulators continued to respond to controversy over Nigeria's efforts to commercialize GM crops. In a brief article, Daily Trust reported that the a spokesperson for the National Biotechnology Development Agency (NABDA) had responded to a report on GM crops from the Nigeria Inter-Religious Council. NABDA assistant director Rose Gidado said that the committee reviewing the issue had not included any researchers or non-advocacy participants, thus biasing its conclusions. Media outlets in the region also continued to report on NABDA's launch of a training program to help local regulators identify GM seeds. [See more.](#)
- Activist research group GenØk issued a statement today highlighting its plan to promote the "responsible research and innovation" philosophy for regulating research and development in Europe. The approach, a reformulation of the precautionary principle, emphasized assessing environmental and societal impacts of scientific discoveries "in an early phase" of the research. GenØk explained that the approach "stresses the importance of public engagement and to have iterative, inclusive and participatory methodologies in all stages of the research and innovation process." The group added that it plans to issue guidance on how to implement the approach. [See more.](#)
- Activists also continued to promote the Brazilian Ministry for Agrarian Development's recently released report highlighting studies that countered the scientific consensus on GM crop safety. Spain's Ecologistas en Acción and Africa's La Via Campesina both used the report to call for a renewed focus on agroecological farming and research. [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: Reuters reports agricultural traders and biotechnology firms finding ways to make fish oil substitutes from grains and algae to cash in on health fads that have led to scarcity of the fatty acids; genetically engineered canola in the works that makes long chain omega-3 fatty acids](#)

[Commentary: Big-AgWatch says since GM crops were introduced in the US, corn yields have increased 37 percent, soybean yields by 21 percent; yield improvements will be crucial to feed growing world population as land availability switches from ag use to living space](#)

[News: Midwest Center for Investigative Reporting reports federal officials seeking public comment on proposed regulations to better oversee next-generation food modification; researchers say increased precision of gene editing could lead to vegetables with boosted nutritional value, fruits that don't spoil](#)

[Commentary: Grain Growers of Canada columnist, a farmer, says 90 percent or more of country's canola,](#)

corn, soybeans and sugar beets are genetically engineered to provide better control of yield-reducing weeds and pests

News release: USFRA "GMOs and Sustainability - Go Hand 'n Hand" panel discussion (March 4) at Commodity Classic in San Antonio to feature different perspectives from Culver's CEO, dietitian, USFRA past chairwoman, American Sugarbeet Growers Association president

Commentary: Scientific American contributor lists five ways to defeat those who are "waging war" on science, notes scientists are important to help the public navigate complex issues such as genetic engineering

More North America items

Africa

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science contributor says 'pro-science' individuals increasingly engaged in Ghana, especially in GMO debate; notes battle lines being drawn ahead of GM crops' commercialization next year

News: Nigerian news site Blueprint reports National Agricultural Seed Council scientists receive training to detect GM seeds to ensure truthful labeling; head of Nigeria Biotechnology Development Agency says Council best able to alleviate public fear of GM seeds

News: Nigerian Tribune reports on National Biotechnology Development Agency's (NABDA) training program for National Agricultural Seed Council (NASC) staff on detection of GMOs, NASC Director General Philips Ojo noted officials will be able to differentiate between GM and organic seeds for farmers' benefit

News: Nigerian news outlet reports on National Biotechnology Development Agency's (NABDA) criticism of National Inter-Religious Council's (NIREC) investigation of GMO safety as biased, urging Nigerians to disregard NIREC's claims

News: Nigerian news site reports country's National Agriculture Biotechnology Development Agency promoting benefits of GMOs to Catholic Church to garner support for refined national approach to introduce biotechnology in agriculture

News: Ugandan news site reports banana wilt disease and exhausted soil destroying banana yield in Central Uganda, financially devastating area; ag expert says disease- and climate-resistant varieties being developed using conventional crossbreeding and genetic engineering, bananas could thrive in more fertile soil

Commentary: La Via Campesina amplifies Brazilian Ministry of Agrarian Development (MDA) report examining 750 studies on GMOs, argues the report reinforces urgent need for critical analyses of current agricultural and agrarian development model, and for a search for alternatives

Commentary: Kenyan news outlet contributor calls on government to lift GM import ban, noting it is ill-conceived and hinders the nation's adoption of biotech to help fight food insecurity, criticizes government delays, notes safety studies relied on when the ban was instituted have since been debunked

News: Swazi Observer reports that members of the ministry of agriculture said they were dedicated to working with the legislature to allow GM cotton cultivation in the country; noted success in India

More Africa items

Asia

News: Indian news outlet reports on recent publication by Brazil's Ministry for Agrarian Development reviewing 750 studies on GMOs claiming to demonstrate hazards and uncertainties, highlights development of GM mustard and current use of Bt cotton, Charu Dutt Mayee of South Asia Biotechnology Centre highlighted its success

More Asia items

Europe

Commentary: GenØk staffers highlight 'emerging governance approach' that assesses environmental and social impacts early in research process; note plans to help implement the philosophy across EU programs such as Horizon 2020

Commentary: Investment news site columnist says alternative to more land use for crops is to make land more productive, similar to Green Revolution gains from better seeds, irrigation and chemical fertilizers; EU's GM crop ban increasingly out of step with practices elsewhere

News: Swiss Genetic-free Alliance reports on German Federal Office for Consumer Protection and Food Safety's (BVL) warning that DIY genetic engineering may be punishable by law, Swiss authorities have not yet issued a similar warning

Commentary: Spanish anti-GMO NGO Ecologistas en Accion amplifies Brazilian ag ministry's review of 750 studies on GMOs, claims the publication demonstrates lack of scientific consensus on GMO safety, following in footsteps of 2015 ENSER publication

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Nicaraguan environmental expert Álvaro Fonseca writes for local news outlet in opposition to GM maize adoption, arguing it will threaten native maize varieties, and pointing to recent National Academy of Sciences report questioning yield advantage

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: New Zealand Herald reports on recent economic summit in Hastings hosted by Ngati Kahungunu, where exporters and growers associated with Pure Hawke's Bay promoted economic benefits of remaining GMO-free, John Bostock argued government goal of doubling exports by 2025 will not be possible with GM low-end commodities

[More Oceania items](#)

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 Date: Monday, February 27, 2017 9:18:56 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included a new report from Brazil's Ministry of Agrarian Development, which highlighted studies that questioned the scientific consensus on GM crop safety. In the U.S., Center for Food Safety called on Midwestern shoppers to help it identify grocery stores where Arctic brand GM apples were being sold.

Consolidated highlights include:

- The Brazilian Ministry of Agrarian Development issued an English version of its scholarly literature review, "Transgenic crops hazards and uncertainties: More than 750 studies disregarded by the GMOs regulatory bodies." Activist groups Third World Network and GMWatch amplified the announcement, highlighting research from China and India that purports to show limited reduction in pesticide use as well as human and animal immunological reactions to Bt toxins. [See more.](#)
- Center for Food Safety launched a new campaign calling on shoppers in the U.S. Midwest to help identify the grocery stores where the new non-browning Arctic Apple is being sold. The NGO asked supporters to speak with customer service about whether the apples were being sold in the store, to document the packaging and then send the store's information to the activist group. [See more.](#)

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North America

Campaign: Center for Food Safety asks supporters to help identify the 10 Midwest grocery stores selling Arctic Apples, report locations to the NGO

Commentary: Farmer's Daughter celebrates passage Montana bill aimed to keep GMO regulation at state vs local level, saying it would promote uniform seed regulation, prevent counties from banning GM crops based on ill-informed campaigns that limit farmers' options

Commentary: Hank Campbell of American Council on Science and Health criticizes US Right to Know's campaign demanding that mainstream media stop publishing articles by scientists and doctors unless they are given equal time, says they are just a marketing group promoting organic food

News: Wall Street Journal reports on growing interest in DIY gene editing, highlighting workshops available at Brooklyn community lab, Genspace, as well as concerns that CRISPR amateurs may inadvertently release something harmful into the environment

Commentary: Veterinarian's syndicated column warns readers that GMO ingredients used in pet foods could cause abnormalities in their animals' liver enzyme levels, fatty liver disease, cites Seralini study finding ultra-low doses of glyphosate caused increased likelihood of fatty liver disease in rats

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Ghanaian news outlet reports on National Biosafety Authority CEO Eric Okoree's announcement of release of biosafety guidelines for GM crops, which he notes is a major boost to Ghana's capacity to regulate GM technology

News: Reuters reports GM corn adoption, cold weather and rains have curbed spread of fall armyworm in South Africa, according to Grain-SA, neighboring countries without GM crops, such as Zambia and Zimbabwe, are suffering bigger losses

News: Zimbabwean news outlet reports on FAO's plans to spend millions to combat spread of fall armyworm, highlighting investment in pheromone traps as conventional pesticides have failed, specialist Pasipamire Wesa lamented gap between farming community and agrochemical industry

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: Writing in international development news site, CropLife representative profiles Africa Biofortified Sorghum, noting its work to tackle chronic vitamin A deficiency in children, improve levels of zinc and iron

News: Press Trust of India reports Environment Ministry has received over 700 comments from multiple stakeholders, including farmers and researchers, on food and environmental safety assessment of GM mustard, the ministry's sub-committee will submit its final report to biotech regulator GEAC after reviewing the comments

News: Indian news outlet reports on Brazilian Ministry of Agrarian Development's recent report examining 750 studies on hazards and uncertainties of GMOs, several of which were conducted in India, highlights Indian study demonstrating poor performance of Bt cotton when grown alongside other crops

Commentary: Vandana Shiva writes for Asian Age, promotes upcoming series of events commemorating Gandhi's actions for independence, voices support of free exchange of seeds and opposition to Monsanto's intellectual property rights as well as GM mustard

News: Bangkok Post reports experts say soaring global demand for food exposes limitations of traditional farming; promote ag-tech, adding improved crop varieties and production methods can mitigate effects of crop pests

Commentary: Voices for Biodiversity examines negative impact of monocultures on biodiversity, highlights Indian organic cotton company Chetna Organic's efforts to encourage farmers to shift to organic practices free from GM seeds and chemical pesticides and fertilizers

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Campaign: UK NGO Beyond GM launches survey on consumer opinion on GMOs, hoping to communicate with chefs, caterers and others in the food service industry, noting increased support for ingredients developed via synbio

News: French news outlet reports on Burkina Faso's adoption and subsequent rejection of Monsanto's Bt cotton, highlighting decline in cotton fiber quality, a former Monsanto employee indicated that great errors were committed and that the company did not do what it should have done

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Report: Brazilian Ministry of Agrarian Development (MDA) publishes review of 750 studies on GMOs that have been ignored by regulatory bodies, highlighting evidence of negative impacts on human health and

the environment, as well as socioeconomic issues

Commentary: GMWatch amplifies recently published report by Brazilian Ministry of Agrarian Development (MDA) examining 750 studies on GMOs that have been disregarded by regulatory bodies, argues the report demonstrates lack of scientific consensus on GMO safety, as well as "bad science and negligence" of regulators

Commentary: Third World Network amplifies report by Brazilian Ministry of Agrarian Development entitled "Transgenic Crops hazards and uncertainties:More than 750 studies disregarded by the GMOs regulatory bodies," which examines health hazards, environmental risk and agronomic or socioeconomic problems

News: Argentinian news outlet reports on success of FAO-sponsored agroecology operation at La Aurora farm, FAO highlighted achievements of productive and economic stability, cost reduction, zero use of toxic products, stabilization of production and care of the field

Commentary: Huffington Post contributor recounts recent visit to Oaxaca, highlighting poster exhibit on corn at Instituto de Artes Graficas de Oaxaca (IAGO), with focus on anti-transgenic maize messaging, IAGO director Inari Resendiz noted Oaxaca has no need for GM corn due to its rich corn diversity

[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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Try it free today

From: Jay Byrne
 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - Feb. 27, 2017
 Date: Monday, February 27, 2017 5:41:15 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

Today's Favorable Outcomes newsletter opens with pieces recommending scientists get engaged in the creation of regulations overseeing gene-edited crops in Europe and suggestions for reforming the International Agency for Research on Cancer following its controversial monograph on glyphosate. Other articles deal with deceptive claims about GMOs, antibiotics and "pesticide-free" organic farming, as well as shining a light on an activist-promoted study that used massive doses of glyphosate to fuel claims that it is dangerous. There's also a blog in advance of the Environmental Working Group's annual "Dirty Dozen" report raising alarm about the presence of pesticides on produce.

If you have not yet created a Bonus Eventus account, simply [fill out the Request Membership form](#) on the front page of the site. This will give you access to the articles below as well as a wealth of information on recent news coverage, research and stakeholder activity as well as the ability to network with others. To share articles, simply 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: Center for Media and Democracy



The Center for Media and Democracy is a progressive watchdog organization that runs various online campaigns critical of free trade, corporations and "big agribusiness." It is one of only three founding board members of the U.S. Right To Know (USRTK) campaign that used Freedom of Information Act filings and lawsuits to attack public sector scientists and researchers.

■ Stories Worth Sharing

[Nature editorial: Scientists should "push the issue" on regulation of gene-edited plants so "reason and science" prevail](#)

[American Chemistry Council-funded paper offers suggestions on improving International Agency for Research on Cancer](#)

[Iranian Genetics Society leader: Genetically modified crops necessary to ensure country's food security](#)

[Farm Babe: Deceptive marketing about GMOs, antibiotics make these eight food companies ones to avoid](#)

[Kevin Folta: Study feeding rats "massive amounts of soy milk spiked with gigantic doses of herbicide" caters to anti-GMO movement](#)

[Genetic Literacy Project: Organic marketers and anti-GMO activists "exaggerate" efforts to avoid chemicals in organic farming](#)

[Emil Karlson: Five ways GMOs are good for the environment](#)

[Taiwan entomology professor: U.S. EPA, WHO have shown glyphosate to be safe, organic and GMO-free labels are just a marketing ploy](#)

[Margaret Karembu: Europe benefits from biotech trade while blocking use of advanced technology in Africa](#)

The Center for Media and Democracy is also part of open records act lawsuits seeking U.S. EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt's emails. It has run multiple campaigns attacking the use of pesticides, GMOs, antibiotics and other non-organic farming practices.

LEARN MORE about the center, which runs the PRWatch and SourceWatch websites.

CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES

Alliance for Food and Farming: Study shows Environmental Working Group undermining healthy eating with Dirty Dozen fear-mongering [2](#)

Princeton University researcher highlights role of companion animals in spreading antibiotic resistance, discourages finger-pointing at farms [2](#)

Cornell Alliance for Science to offer free, five-week course on "The Science and Politics of GMOs" beginning March 1 [2](#)

CLICK FOR BONUS EVENTUS MONITORING

What's Trending?

Meeting planned Tuesday to consider latest European EDC criteria proposal; ECPA seeks restoration of derogation language

Tyson to switch to no-antibiotics-ever chicken by June

Ex-USDA entomologist seeks to revive whistleblower claim that agency silenced his research on neonics

Bill to replace Des Moines Water Works with regional water authority advances in Iowa legislature

French NGO promotes test results finding pesticides, EDCs in hair samples from politicians, leaders of activist groups

Calendar highlights

February 25- March 5	February 27- March 1	February 28
Salon International de l'Agriculture in Paris	Farm Bureau advocacy conference in Washington, D.C.	European Commission committee meeting on endocrine disruptor criteria
February 28	March 1-3	March 2
Friends of Family Farmers information session on Oregon farming legislation	National Pork Industry forum in Atlanta	USDA chief scientist listening session on future of U.S. agriculture

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, February 26, 2017 9:03:32 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Global biotechnology developments included a Kenyan agricultural committee refusing to lift a GMO ban.

Consolidated highlights include:

- Kenyan news site Mediamax reported biotechnology experts were surprised that the Parliament's agricultural committee opposed lifting the ban on GMOs. **[See more.](#)**
- A Filipino news site reported a Sugar Regulatory Administration official said it expects to release high fructose corn syrup regulations in about a week. SRA chief Anna Rosario Paner said the regulations will require importers to declare what percentage of a product is GMO. **[See more.](#)**

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North America

[News: Reuters reports new US ambassador to China Branstad plans to prioritize gaining quicker approval of GM traits for corn and other US agricultural exports headed to China](#)

[Commentary: USRTK posts group letter from public interest groups to USA Today expressing concern that the paper has been publishing ACSH-member columns without noting corporate funding](#)

[Commentary: GLP guest columnist, CEO of Center for Food Integrity, says the ethical choice is to embrace technology that preserves natural resources, feeds growing population; adds biotechnology can save lives in Africa](#)

[News: Idaho Business Review reports, in response to consumer pressure for food companies to switch to non-GMO ingredients, the Idaho sugar industry is launching a media campaign on GM crop science](#)

[Commentary: Food Babe maintains Snopes untrustworthy after changing her blog post about health hazards of glyphosate to "False"; alleges Monsanto operative behind change; calls on readers to demand Snopes retract response to glyphosate story, spread word Snopes deceitful](#)

[Commentary: Kevin Folta refutes accusations by Food Babe Vani Hari by explaining she took statements out of context, twisted facts to vilify him after he told Snopes reporter Hari's blog post on glyphosate's dangers was based on information from anti-GMO group](#)

[Commentary: Organic & Non-GMO Report editor notes food corn buyers say Syngenta's Enogen GM corn is contaminating non-GMO white corn fields, Nebraska specialty grains owner compares it to StarLink scandal](#)

[Commentary: Alliance for Human Research Protection summarizes US Right to Know information requests, says academics were paid to promote 'GMO propaganda'](#)

More North America items

Africa

News: African business newspaper reports Kenyan county governor maintains GM cotton is essential to reviving textile industry; cotton farmers say country should ban importation of second-hand cotton clothes

Commentary: Belgian news site reports Tanzanian legislation would criminalize seed exchange in Tanzania; notes you can't share Monsanto, Syngenta seed due to IP issues; says IP seed rights was condition of development aid from New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project guest columnist, CEO of Center for Food Integrity, says the ethical choice is to embrace technology that preserves natural resources, feeds growing population; adds biotechnology can save lives in Africa

News: Mozambique news agency reports Mozambican authorities testing GM maize in Chokwe Agricultural Station, hope to identify drought-tolerant and insect-resistant traits

Commentary: Ghana news site guest columnist and ag school grad criticizes Food Sovereignty Ghana's anti-GMO sentiments; adds that GMOs can thwart destructive armyworms, help attain food security

More Africa items

Asia

Study: Chinese researchers examine off-target effects of Bt rice on non-target pest predators, find no statistically significant differences between transgenic and non-transgenic crops

News: Pakistani news site reports head of Pakistan Engineering Council says two local companies have successfully developed Bt cotton seeds, urges government to rely on indigenous resources

News: Reuters reports new US ambassador to China Branstad plans to prioritize gaining quicker approval of GM traits for corn and other US agricultural exports headed to China

More Asia items

Europe

Commentary: Slow Food warns merged agrochemical companies could challenge European regulations over authorization, labeling of GMOs as obstacles to growth, trade

Event: EFSA announces Scientific Panel on GMOs Draft Agenda for meeting March 1-2 in Parma, Italy; applications for authorization for GM maize, oilseed rape, cotton and soybean will be considered

Commentary: French anti-GMO NGO says EC proposal to revise comitology regulation to eliminate abstentions, make votes public doesn't go far enough; says crop approvals should require qualified majority

Commentary: Agence France-Presse reports France imports GM soy for animal feed, French citizens unaware they eat products from animals raised on GM feed; says industry stifles controversy over GMOs' effect on human health, but claims GM crops' negative impact on biodiversity and "massive levels" of herbicide residue on food are proven

News release: EFSA links to survey to help improve how it communicates the 'scientific uncertainties' of its food safety assessments; notes survey is being jointly run by eight EU Member States

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Uruguayan news site reports biosafety committee has not met since October, officials say there is debate regarding authorizing Monsanto GM maize; has been more than 4 years since last GM variety authorized

Commentary: Mexican news site reports farmer says GM seed presence mocks Mexican farmers, countryside; will eventually force farmer to sell land, go begging

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: New Zealand news site reports a group of exporters and growers from Hawke's Bay promoting the economic benefits of keeping Hawke's Bay GM Free; local farmer highlights price premiums

News: Australian Broadcasting Corporation reports industry group WA Farmers says organic industry in Australia needs to change its zero tolerance to presence of GMOs in organic crops

More Oceania items

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 Date: Thursday, February 23, 2017 9 05:10 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 Google penalizing an anti-biotechnology website, possibly for "fake news" reporting, by removing it from its search engine. Reporting continued on agribusiness mergers.

Consolidated highlights include:

- A search engine optimization site reported that Google delisted anti-biotech site Natural News from its search engine, noting one blogger called Mike Adams' site "one of the most wretched hives of scum and quackery on the Internet." **See more.**
- A Reuters article cited unnamed sources who said that European antitrust regulators are ready to approve the Dow-DuPont merger. **See more.**

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North America

[Commentary: In Agri-Pulse, founding chairman of World Food Program suggests new Rockefeller Foundation head Dr. Raj Shah will continue to build on foundation's leadership in agriculture and food security; adds Shah supports use of biotechnology to boost food production](#)

[News: Politico reports that Trump administration's pick for ambassador to China plans to highlight mutual benefits of trade, push for speedy approvals of GM traits](#)

[Commentary: Food Dive contributor reports that Earth Fare grocery chain is removing GM ingredients from hundreds of its private label food products; notes that consumers still perceive GM-free products as healthier](#)

[Letter to the editor: Tucson news site reader says in forever-changing world climate, companies like Monsanto produce drought, insect and herbicide-resistant seeds and should be welcomed](#)

[More North America items](#)

Africa

[Commentary: ISAAA, Africa regional office \(ISSA\) AfriCenter Director Margaret Karembu examines ways in which European NGOs hinder biotech adoption in Africa, highlights importance of bringing modern African farmers modern technologies](#)

[News: Ugandan news outlet reports on Minister for Science, Technology and Innovation Elioda Tumwesigye's recent meeting with Brazilian Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Animal Supply, Blairo Maggi, with goal of learning how Brazil has used biotech to increase ag productivity](#)

News: Nigerian news outlet reports on National Biotechnology Development Agency (NABDA) Director General Lucy Ogbadu's emphasis that farmers will be able to adopt GMOs by choice, not under compulsion, and her rejection of claims that the agency is being funded and promoted by Monsanto

News: Nigerian news outlet reports on National Agricultural Seed Council's (NASC) training of 20 seed scientists on how to detect GMOs at National Agricultural Biotechnology Development Agency, Agency Director Philip Ojo noted that since GMOs are not currently on the market, it is important to know how to detect them

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Filipino news outlet reports on Negros Occidental Governor Alfredo Marañon Jr.'s welcoming of Sugar Regulatory Administration's (SRA) move to regulate high fructose corn syrup imports, noting it will help the sugar industry, as HFCS is cheap, highly subsidized and made from GM corn

News: Bangladeshi finance news outlet reports on President Md Abdul Hamid's call on ag scientists and researchers to invent new technologies and strategies to mitigate effects of climate change, as well as crops with improved nutrition to boost food security

News: The Daily Star highlights potential challenges of organic production in Bangladesh, presenting organic production as solution to environmental issues associated with chemical-intensive agriculture

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Science Business reports on recent U.S. patent decision over CRISPR-Cas9, says regardless of exclusive rights Europe remains behind in commercializing gene editing technology

News: Bulgarian news site reports NGO National Association for Consumer Protection claims Commission for Consumer Protection hasn't inspected food for GMOs in 2 years, says Bulgarian people may be buying GM food unaware

News: Life Sciences Intellectual Property Review reports on recent Competitiveness Council meeting where EU Council members agreed that IP is a main driver of productivity and economic growth for companies, the meeting reiterated call on EU Commission to further analyse patent law with regard to biotech and GE

News: Swiss NGO reports EU member states want to ban patents on conventionally bred plants, animals due to loopholes; Commission's opinion is only GE plants and animals can be patented when additional gene incorporated in genome

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Nicaraguan news site reports NGO Alliance Seeds of Identity members want government to ban GMO imports into country, fear loss of "genetic heritage" and environmental damage

News: Cuban news site reports Cuba's advances in biotechnology highlighted during BioProcess Congress, expert says biotechnology raises quality of crops, soils and yields

News: Brazilian news site reports pests developing resistance to GM crops because farmers do not plant "refuge areas" to help stem resistance as technologists recommend; agricultural director considers mandating refuge plantings with GM crops

News: Peruvian news site reports country's GMO moratorium difficult to enforce, some government officials favor introducing GM crops and companies apply pressure to change the law, but biotech still has

staunch detractors in Peru

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: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Feb. 22, 2017
 Date: Wednesday, February 22, 2017 9:04:07 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 from France that an activist requested a full public trial over his agricultural vandalism activities. In Switzerland, the country's Science Committee recommended that food manufacturers incorporate a non-GMO label to compete with neighboring countries. Media outlets in the U.S. and Europe continued to report on pending agricultural industry mergers.

Consolidated highlights include:

- In France, an activist affiliated with the group Faucheurs Volontaires (volunteer reapers) refused an automatic sentence over his participation in the vandalism of a field of herbicide-tolerant rapeseed. The move would have allowed the defendant to skip a trial. Instead, he will appear before a criminal court in September. The activist will also appear before a court in May over his refusal to offer a DNA sample. **See more.**
- Switzerland's Science Committee for the Council of States issued a recommendation that would relax the country's GMO labeling regulations, noting that - unlike in Switzerland - neighboring countries utilized the labels when animals were fed GM feed. A proposal from national councilor Jacques Bourgeois, which would adjust the rules in order to allow local farmers to be more competitive, received unanimous approval from the committee. **See more.**
- U.S. and European media outlets continued to report on pending agricultural industry mergers. Politico reported that Dow and DuPont offered further concessions to European regulators, after a review found that the current merger proposal would not address concerns about monopolistic practices. In the U.S., the National Farmers Union president argued that the mergers would reduce competition and limit farmers' choice of inputs. **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: Tech Times reports on UC Davis biotech expert Alison Van Eenennaam's recent speech at AAAS' annual meeting, in which she highlighted her research on developing hornless dairy cattle, and noted the future of gene edited animals relies on regulatory decisions

News release: Cornell Alliance for Science says free, five-week introductory online course, "The Science and Politics of the GMO," launches March 1, 2017; Cornell professor says course will offer information literacy tools

News: Chicago-based Institute of Food Technologists reports on its recent debate on GMOs; Sunny Gilbert of Cofactor Genomics highlighted many benefits of GMOs, pointing to golden rice and Arctic apples, while Joel Warady of Enjoy Life Foods noted he is against GMOs because his consumers don't want them

Commentary: Joan Conrow of Cornell Alliance for Science recounts recent pro-science rally in Boston, amplifies AAAS President Barbara Schaal's emphasis on importance of science for improving agriculture, and other speakers' call on scientists to increase communication

Campaign: Organic Consumers Association's Ronnie Cummins recaps recent national call-in involving 5,000 people, urges supporters to sign up to host Regeneration Meetings or house parties in their communities, announces plans to roll out #ConsumerRevolution campaigns

Campaign: March Against Monsanto says Nestle Corporation conspicuously absent from food manufacturers vowing to label GM ingredients in products; highlights new Food Revolution and Just Label It petition

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Nigerian news site reports AATF spent \$16 million to develop GM cowpea resistant to pod borer for farmers in West African nations; will begin releasing seeds to farmers in 2018

Commentary: ISAAA notes Uganda Biosciences Information Center educates public on GMOs and climate-smart agriculture during Harvest Money Expo, says farmers disappointed biotech solutions to their problems not allowed in Uganda, call on government to pass laws allowing GM crops

News: Kenyan news outlet reports on members of National Assembly's Committee on Agriculture's interruption of National Biosafety Authority chief executive Dr Will Tonui's speech at recent forum, calling for use of homegrown solutions to food security rather than "borrowing technology from elsewhere"

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: India-based CollegeDekho reports Indian research institute celebrates 7th anniversary; says institute is working on strategies to 'overcome anti-nutritional activity' and improve crops quality

News release: International Rice Research Institute director general Matthew Morell recently delivered Millenium Lecture at the M.S Swaminathan Research Foundation, where he emphasized potential for stress-tolerant rice varieties to help farmers address challenges posed by climate change

News: Iranian financial news outlet reports on Iranian Genetics Society head Mahmoud Tavallaee's assessment that biotech is indispensable for ensuring Iranian food security; Food and Drug Administration head Rasoul Dinarvand noted GMOs do not pose health risks

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Nature editorial examines regulatory limbo surrounding gene editing in Europe, highlights recent debate in Germany on the subject; notes some countries like Sweden are allowing scientists to proceed with research until a final decision is made, believes scientists should engage the public

News: French environment news outlet reports on group of over 100 MPs that protested Constitutional Council in opposition to CETA, voicing concern that the agreement will allow entry of unlabeled GE salmon

News: Politico reports on likelihood that BASF will be a prime beneficiary in all three proposed ag industry mergers, as merging companies seek to make divestments to assuage antitrust concerns, Christian Faltz of financial services company Kepler Cheuvreux notes BASF stands to acquire aggregated value of €11.5 billion

News: French news site reports Volunteer Reaper, who participated in destroying GM oilseed rape field, refuses automatic sentencing, asks for trial; says he is not a "delinquent" but a "militant"

News: French TV news site reports Volunteer Reaper who took part in destroying a GM oilseed rape field refused automatic sentencing and demands a trial

News: Swiss news agency reports Committee for Science recommends Swiss begin labeling their food as non-GMO to address marketing disadvantage

News: Swiss news site reports Committee on State Science says lack of non-GMO labels puts Swiss farmers at disadvantage to competitors

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Colombian news site reports Union of Scientists Committed to Society open letter supports Andean Parliament's decision to make region GMO-free, says the decision will help resolve "agronomic and health problems"

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: ISAAA reports Australia licenses GM potato field trial to assess disease resistance, agronomic characteristics

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 reports that Kenya legislators had announced plans to allow locally developed GM cotton commercialization in the country. In Europe, the Competitiveness Council announced that the region's Biotech Directive did not allow patents on conventionally bred crops.

Consolidated highlights include:

- Xinhua News Agency reported that Kenya's Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture, Livestock and Cooperatives gave scientists permission to begin commercializing GM cotton, though the committee chairman urged regulatory agencies to ensure that cotton byproducts did not enter the human or animal food chains. The chairman added that legislators were supportive of "home-grown" solutions to food insecurity and said that they were willing to meet with other relevant committees in order to review the country's long-standing ban on GMOs. **See more.**
- In Europe, following a request from member states, the EU Competitiveness Council confirmed that plants developed through conventional breeding techniques were not eligible for patents. The statement clarified questions that had surrounded the region's Biotech Directive and countermands a European Patent Office decision from 2015 that had allowed the possibility of patents on plants developed through traditional breeding processes. **See more.**

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North America

Interview: Monsanto chief technology officer Fraley tells AgriNews that Bayer merger offers opportunity to invest in more R&D; adds Monsanto's breeding, seeds, traits and data science blends well with Bayer's knowledge of new chemistries

Commentary: Quora contributor says glyphosate use on crops not as harmful to human health as perceived, contrasting risk to cigarette smoking; claims organic and GMO-free labels do not carry same level of risk as labels on nicotine products

News: The Wall Street Journal reports while organic grain is flooding into the US to meet booming demand for products made without the use of synthetic pesticides or GM seeds; notes USDA plans to require import certificates to screen for fraud

News: Tucson TV station reports GMO Free Arizona rallies against Monsanto's proposed seven-acre greenhouse in Pima County; Monsanto says greenhouse is part of mission to provide farmers tools for better harvests using natural resources

Video: Environmental Working Group announces joint Plate of The Union campaign with Food Policy Action Education Fund's founder Tom Colicchio; initiative aims to support organic farming, keep ag pollutants out of water sources, ensure access to healthy food

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Kenyan news site reports National Assembly's Agriculture Committee wants country to improve capacity in developing GM foods locally; Chairman of the Agriculture Committee says it would play major role in mitigating perennial food shortages

News: Chinese news site reports Kenya lawmakers approve commercialization of GM cotton; ag committee chair cautions growers to ensure by-products don't get to human and animal food chain

Commentary: Agricultural economist writes for Huffington Post South Africa with optimistic view for the future of South Africa's ag sector, believes the country is well equipped to handle the armyworm attack, noting 85 percent of the maize crop is GM, pesticides are available, and Ag Department is providing technical assistance

News: Nigerian news outlet reports on Nigerian Agriculture Seed Council (NASC) Director General Olusegun Ojo's call for increased ag biotech funding to promote full domestication of GM crops, emphasizing necessity of increasing development capacity in order to meet food needs of growing population

News: Zimbabwean news outlet reports on Grain Millers' Association of Zimbabwe's (GMAZ) request for government to impose 40 percent tariff on maize and mealie-meal imports, noting it is struggling to compete with cheap South African GM imports

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: MABIC executive director reviews biotech adoption in China, Bangladesh and India; says growth is slowed by private sector tensions and NGO activism but calorie demands still increasing

Commentary: Vietnamese news outlet contributor examines high-tech agriculture, highlighting various methods, including precision agriculture, which seeks to boost production while minimizing land use, and reducing pollution

Commentary: Forbes India contributor examines future of food as Indian chefs seek to return to using seasonal, domestic foods to boost sustainability, claims Green Revolution technologies such as GMOs destroyed the soil and led to increased cancer rates

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Agra Europe reports EU member states are calling on the European Commission to provide further analyses on the development and implications of EU patent law and biotech crops in a report later this year

News release: Green MEP for the South West, Molly Scott Cato, announces launch of two reports on ideas for post-Brexit agriculture, one by Soil Association and the other by Simon Fairlie of Land Workers' Alliance, Fairlie's report calls for 'polluter pays' labeling on food products involving use of pesticides, GMOs

News: Bulgarian news outlet reports on BSP leader Kornelia Ninova's concern that CETA would allow entry of GMOs, and her promise that BSP will block ratification in National Assembly if she wins the election; however, EU Commission spokesman on trade and ag noted strict GMO regulations will remain in place

News: Serbian news agency reports Republic Administration for Inspection Affairs has not detected presence of GMOs in recent tests of imported food samples, following concerns about GM contamination in certain imported foods

News: Daily Mail (U.K.) reports on UC Davis geneticist Alison Van Eenennaam's development of gene-edited hornless dairy cattle to protect farmers, highlights opposition from European NGO Earth Open Source, funded by the Maharishi cult, which claims CRISPR is not more precise than other GE tools

News: The Times (U.K.) reports on potential for EU to block British produce imports following Brexit, should the UK follow through with plans to cultivate GM crops, according to leaked EU Parliament report

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: GRAIN official in La Jornada details legal efforts by Yucatan's indigenous community to block GM soy

News: Croatian news outlet reports on agricultural and genetics expert Dr. Marijan Jost's warning that Zika is not responsible for birth defects in Latin America, blaming glyphosate and GMOs instead, Croatian MEP Davor Skrlec has called on citizens to sign European Citizens' Initiative to ban glyphosate

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Audio: EPA chief scientist Dr. Jacqueline Rowarth tells a New Zealand news site that GE grasses can result in enriched milk and meat products, creating fewer greenhouse gases and less nitrate; calls crop a win for agriculture

News: Food Navigator reports authors of a study examining women's attitudes toward GM foods say scientists need to go beyond presenting just facts

Commentary: Greenpeace investigative journalist writes for New Zealand farming news outlet, promotes ecological agriculture free from pesticides and GMOs, notes it does not mean a return to old fashioned practices, but rather using practical methods that put the environment first

News release: New Zealand anti-GMO NGO Pure Hawke's Bay announces use of "Taniwha Dragon" summit hosted by Ngaiti Kahugnunu to promote economic benefits of maintaining Hawke's Bay's GMO-free status, exporter John Bostock noted GMOs are associated with low-end commodities such as corn and soy

[More Oceania items](#)

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 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - Feb. 20, 2017
 Date: Monday, February 20, 2017 4:02:02 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

A series of court hearings on a challenge to the European Union's restrictions on neonics has brought renewed interest to the process that led to a ban on many uses of the pesticides. In this week's newsletter, a member of the U.K.'s House of Lords and a Belgian blogger argue that the restrictions should be lifted as a recent report showed they have not benefited and have been a burden to farmers. In addition, a syndicated U.S. radio program interviewed Henry Miller on the issue, including how Zaruk revealed conflicts of interest that led to the creation of an unattainable standard for proving pesticides are not harmful to bee colonies.

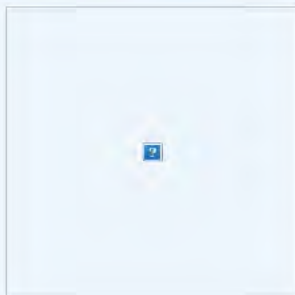
Among other notable content this week, Dan Rather interviewed a Nobel laureate about the safety of GMOs, a Genetic Literacy Project series continued with Steve Savage examining myths about the benefits of organic farming and a former USDA undersecretary criticized claims about "clean meat."

Please [contact us](#) if you have any questions. The full text of the articles below can be viewed by [logging in](#) to the Bonus Eventus Community site. First-time users will need to fill out the Request Membership form on the front page. To share articles, simply click on the Twitter icon.

In This Issue

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

Stakeholder Spotlight: Green Science Policy Institute



The Green Science Policy Institute (GSPI), an NGO formerly known as the WELL Network, is an anti-synthetic chemical advocacy group that claims the public health is at risk from unacceptable-at-any-dose chemical residues

■ Stories Worth Sharing

[Matt Ridley: With bee population rising, EU neonic ban based on "deeply flawed process" should be lifted](#)

[Nobel laureate tells Dan Rather GMOs are safe, opposition is "irrational"](#)

[David Zaruk: Following study showing neonic ban did not help bees, European Commissioner should retract bee risk guidance document](#)

[Steve Savage: Organic farming is not better than conventional, switch would be "fundamentally problematic"](#)

[ISAAA scientist: With court hurdle cleared, developer should consider commercial release of Bt eggplant](#)

[Henry Miller: "Intolerable and unacceptable" actions led to creation of European bee risk guidance document](#)

[Ex-USDA undersecretary: Good Food Institute's "clean meat" wrongly implies conventional meat is dirty, loaded with antibiotics](#)

[Center for Accountability in Science: U.S. wasted \\$1.2M last year by funding IARC's "Chicken Little" approach to declaring everything carcinogenic](#)

that are found in food and packaging as well as leaching from other everyday consumer products.

The group's hazard warnings are aligned with campaigns insisting only a precautionary principle approach that seeks to ban the use of modern chemicals and pesticides.

LEARN MORE about Berkeley, California-based GSPI.

CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES

[Daily Caller: Harvard toxicologist says current uses - and even some banned uses - of chlorpyrifos are safe](#)

[Minnesota organic farmer raises "serious concerns" about USDA's proposed organic check-off program](#)

[Ex-U.K. chief scientist Sir John Beddington calls European anti-GMO movement "naive," blocking solution to world malnutrition](#)

[University of Adelaide research: Science alone not enough to convince women that GM foods are safe](#)

[U.K. farmer questions why Soil Association leader uses IARC ruling to campaign against glyphosate, apparently has no issue with diesel](#)

[Julie Kelly: House Republican works to eliminate "ineffective" EPA regulations from Obama administration](#)

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What's Trending?

[Syngenta, Bayer get days in European court in effort to overturn neonic restrictions](#)

[Farmers in 10 U.S. states sue Monsanto, claiming company is liable for damage from illegal dicamba spraying](#)

[Food and Agriculture Organization holds emergency meeting in response to southern Africa armyworm outbreak](#)

[NGOs accuse European Commission of signing off on emergency exemptions to neonic ban too readily](#)

[Maryland Senate hears testimony on bill to ban some uses of antibiotics in animal agriculture](#)

[Natural Resources Defense Council lawsuit seeks to force through endangered species listing for rusty patched bumblebee](#)

[European Commission proposes changes to comitology process, potentially affecting regulation of glyphosate and GM crops](#)

Calendar highlights

February 25-March 5	February 27-March 1	February 28
Salon International de l'Agriculture in Paris	Farm Bureau advocacy conference in Washington, D.C.	European Commission committee meeting on endocrine disruptor criteria

CLICK HERE TO ACCESS FULL EVENTS CALENDAR

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Feb. 17-19, 2017
 Date: Sunday, February 19, 2017 10:44:45 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 weekend included the release of a public-private partnership project in Nigeria, a pod borer-resistant GM cowpea. Pro-biotech groups and the Green Party commented on the European Commission's announcement that it will revise its decision-making process for items such as GMO and pesticide authorizations.

Consolidated highlights include:

- The Nigerian news site Vanguard reported the development of Maruca Resistant Cowpeas by a public-private partnership, the Pod Borer Resistant Cowpea Project. The GM cowpea is resistant to pod borer attacks and is expected to reduce losses to the pest and reduce the need for insecticide use. **See more.**
- Industry and anti-GMO politicians commented on the European Commission's proposed changes to its comitology process. Feed Navigator reported 17 trade groups, including EuropaBio and FEFAC, called on the commission to prioritize science-based decision-making as it revises the process, highlighting impacts on GMOs and pesticides. Meanwhile, EU Green Party members said in a news release that the changes will do little for food safety but will "mask the political disputes linked to GMOs." **See more.**

Due to the Presidents Day holiday, your next Global Biotech Snapshot will be sent on Tuesday, Feb. 21. Please visit the monitoring portal for updates in the meantime.

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North America

News: AgBioForum studies costs of choosing non-GMOs over GMOs, finds average family food cost increase nearly \$3,000 over a year

Study: Nature publishes study on the ability of Bt cotton to reduce pesticide spraying

Commentary: March Against Monsanto blogger reports on growing opposition to Monsanto's planned corn greenhouse facility in Pima County, Arizona, announces upcoming rally, public forum and press conference in opposition to its construction, forum speakers include Zen Honeycutt of Moms Across America

Commentary: Julianna LeMieux of American Council on Science and Health writes for Buffalo News, criticizing PTA's resolution aimed at removing GM foods from school cafeterias, notes the resolution is not based on science, and wastes time and energy that could be devoted to more important issues facing the public school system

News: Earth.com reports on developments in gene editing, including animal improvements such as hornless cows, highlights UC Davis geneticist Alison Van Eenennaam's concern that gene edited animals might be regulated as animal drugs, she notes resulting DNA sequences may be identical to existing, naturally-occurring DNA sequences

Commentary: Center for Food Integrity CEO says conversation about food isn't just about better technology, but finding better ways to support informed public evaluation of those technologies

News: Reuters reports on federal jury's conviction of Chinese scientist Weiqiang Zhang of conspiring to steal GM rice seed samples from a US research facility, he was convicted on three counts including conspiracy to steal trade secrets and interstate transportation of stolen property

More North America items

Africa

News: South African news outlet reports on November 2016 celebration by nonprofit biotechnology stakeholders association Africabio, marking 20 years of GM crops, speakers discussed the legacy of biotech in South Africa

News: South African news site reports Zimbabwean grain millers want tariffs on maize imports, say they struggle to compete with less expensive GM maize imported from South Africa, and it interferes with food security by foiling attempts to boost local production

Commentary: Food Sovereignty Ghana says Parliament members distort opposition to Plant Breeders Bill, says many objections to the proposed law have nothing to do with GMOs, calls on Parliament to publish report on public consultation regarding the bill

More Africa items

Asia

Commentary: Filipino news outlet contributor continues series on potential for GMOs to solve the food crisis, points to recent study which found a GM ban would increase greenhouse gas emissions, as well as scientific consensus on GMO safety

News release: Third World Network says pesticides used with Bt cotton still a health hazard to farm workers, cites Nature article analyzing two recent studies

Commentary: Indian news outlet reports on Bt cotton situation in Burkina Faso, framing it as an example to follow, highlighting recent talk in Hyderabad by Coalition for the Protection of African Genetic Heritage (COPAGEN) activists, in which they described declining yields, poor quality and high prices of Bt cotton, leading farmers to abandon it

Commentary: Indian financial news outlet editorial argues that while NITI Aayog's support of GM technology indicates the government may use the Seed Bill to voice commitment to better technology, the bill itself is not enough to indicate change, noting GM mustard and Bt eggplant have not made it to market yet

More Asia items

Europe

Study: Italian researcher says EU's GMO legislation makes little sense, is not science-based, notes contradiction that GM cultivation largely is banned while GMOs are imported; says legislation varies between "nonsense and protectionism"

Commentary: GMWatch's Claire Robinson criticizes recent lecture by GMO scientist head of Sainsbury Laboratory at John Innes Centre, Jonathan Jones, accusing him of misleading university students about GMOs, claims GMOs and products of gene editing can have off-target effects that negatively impact health, points to dangers of glyphosate

News: Swiss NGO says if three major agribusiness mergers are completed, the resulting companies' dominance over food system would be immense, says competition commission, EU Commission should reject mergers

Commentary: EU Green Party blog lists reasons party opposes CETA, including lack of transparency, private courts, and continues to pressure EU to change biotech, GMO rules

News release: EU Green Party says Commission's proposed changes to comitology will do little for public health on GMO, pesticide authorizations; MP Bart Staes says it will "mask the political disputes linked to GMOs"

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Agencia EFE reports Colombian agricultural groups support biotech that they say can contribute to food security and agricultural competitiveness in the region

News: Bolivian news outlet reports on grain industry's frustrations over increased imports of transgenic maize from Argentina, which is more expensive but thought to be higher quality, Association of Producers of Oilseeds and Wheat (Anapo) and Maize and Sorghum Producers have called on government to allow GM crop cultivation

News: Argentine news site reports activists to host ECOS Day rally to oppose Argentine seed law; event includes filming for seed documentary, Carlos Vicente to appear at news conference

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: Australian Broadcasting Corporation reports beekeeper claims honeybees lost due to pesticide drift from cotton farms, notes cotton industry claims development of GE cotton has reduced pesticide use, while CropLife Australia CEO touts health of country's bee colonies, noting lack of impact on bee health from EU neonics ban

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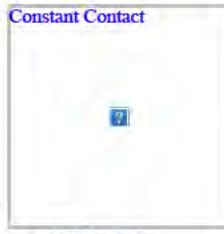
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 Date: Thursday, February 16, 2017 9 01:31 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included continued commentary on Oregon legislation that would allow local governments to ban or regulate biotech crops. Activist groups continued commentary on the European Union and Canada's Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau addressed the EU Parliament after it approved the treaty.

Consolidated highlights include:

- A Capital Press editorial opposed an Oregon legislative bill that would allow counties to regulate GMOs, suggesting that should be governed at the state level. Meanwhile, an Oregon public radio station announced an upcoming program on the topic featuring activist Elise Higby and state Rep. Pam Marsh. **See more.**
- Global Justice Now and other anti-GMO groups criticized the EU Parliament's approval of CETA, saying it will allow GM products and hormone-treated meat into the EU. Le Monde reported Trudeau applauded the Parliament's decision, saying it would help the middle class on both sides of the Atlantic. However, the president of an agricultural union said European regulatory constraints will hamper exports of Canadian agricultural products, especially beef and GMOs. **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: Steve Savage writes for Genetic Literacy Project, explaining why organic ag is not necessarily better for the environment, highlights yield gap, notes organic operations cannot use no-till, and points out that innovative technologies to solve environmental problems are prohibited in organic systems

Commentary: Plant scientist criticizes marketing ploys that urge consumers to choose 'clean' food without GMOs; says these marketing claims undermine ongoing efforts to reduce hunger and malnutrition deaths

Commentary: Contributor to the Georgetown Journal of International Affairs describes ethical discussions surrounding new gene editing techniques as the 'new GMO wars'

News: Missouri news outlet reports Missouri farmers Steven and Deloris Landers have joined farmers in nine other states in class action lawsuit against Monsanto, alleging the company knowingly marketed its Xtend cotton and soybean seeds without first gaining approval for its dicamba formulation

Study: Scientific Reports study finds environmental impact difference between Bt rice and the non-Bt parent was much smaller than variations among conventional rice cultivars; suggest this variability among conventional cultivars could be used as a criterion for environmental safety assessment

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: South African news site reports South Africa facing possible national disaster over fall armyworm invasion, which could devastate sub-Saharan crop production; South Africa could also potentially be at risk from the red migratory locust

Commentary: University of Pretoria entomologist writes for The Conversation about how difficult it is to control fall armyworm in southern Africa, notes tendency to develop a resistance to pesticides as one of several reasons the pest is a serious threat

Commentary: Wanjiru Kamau of Kenya Organic Agriculture Network and Ousmane Tiendrebeogo of National Syndicate of Agropastoral Farmers in Burkina Faso write for Kenyan news outlet, warning readers about risks of Bt cotton adoption, noting problems with the technology in Burkina Faso, arguing Kenya must address production challenges first

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: Filipino news outlet contributor begins first of two-part series on how biotech can solve the food crisis, notes the Philippines have already hit the ceiling for crop production according to Dr. Randy Hautea of the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications (ISAAA), and that the population is growing

News: Institute for Basic Science says researchers have edited fat content of soybean oil using CRISPR-Cpf1 gene editing technology; increased oleic acid in soybean seeds thus resulting in a healthier oil

News: The Times of India reports former director of a university plant biology center releases book to create awareness about the 'advantages of GM crops among people and farmers'

News: Local news source reports the Philippines is considering a law focused on food production, instead of only amending its anti-GMO ordinance; notes it will require non-GMO certification for 'watchlist' ingredients used in food production

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: French plant researcher says 'post-modernism' undermines empirical fields like biology, adds that US National Academics of Sciences report calling for public engagement on biotechnology ignores how similar efforts have failed in Europe

Commentary: French anti-GMO NGO previews its March 23 General Assembly; says, among many other issues, group should discuss industry efforts to avoid GMO regulations on new plant breeding techniques

Commentary: French anti-GMO NGO Inf'OGM examines debate on regulation of products of new breeding techniques, notes ag industry does not want them to be regulated as GMOs

News: Le Monde reports Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau addresses Parliament, applauds approval of CETA, welcomes economic benefits; expert laments European regulations still will hamper Canadian agricultural exports, including GMOs

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Bolivian news site columnist dismisses activists who link swarm of locusts to use of GM crops, pesticides; notes there are reports of locust swarms in Bolivia before there were biotech crops

News: Brazilian news site reports agricultural ministry fast-tracks pesticide, GMO registration, says

experts claim they are linked to cancer, other health issues

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: The Australian reports on Tim O'Hare of Naturally Nutritious' development of nutrient enriched produce via conventional breeding, while O'Hare is interested in the science of genetic engineering, he would rather see his products on shelves than stuck in the lab, noting the consumer must come first

Commentary: University of Adelaide academics claim facts alone may not persuade consumers; note research found women without science backgrounds think GM food presents 'unknown risks'

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 additional analysis of the European Commission's proposed comitology processes, as well as the European Parliament's decision to approve a significant trade agreement with Canada. U.S. media outlets previewed this week's launch of the gene-edited Arctic brand apple in Midwestern grocery stores.

Consolidated highlights include:

- European news outlets reported that the European Parliament approved a trade agreement with Canada, on a 408-254 vote. Activist groups Corporate Europe Observatory and Greenpeace issued statements criticizing the approval, warning that the deal threatens European food safety and environmental standards. Xinhua, in reporting on the decision, countered those claims and noted that Canadian imports to the EU would have to comply with local regulations. The decision will now be referred to national and regional parliaments for ratification. **[See more.](#)**
- European news outlets continued to report on the European Commission's proposal to revise the comitology process on controversial issues. Politico's analysis noted that the various country ministers would play a more active and public role in such decisions. Reports in Agence France-Presse, Les Echos and other news sites noted that recent impasses on GM crop trait approvals and on glyphosate had prompted the proposed changes. **[See more.](#)**
- Agricultural news outlets in the U.S. reported on the limited release of Okanagan Specialty Fruits' Arctic brand apples, which will appear in some Midwestern stores this week. The Packer highlighted a recent report from Rabobank, which noted that produce companies were carefully watching the launch to assess consumer reactions. The article added that a successful trial could spur significant innovation. Meanwhile, Organic Consumers Association launched a consumer action campaign, calling on supporters in the Midwest to sign a petition opposing the sale of the apples. The petition will be delivered to regional grocery store chains. **[See more.](#)**

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North America

[Commentary: Organic Consumers Association's Ronnie Cummins notes organic industry has grown to \\$50 billion per year sector, announces launch of Consumer and Political Revolution 2017-2020, claims most consumers believe pesticides, synthetic hormones, antibiotic residues and GMOs are dangerous](#)

[Commentary: Former USFRA chairwoman Nancy Kavazanjian expresses disappointment that Girl Scouts introduced non-GMO labeled cookie, says organization that prides itself on promoting STEM education has become a pawn of activists](#)

[News: The Packer reports Rabobank calls limited marketing of Arctic apple a pivotal case for biotech companies; says, if successful, it could trigger a wave of innovation in the fruit sector](#)

[Campaign: Organic Consumers Association urges supporters in Midwestern states to take action to oppose test marketing of Arctic apples in local grocery stores](#)

Commentary: Health news site says GM apples, potatoes will be in some Midwest produce departments this month, Organic Consumers Association rep says GMOs pose health risks

Campaign: FireFly Film & Video, Inc launches Kickstarter crowdfunding campaign to raise money for "Operation Phoenix," an anti-GMO action feature film, with goal of informing audiences about dangers of GMOs and their associated pesticides, seeks \$500,000 for development

More North America items

Africa

News: Nigerian news outlet reports on National Biosafety Management Agency Director General Rufus Ebegba's recent statement that NBMA's purpose is to ensure that GMOs are safe for humans and the environment prior to market release, noting Nigeria has taken the necessary precautionary measures

More Africa items

Asia

News: Hindustan Times reports experts concerned over easy availability of inexpensive genome editing kits; government biotech expert says there has to be some form of protection against irresponsible bio-hackers

News release: Third World Network shares research finding gaps in EFSA's assessment of Monsanto's soybean Intacta, says with further soybean varieties expressing Bt toxins in the pipeline, these issues require urgent attention

More Asia items

Europe

News: European news outlets report on EU Parliament's passage of CETA trade deal; Deutsche Welle quoted trade commissioner, who said the agreement would not change any EU standards on food safety

Commentary: French news site correspondents write that arguments against CETA are mostly myths, says agreement does not overrule EU laws, will not import large amounts of hormone-treated meat, will not abuse tribunal process

News release: Greenpeace criticizes EU Parliament's approval of CETA, believes Parliament's support may clash with opinions of EU national and regional parliaments; adds that CETA may not pass scrutiny of European Court of Justice, as Belgium will seek ruling on legality of the Investment Court System

Commentary: Global Justice Now criticizes EU Parliament vote approving CETA despite protesting, "widespread public opposition," claims it would give corporations greater roles in formulating laws, privatizes and deregulates wide range of services

Commentary: Scott Sinclair of Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives and Stuart Trew write for The Guardian, voicing opposition to CETA, noting it will weaken the precautionary principle and put pressure on EU regulations of GMOs and endocrine disrupting chemicals

News release: Corporate Europe Observatory criticizes EU Parliament for approving CETA in spite of widespread public opposition, labeling it a "sad day for democracy," voices concern that the agreement will provide large corporations with unprecedented power

News: EurActiv reports EU Commission President Juncker's proposed reforms of comitology process already face criticism; Juncker seeks a solution to decisions on sensitive issues like GMOs and glyphosate being left to the Commission, but Green MEPs believe more transparency is needed overall

News: Agence France-Presse reports European Commission proposes rule changes assigning more responsibility, transparency in EU member state decision decision-making process; notes decision on

glyphosate reauthorization, biotech crop decisions impacted Commission's desire to change the process

News: Politico summarizes latest details in proposal to revise EU comitology regulations, says Commission's plan is to involve country ministers and make decisions public

News release: Testbiotech says new publication reports unintended effects found in GE golden rice, says the transgenic plants could spread their gene constructs into populations of weedy rice as well as other cultivated varieties

[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: Australian news outlet reports on public hearings hosted by Tasmanian Legislative Council's dairy inquiry, Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association dairy council chair Andrew Lester noted the state's GM moratorium, while helpful to the brand, means missing out on technological advancements

[More Oceania items](#)

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 Date: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 9:04:49 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included the announcement of the European Commission's proposed changes to the comitology process. Media outlets in Nigeria continued to report on the controversy over the country's biosafety law, including recent statements from religious groups.

Consolidated highlights include:

- The European Commission released its proposed changes to the comitology process today. A Reuters article reported that the move was designed to counter increasing "euroscepticism" in the region. In a question-and-answer document about the proposed changes, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker highlighted the inappropriateness of forcing the commission into making a decision when the membership cannot decide on sensitive topics. The proposed changes include ignoring abstentions in the voting process and incorporating other ministers and legislative bodies in the event of an impasse. The proposal was met with statements from EuropaBIO and environmental activists. **See more.**
- Controversy over Nigeria's biosafety law continued today. Following yesterday's statement from the National Inter-Religious Council (NIREC), which called on the government to use "caution" in approving GM crops, an Abuja-based bishop elaborated on the statement and noted that the government has an obligation to prioritize citizen health above all other considerations and thus must consider other methods to allay hunger. These claims were countered by a spokesperson for the Open Forum for Agriculture Biotechnology (OFAB), who noted that recent pest and disease problems in the country highlight the need for innovative agricultural technologies. **See more.**
- Beekeepers in Quintana Roo, Mexico, told local media outlet SIPSE today that they were launching a new trade association to help advocate for honey producers in Leona Vicario. Spokesman Martin Dzib Tun told the newspaper that beekeepers were threatened by the planting of transgenic crops because the presence of GM pollen made it impossible for them to market their honey as 100 percent pure in European markets. In similar news, during a visit to Marist University, the Yucatan governor said that the government remained committed to its GE-free commitment. Zapata Bella highlighted the state's commitment to environmental protections. **See more.**

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North America

[Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science shares comments from scientists to show their passion for what they do, including the researcher who developed a transgenic papaya resistant to the ringspot virus](#)

[Commentary: In Honolulu Star-Advertiser, media consultant writes that counties should not have authority to regulate pesticide use, noting they lack necessary expertise, motivations are based on politics rather than science, and different regulations across the state would create "chaos" for Hawaii agriculture](#)

[Commentary: Kauai blogger claims Rep. Richard Creagan, chair of the House Agriculture Committee, is undermining farming on Hawaiian islands in push to over-regulate GMOs, pesticides](#)

Commentary: Common Dreams contributor promotes campaign from 325 food and farm groups urging Attorney General Sessions to reject agricultural mega-mergers, claiming they put corporate interests above public health, small farmers, and the environment

Commentary: Center for Food Safety calls for Department of Justice to reject mega-mergers among chemical and seed companies, says it would put world consumers at even higher risk of food insecurity

News: Bloomberg BNA says Minnesota woman files suit alleging Dannon used deceptive "all natural" labels on yogurt products containing GM ingredients

News release: Cooperative bank issues report claiming increased consumer demand for organic, non-GMO foods produced sharp rise in 2016 organic grain imports, notes domestic production remains below demand, prompting incentives to transition to organic

More North America items

Africa

News: Nigerian news outlet reports on recent sensitization workshop entitled "Agricultural Biotechnology Regulation of Genetically Modified Organisms in Nigeria: Faith Based Perspectives," organized by National Biotechnology Technology Agency, NBMA, OFAB, Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria and Action Family Foundation

News: Nigerian news outlet reports on controversy surrounding GM crop adoption, Auxillary Bishop of Abuja Archdiocese, Bishop Anselem Umorem, believes Nigeria does not need GMOs to produce more food, but should improve infrastructure to ensure that food gets distributed to those in need

News: Nigerian news outlet reports on environmentalist Nnimmo Bassey's call on federal government to revoke permits issued to Monsanto for GM cotton and corn varieties, claiming the permits were issued illegally, and that GMOs pose risks for human health and the environment

News release: Greenpeace Africa says climate change, failing food system open door to armyworm pest; calls for revamping agriculture; adds eco-farming doesn't require chemical inputs or GE crops

News: Agence France-Presse reports UN is holding emergency talks with international experts in Harare on how to tackle outbreak of fall armyworms advancing across several African countries

Video: Cornell Alliance for Science shares video of Ghana farmer who embraces new crop technology, urges other farmers to do so; highlights Ghana current tests on GM crops resistant to pests and drought

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

Announcement: Norwegian Biotechnology Council announces publication of statement recommending moratorium on use of gene drives in nature, but supporting further research and development of international rules, highlights benefits of technology but say little is known about ecological risks

News: Reuters reports EU Commission will change decision-making process, remove abstention option to tackle growing criticism of Brussels government for enacting unpopular decisions, including GMO, glyphosate approval, caused by a failure of states to take stand on controversial issues

Commentary: EuropaBIO issues statement warning that comitology reforms could make it even more

difficult to approve innovative agricultural and pharmaceutical products; calls for European Commission to 'guard' its independence from political considerations and focus on science

Campaign: Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, IFOAM and Pesticide Action Network offer recommendations to revise EU comitology process; says current regulations undermine public health and democratic process

Interview: European Seed features chief scientific officer for crop developer Cibus, who says the company is using non-transgenic techniques to enhance tolerance to environmental stressors

News: EurActiv reports U.K. Greens co-leader issues report listing ways Brexit threatens environmental protection laws; report warns legislation surrounding GMOs and pesticides could be eroded to enhance trade opportunities with the US

Commentary: Campaign Stop TTIP writes for Huffington Post Italy, calling on MEPs to reject CETA agreement in tomorrow's vote; claim it will open the door to "violent and irreversible deregulation" of GMOs, pesticides, and hormone treated meat

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Mexican news outlet reports on Yucatan Peninsula beekeepers' concerns about GM contamination, resulting in returned shipments of honey exports, Leona Vicario beekeepers plan to form an association with goal of strengthening and protecting their production

News: Mexican news outlet reports on Yucatan Governor Rolando Zapata Bello's recent statement on the state's GM-free decree, highlighting importance of protecting the environment, biodiversity, and local honey operations, and noting importance of public policies that support the decree

News: Brazilian news outlet reports on Carlos Henrique Gaguim's introduction of a bill to amend the Biosafety Law to require mandatory labeling of GM foods with a warning about potential health risks, Gaguim stressed importance of adhering to the Precautionary Principle

News: Italian news outlet reports on Argentinian opposition to agribusiness, amid President Mauricio Macri's policies in support of GMOs and the ag sector, highlights peasant group's opposition to seed law on royalties, and protests against Monsanto's facility in Cordoba

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: Former U.K. chief scientist tells ABC Rural that the anti-science movement is threatening policy on climate change, GM crops; calls European movement against GM plants naive

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 new campaigns in the U.S. and Africa against agriculture industry mergers. In Australia, a local broadcaster previewed a field trial of disease-resistant bananas scheduled for the spring.

Consolidated highlights include:

- Friends of the Earth and other NGOs issued an open letter calling on newly confirmed U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions to block the pending mergers and acquisitions in the agricultural industry. The letter, signed by over 300 food and farming groups, claims that industry consolidation would reduce competition, increasing costs for farmers and negatively impacting farmer health. [See more.](#)
- African activists also launched criticisms of proposed agricultural industry mergers, with the African Centre for Biodiversity issuing a new report claiming that Bayer's purchase of Monsanto would result in companies that are "too big to fail" and would further erode democratic control of food systems. The group also warned that the mergers would reduce investment in research, minimizing farmer choice and increasing costs. [See more.](#)
- Australian Broadcasting Corporation reported that the Queensland University of Technology received approval for a five-year trial of bananas genetically modified to be resistant to Panama Tropical Race 4. The report noted that the disease is commonplace in the Northern Territory. [See more.](#)

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North America

[News release: Friends of the Earth announces letter from over 300 food and farm groups urging Attorney General Jeff Sessions to oppose ag industry mergers; claims consolidation will raise costs and threaten the environment, farmworker health and food security](#)

[News: Progressive Farmer reports on letter from almost 325 consumer, food, farm and anti-pesticide groups to Attorney General Jeff Sessions, calling on him to block mergers between ag companies; claim the mergers will increase prices and threaten human and environmental health](#)

[Letter to the editor: Writing in Science, French researcher pushes back on U.S. National Academies of Sciences recommendations for public consultation on biotech regulations; says engaging the public too early risks allowing emotional discourse to preempt scientific information](#)

[News: AgriNews reports seed company rep says gene editing goes beyond dealing with disease and pathogens, calls enhancing nutrition in vegetables very exciting, a path to make nutrients available](#)

[News: Ag news site reports growing group of scientists says gene editing holds promise for fighting crop diseases, improving flavor, yield of vegetables: industry knows global acceptance of the technology crucial for long-term success](#)

[Commentary: Global Justice Ecology Project blames GMOs for monarch butterfly's dramatic population](#)

decline; notes herbicide-resistant crops prompt heavier glyphosate use that kills milkweed that serves as caterpillar's only food

Commentary: Washington law firm blogs on Oregon state legislature introducing legislation to repeal parts of 2013 law that preempts county laws from regulating farm practices, including restrictions on GMO cultivation

News release: U.S. Grains Council attributes its engagement for export victories, biotech trait approvals in South Africa, noting country is now buying US sorghum, and open to US corn following December decision to eliminate biotech restrictions

More North America items

Africa

News release: African Centre for Biodiversity announces publication of briefing paper with support of Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, entitled "The BAYER-MONSANTO merger: Implications for South Africa's agricultural future and its smallholder farmers," which claims industry consolidation will reduce choices and raise prices for farmers

News: Nigerian news outlet reports on National Inter-Religious Council's (NIREC) call on Federal Government to exercise caution in allowing GMOs into the country, a report by its expert committee argued that the country does not have necessary facilities and expertise to regulate and control GMOs

More Africa items

Asia

Commentary: Writing for Southeast Asia ag-biotech research NGO, ISAAA scientist documents saga of Bt eggplant field trials, recommends developer commercial Bt eggplant now that trials have proven efficacy of the technology

News: Filipino news outlet reports on Green Asia Agri-Ventures (GAAG) agriculturalist Johann Go's research on banana tissue culture to develop plants with higher yields, disease tolerance; Go emphasized that the technology is different from GMOs

More Asia items

Europe

Event: European Commission to present proposal on February 14 to revise Comitology Regulation, following President Juncker's State of the Union speech, in which he noted it is not right that member states cannot decide among themselves controversial issues such as approving GMOs and glyphosate

News: UK's Daily Mail reports Cambridge University's Study of Existential Risk has issued opinions on how world will end; considers genetic engineering mishaps, climate change-related food shortages among top 10 risks

News: Italian green news outlet reports on Movimento 5 Stelle's opposition to CETA agreement, highlighting letter to Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau from Green MPs voicing their concern about health and environmental risks posed by GMOs, pesticides and animal hormones

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Mexican news outlet reports on association Mi Arbol y Yo's support of GM cultivation bans in states of States of Coahuila and Durango, following in Yucatan's example, association advisor Francisco Lastra pointed to health risks of pesticide use on GM crops

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: Australian Broadcasting Corporation reports on Queensland University of Technology's Centre for Tropical Crops and Biocommodities' (QUT) planned field trials of Panama TR4-resistant GM bananas in Northern Territory, lead researcher James Dale noted spread of the disease could lead to deregulation of their banana

Commentary: Australian news site editorial says government should ensure upcoming GM banana trial benefits, community and farmers, cites GM Free Australia Alliance claims genetic manipulation is risky to human health and the environment

News: GMO-ID Australia director tells Australian food news site many Australians don't want to eat GMOs despite claims supporting their benefits, adds most fears about GMOs haven't been conclusively refuted by the scientific community

More Oceania items

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 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - Feb. 13, 2017
 Date: Monday, February 13, 2017 4:01:27 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

This week's Favorable Outcomes newsletter features analysis pieces examining the two sides of the scientific debate surrounding neonicotinoids and their impact on bees. Jon Entine writes for Genetic Literacy Project on the many field studies that have shown neonics pose little risk to bees while a piece in Forbes by Henry Miller points out how activist groups claiming neonics are harmful frequently rely on research compromised by conflicts of interest.

Other pieces take a closer look at the Arctic apple as it arrives on store shelves, argue on behalf of biotechnology in Kenya and make the case that Canada does not need to ban the pesticide imidacloprid.

You can also find more information on a series of recent developments in Europe: the launch of an NGO-backed [citizens initiative seeking a ban of glyphosate](#), the latest bid by the U.K.'s National Farmers Union to [allow oilseed rape farmers to use neonic-treated seeds](#) and a new draft of the European Commission's proposal to regulate endocrine-disrupting chemicals. The [commission plans to discuss the new criteria](#) at a Feb. 28 meeting.

Please [contact us](#) if you have any questions. The full text of the articles below can be viewed by [logging in](#) to the Bonus Eventus Community site. First-time users will need to fill out the Request Membership form on the front page. To share articles, simply click on the Twitter icon.

In This Issue

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Stakeholder Spotlight: The Organic Center



The U.S. Organic Trade Association's recent top lobbying agenda item has been implementation of a farmer- (producer) funded and taxpayer-supported USDA Organic Check-Off program to underwrite the industry's marketing expenses.

Stories Worth Sharing

[Jon Entine: 18 field studies show neonics pose little risk to bees](#)

[Nina Fedoroff: Biotech regulations should be based on facts, and "scientific evidence of safety is in"](#)

[Henry Miller: Science promoted by anti-pesticide activists riddled with conflicts of interest](#)

[Kenyan lecturer argues country should move past being "on the brink" of approving GMOs and actually do it](#)

[Science 2.0: Kevin Folta explains gene silencing involved in creation of Arctic apples](#)

[Genetic Literacy Project begins 10-part series on how regulation of genetic engineering squelches agricultural innovation](#)

[Farm Babe debunks myths that farmers are forced to grow cancer-causing GMOs drenched in toxic herbicides](#)

[University of Guelph scientist: Canada's proposed ban of imidacloprid is "unnecessary"](#)

The USDA announced in January that this Organic Check-Off would be launched following a 60-day comment period ending March 20. The USDA-endorsed Check Off would direct funds to organic marketing research and promotion programs, which historically have focused on disparaging conventional production methods.

As the primary research arm of the Organic Trade Association, The Organic Center is likely to benefit from the estimated \$30 million to \$40 million in annual Check-Off dollars. While funded, co-located and led by OTA, The Organic Center has been operating as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charitable organization since its founding in 2002.

To learn more about The Organic Center, how organic marketing industry trade association members direct resources to and use this tax-exempt "charitable" organization, and how a taxpayer-subsidized, U.S. government-endorsed program's funding might be used for industry marketing expenses, [CLICK HERE](#).

[CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES](#)

Kavin Senapathy: Watch out for false claims about non-browning, genetically modified Arctic apples [?](#)

European Landowners Association official: EU indecision on agriculture regulations could cause "serious problems" for farmers [?](#)

Indian physician: As human population grows, Nobel laureate points to genetically modified foods as solution to food scarcity [?](#)

Stephan Neidenbach: With activists cherry-picking any flaw, communicators must be more specific about safety of GMOs [?](#)

In Philadelphia Inquirer, pediatrician suggests "parents should feel safe feeding their children" GM foods [?](#)

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What's Trending?

Nearly 40 NGOs launch citizens initiative seeking glyphosate ban in Europe

Trump administration delays addition of bumblebee to endangered species list, raising questions whether decision will be nixed

European Commission releases fourth draft of proposed EDC criteria, removing exemption for pesticides

Sanderson Farms rejects shareholder proposal to phase out medically important antibiotic use for growth promotion, disease prevention

Canadian NGOs ramp up petition campaigns supporting imidacloprid ban as Feb. 21 comment deadline nears

Calendar highlights

February 14	February 16	February 16
Maryland Senate hearing on Keep Antibiotics Effective Act of 2017	Agriculture Day in Canada	Independent Women's Forum "Food and Fear" forum
February 16	February 18-20	February 18-19
Belgian NGO Inter-Environment Wallonie hosts workshop on environmental health and endocrine	Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont annual conference featuring Vandana	Environmental Health in Wisconsin conference featuring Tyrone Hayes presentation

[disruptors](#)

[Shiva keynote speech](#)

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 Date: Sunday, February 12, 2017 9 04:15 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 a lawyer for a collective of Mexican NGOs that is suing to ban GM maize cultivation telling Mexican media that regulatory agency officials lied to the court regarding illegal GM cultivation in the area. Media reported that a pest native to the United States is threatening crops in southern Africa.

Consolidated highlights included:

- Mexican news sites reported NGO attorney Rene Sánchez Galindo accused the regulatory agency SAGARPA of lying to the court regarding the illegal planting of GM maize in order to protect large agribusinesses. **See more.**
- Reuters and other media sources reported fall armyworms are devastating crops in southern Africa. A Lancaster University professor's article for The Conversation noted pesticides and Bt crops keep the armyworm under control in the U.S., but some African countries do not allow biotech crops and ban some pesticides. **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

Video: Dan Rather interviews Nobel laureate Paul Nurse, who says GMOs are as safe as conventionally bred crops, what matters is end product not the process

Commentary: The Farmer's Daughter USA calls out Food Babe over "Food and Fear" event tweet, invites Food Babe Army members to attend Feb. 16 event in St. Louis sponsored by Monsanto

News: Oregon news site reports some farmers want Oregon lawmakers to allow local governments to regulate and potentially ban GM crops, but Oregon Farm Bureau Federation, pesticide manufacturers renew objections

News: Philadelphia Inquirer reports on DuPont CEO Edward Breen's statement to employees in recent newsletter, reproducing the text, in which Breen describes plans to divest a portion of DuPont's crop protection business to a single buyer to create a strong crop protection industry competitor

Commentary: UPROXX contributor voices concern about President Trump's pick for Health and Human Services, Tom Price, especially regarding uncertainty surrounding future of food regulation, highlighting decreasing regulation of new GM products

Commentary: News Target contributor criticizes Monsanto's promotion of GMOs in the UK, claims there is no scientific consensus on GMO safety, and that GMOs and pesticides negatively impact human health and the environment

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Ugandan news site reports national research lab director notes GM banana that resists devastating disease, is enhanced with vitamin A will become available once Uganda passes biosafety law

Letters to the editor: Rwandan news site publishes letters supporting country's biosafety framework, GM crops

News: Nigerian news outlet reports on National Biosafety Management Agency (NBMA) director Rufus Ebegba's statement that the agency's responsibility is to safeguard health of Nigerians in use of modern biotech and GMOs, noting Nigeria cannot shy away from deployment of safe science and technology

News: Reuters reports South African farmers battling crop-eating fall armyworms on the heels of the worst drought in 25 years; farmers dread crop damage, costs of pesticide

Commentary: Natural News contributor amplifies letter to the editor of a Rwandan news outlet claiming "toxic" foods such as GMOs grown with pesticides are responsible for rising cancer rates, criticizes US' push of biotech on African agriculture

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: Sri Lankan news site editorial says Trump will approve Bayer's Monsanto purchase to create "agri-business beast," claims move would be bad business and against the law

News: Filipino news outlet reports on Visayan legislators' call for investigation on impact of importation, use and sale of high fructose corn syrup (HFCS) on sugar industry's sustainability, Councilor Caesar Distrito noted HFCS is made from GMOs which are banned in Negros Occidental

Commentary: ASA's Biotech Working Group discusses innovations in plant breeding and biotech policy during Bayer meeting; notes major concern involved slow regulatory process in China and the EU

Commentary: Indian physician writes for local news outlet, amplifying Sir Richard Roberts assessment that GMOs are safe and necessary to feed the growing population, highlights use of GM technology to create lifesaving drugs and vaccinations

News: Reuters reports on Chinese Ag Ministry's plans to step up supervision of seed sector following discovery of illegal GM corn cultivation last year, calling for more inspection of seed samples, and more inter-provincial cooperation to crack down on fake seed sales, to enable healthy development of the industry

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Italian news outlet reports on EU Commission president Jean-Claude Juncker's proposed review of EU decision-making process, voicing frustration at comitology process, in which member states can refrain from making a stance, highlights Germany's recent abstention in vote on GMO authorizations

News: Italian news site reports EU court finds Italy legally able to ban GMOs despite EU approval of GM varieties

News: Agribusiness Intelligence reports EU 'admits more delay' on rules for new plant breeding techniques regulated under EU laws involving GMO technology, with any discussion to occur after new consultations

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Mexican news site reports Mexican agency seeks to allow GM crop cultivation but NGO attorney says there is not enough protection for countryside, other crops

Commentary: Mexican news outlet criticizes government plans to promote GM crop cultivation, claims associated pesticide use contaminates the soil and groundwater, leading to health problems in those who drink it

News: Agence France-Presse reports extreme weather due to climate change reduces monarch's hibernation area by 27.4 percent, reducing its numbers; reports other factors affecting monarchs are GMO, pesticide use that reduces plants that are the butterfly's main food

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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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS

A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included the German government threatening that those using "biohacking kits" available on the Internet could face hefty fines or a prison sentence. A bill was introduced in the Oregon state legislature to allow counties to regulate GM crops and seed.

Consolidated highlights include:

- Gizmodo reported the German government noted that biohacking kits available on the Internet make it cheap and easy to experiment with gene editing, but those doing so without proper government authorization could face up to a 50,000-euro fine or up to three years in prison. [See more.](#)
- A National Public Radio affiliate in Oregon reported that biotech critics are supporting a bill before the Oregon state legislature that would allow counties to regulate or ban GM crops. The legislature passed a bill in 2013 that banned counties from taking such action. [See more.](#)

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North America

News: Canadian ag news outlet reports on CropLife Canada's call on government to modernize regulations to deal with gene-edited crops, noting knowledge of how the regulatory system will react to gene editing innovation is critical to making investment decisions, highlights US process of updating regulations

News: NPR reports Oregon farming groups pushing new legislation allowing counties to regulate GE crops; notes state legislature took away that right in 2013

Commentary: Food Babe claims Skittles spill on Wisconsin exposed farmer practice of "secretly" feeding them to cows, says it was bad enough that cows receive GM feed, antibiotics, hormones, advocates boycott of factory farm meat; shifts for Butcher Box meat that is grass-fed, grass-finished, antibiotic- and hormone-free

News release: American Soybean Association, USFRA, other farm groups pursue collaboration with food companies on marketing practices, plan outreach on food biotechnology, sustainability, animal health to head off marketing employing incorrect information that erodes trust in US farmers, food supply

News: Canada-based Saskatoon StarPhoenix features Percy Schmeiser, a local farmer who 'took on Monsanto,' notes Schmeiser was sued over Roundup Ready canola he claims self-seeded on his farm through drift

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Video: NTA News notes while the Nigerian government supports the use of GMO technology, and says it has a system in place that will guarantee health and environmental safety, local Catholic church is appealing for caution

News: Kenyan news site op-ed writer says Africa should review GMOs as better option to increase harvests, decrease hunger

Commentary: Ghana news site notes GM crops can help address climate change, disease issues to help feed rising population

Commentary: AgBioForum contributors explore both sides of GM maize debate in Kenya, evaluating the 'economic and political motives' of those likely to lobby for or against GM crop cultivation

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Filipino news outlet reports on Winnie Sancho of the Save-Sugar Industry Movement's "guarded optimism" regarding upcoming deliberations on high fructose corn syrup, a proposed amendment to ordinance banning GMOs would list HFCS as a possible "watchlist item," and require non-GMO certification from beverage companies

News: China News Service reports on Heilongjiang province's GMO ban, in spite of backlash from scholars who believe it will hinder domestic biotech development, Heilongjiang Contemporary China-Russia Regional Economy Research Institute President Song Kui noted the ban will benefit China's ag cooperation with Russia

News: Jakarta Post reports on Nobel Laureate Sir Richard Roberts' assessment that anti-GMO sentiment could do more harm than good, at recent lecture entitled "Why You Should Love Bacteria"

Commentary: Indian news outlet contributor examines debate over best course of action for Indian ag, questions NGO Samaj Pragati Sahayog's rejection of GM crops that require fewer chemical inputs, when their goal is to reduce chemical use, believes agronomic, financial and marketing support will help boost smallholder incomes

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Agence France-Presse reports near-complete genome of quinoa unveiled by scientists who say the grain cultivated by Incas could help reduce hunger; researchers highlight potential for new crop breeding

News: Italian news site reports no contamination found in fields near illegally cultivated GM crop; government working on increasing sanctions for illegal biotech cultivation

Commentary: CropLife International posts infographic highlighting the fact that plant science is 'saving endangered foods' from devastating plant diseases; highlights orange, banana and papaya

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Agra-Net reports Monsanto wants legislation guaranteeing royalty rights before it releases its Intacta GM soy variety on Argentine market

News: Mexican news site reports environmental NGO claims SAGARPA illegally concealed 89 cases of GM contamination of native maize in Puebla and other states over last decade

News: Mexican news site reports Mexican biotech regulator asks landowners to report those illegally planting GM soy

News: Brazilian news site questions Brazil's biotech regulator's transparency, questions planned releases of products before field trial results are available, wonders if CTNBio has "hidden agenda"

More Latin America items

Oceania

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

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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.K.'s Sainsbury Laboratory had applied to field trial a new GM potato. In Europe, the president of the European Commission told news outlets that he planned to propose significant changes to the comitology process in order to break the ongoing deadlocks on controversial issues such as biotechnology approvals. U.S. media company Netflix released a new trailer for Bill Nye's upcoming documentary series, noting that one episode will focus on GM crops.

Consolidated highlights include:

- In Europe, Sainsbury Laboratory announced that had applied to the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) for permission to field trial a new genetically modified potato resistant to late blight. A local news report noted that researchers and legislators were hopeful about the potential to commercialize new crops following the Brexit vote. [See more.](#)
- Politico Europe, echoing similar reports from earlier in the week, reported that European Commission president Jean-Claude Juncker told his commissioners last week that he planned to announce a "radical" change in comitology processes. In a September State of the Union address, Juncker had criticized member nations for not taking responsibility on politically risky decisions such as the approval of GM crop traits for import or cultivation. The issue is likely to resurface next month pending another vote on whether to reject or approve three GM maize crops for cultivation. [See more.](#)
- Netflix issued a new trailer for the upcoming science outreach series "Bill Nye Saves the World." The video noted that Nye would tackle contentious issues such as climate change and plant biotechnology. The series will be available for streaming starting in late April. [See more.](#)

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North America

Commentary: In second article of Genetic Literacy Project series, UC Davis' Alison Van Eenennaam argues gene edited animals should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, regulatory frameworks should consider both benefits and costs

Video: Netflix series "Bill Nye Saves the World," starting April 21, features the science guy discussing GMOs, other issues with experts and celebrity guests

Commentary: Environmental and public health NGO urges "Boycott" against companies who lobbied against GMO labeling law and now use SmartLabel QR codes on their products

News: Colorado news site reports Boulder County officials seeking proposals for alternatives to GE crop use on county-owned lands; part of plan approved for phasing out GM corn and sugar beet

Commentary: Oregon NGO Friends of Family farmers lists important bills recently introduced to state legislature, including repeal of prohibition on locally enacted bans on GM crops, and one holding patent-

holders of those crops financially liable, promotes April rally

[More North America items](#)

Africa

Commentary: IIED Southern Africa manager of the Sustainable Diets for All project ponders whether Zambian worm infestation will encourage a policy shift away from monocropping maize

News: South African news outlet reports Bt maize may be resistant to fall armyworm, features podcast with Agricultural Research Council's Institute for grain crops entomologist Dr. Annemie Erasmus

News: Nigerian television outlet reports on Auxiliary Bishop of the Abuja Catholic Archdiocese's statement against GMOs, arguing that Nigeria can produce enough food using natural agricultural practices; National Biosafety Management Agency's Rufus Ebegeba noted the Church's position is misconstrued

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: Smart Indian Agriculture summarizes Annual Review of Resource Economics paper, says environmentalists have linked GE technology to corporate control of ag systems

News: The Hindu reports on Indian government's steps to develop policy on synbio, with Environment Ministry convening an expert panel to evaluate extent of synbio work in Indian labs, potential benefits and risks, and the implications of trans-boundary movement

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Announcement: Sainsbury Laboratory announces submission of application to DEFRA for approval to conduct field trial on GM blight-resistant potatoes, provides answers to several questions, including measures that will be taken to ensure that the trial remains contained and will not spread to conventional potatoes

News: UK news outlet reports on Sainsbury Laboratory's application to conduct field trials of late blight-resistant GM potatoes, lead scientist Jonathan Jones notes late blight leads to between \$4 and \$7 billion in losses each year, not including costs of chemical inputs, highlights public concern about GMOs

News: Politico reports on Dow and DuPont's offer to divest portions of their portfolios to assuage antitrust concerns in Europe surrounding \$140 billion merger, EU Commission has set new deadline of April 4 to review the remedies

Announcement: European Ombudsman announces resolution of complaint filed by a research institute on EU Commission's failure to reply to request for information on whether its CRISPR/Cas9 developed product constituted a GMO under EU legislation, summarizes Commission's response

News: Politico reports that European Commission president is proposing revisions to comitology process for EU, says EU nations abdicate responsibility for controversial decisions

Commentary: The Greens/European Free Alliance voices opposition to CETA, raising concerns about Investment Court System and promotion of GMOs, highlighting CropLife Canada's praise of the agreement for working to shorten timelines for approval of GM crops, and to strengthen 'science-based' regulation

News: Italian news site reports GM grain intended for animal feed ended up in cornmeal used in food, 15 tons of GM cornmeal removed from shelves; notes GMOs not a threat to health

News: Italian news site reports 5-Star Movement urges EU Parliament's Environment Committee to

reject authorization of 20 GM corn varieties

Event: Federation of Swedish Farmers announces member webinar on genetic engineering, will address issues of sustainability and new plant breeding techniques

News: Swiss news site reports Federal Council to discuss GMO moratorium during special session

News: Serbian news sites report Serbian Minister of Trade says there is huge public opposition in Serbia to amend ban on GMOs, a condition for joining the World Trade Organization

More Europe items

Latin America

Commentary: Mexican news site reports Monsanto, Mexican agencies undermine court order prohibiting GM maize cultivation by covertly cooperating with farmers to continue GM crop planting

More Latin America items

Oceania

News: New Zealand news outlet reports on development of GM ryegrasses designed to produce 50 percent more yield, between 10-15 percent more energy and lower methane, AgResearch is sending the grass to the US for field trials due to New Zealand's strict GMO laws

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 international reporting on the Chinese government's Central Document, which outlined the country's agricultural priorities for 2017. In Africa, concerns over fall armyworm predation prompted a statement from Grain SA highlighting the potential for biotech traits to combat the pest.

Consolidated highlights include:

- Reuters and other international outlets reported on the Chinese government's 2017 Central Document No. 1, which focused on the country's agricultural goals for the coming year. News sites noted that the policy statement was a departure from the country's earlier focus on supply and seemed to reflect a new acceptance of international trade and imports to meet local consumer demand. A CCTV interview with farming and development officials highlighted a new emphasis on "green development" in rural sectors. **See more.**
- Concerns about a significant fall armyworm presence in southern Africa prompted widespread local media coverage of current programs and interventions for controlling the pest. In a statement, Grain SA noted that a significant percentage of South Africa's maize was genetically modified. The group added that it was currently testing the maize to determine whether the GM varieties could help control armyworm infestations. **See more.**

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North America

News: Agricultural business news outlets reports Trump executive order requiring two laws removed for every new 2017 law enacted puts future of federal GMO labeling law into question; note 2018 enactment date may save law from withdrawal

Commentary: Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy lists eight questions for President Trump's pick for Ag Secretary, former Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue, voicing concern about ag industry mergers, as well as problem of "superweeds" and insect resistance which it associates with pesticide use on GM crops

News: Capital Press reports Washington Wheat Commission received praise from overseas buyers on industry's handling of Washington GE wheat outbreak, though some voiced disappointment that cause is still unknown

Commentary: Contributor to The Plaid Zebra explains many benefits of GMOs, noting they are healthy and help reduce pesticide use, fuel consumption and land use, notes organic production also uses pesticides, and that organic is not a feasible method of feeding the world, noting it is a luxury

News: Canadian news outlet reports on upcoming public conference on GMOs on February 28, organized by MP Francois Choquette, New Democrat MP Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke) will introduce his GMO labeling bill

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: South African news site reports Grain SA says more than 75 percent of country's maize crops may be able to resist the fall armyworm that has devastated crops in countries that don't plant GM seed

News: Investment news outlet reports on devastating fall armyworm attack spreading across southern Africa, highlighting Center for Agriculture and Biosciences International's call for urgent action, and FAO's upcoming emergency meeting in Zimbabwe, the pest has potential to impact over 100 different crops

News: Bloomberg reports on fall armyworm invasion devastating crops across Africa, highlights FAO's assessment that it could soon spread to Asia and the Mediterranean, threatening agricultural trade worldwide, FAO notes the pest can cause crop losses of up to 73 percent, and is difficult to control with a single type of pesticide

News: South African Government News Agency reports on launch of Emergency Plant Pest Response Plan to fight fall armyworm attacks, Ag Minsitry Registrar Jonathan Madzunga noted there are pesticides available that are already registered, voicing confidence that farmers will use them safely

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Announcement: China.org.cn posts question and answer session between local media outlets and government officials, highlighting the role of "green development" in the China's new Central Document Number One

News: Reuters reports China publishes rural policy document revealing country plans for major shift in ag policy, abandoning focus on self-sufficiency in favor of better meeting consumer demand; promotes embrace of int'l markets

News: Indian news source reports head of Review Committee on Genetic Manipulation says GE mustard, fruit borer-resistant Bt brinjal should be released, arguing their safety is demonstrated and they offer farmers best chance to succeed

News: Indian finance news outlet reports on Ag Ministry committee's recommendation of further 10 percent reduction in trait value for Bt cotton, and plans to reduce trait values year after year, in spite of Monsanto's opposition

News: European Seed reports on China National Seed Group's development of insect and disease resistant high-yielding rice variety using breeding chip technology, Zhang Qifa of Chinese Academy of Sciences noted the technology will help prevent health and environmental problems caused by pesticide use

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: French science news outlet reports on UK Environment Ministry's authorization of GM wheat field trials by Rothamsted Research, with goal of boosting yields via increased photosynthetic efficiency, highlights INRA's assessment that weak yields are due to climate change rather than varietal weakness

Commentary: Swansea West MP and European Scrutiny Committee member Geraint Davies writes for Global Justice Now, voicing concern about closed-door CETA vote, as well as Investor Court Systems that would allow companies to sue governments for laws aimed at protecting health and the environment

Commentary: Jan Schaart and Rene Smulders of Wageningen UR Plant Breeding in The Netherlands write for European Seed, examining challenges inherent in gene editing technology, as well as its potential applications, they believe that over time it may become a generally applied technology

News: U.K. news site reports non-browning GM apple could be sold in British stores after Brexit; adds some environmentalists oppose GM crops, but others think the apples break down taboos and start making GM crops mainstream

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Mexican news outlet reports on Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources' (Semarnat) dismissal of lawsuit over GM crop cultivation in Yucatan, ruling that Executive Federal order against the state's decree prohibiting GM crop cultivation violates the state's sovereignty

Video: RT correspondent Ricardo Romero analyzes debate surrounding Argentina's seed law, as Monsanto seeks payment for IP rights and farmers demand right to use seeds freely

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

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

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Feb. 6, 2017
 Date: Monday, February 6, 2017 9:01:11 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 reports out of Norway that researchers developed a genetically modified salmon designed to be infertile. U.S. media outlets discussed a new book examining GM agriculture in the country.

Consolidated highlights include:

- News outlets in Norway reported that the country's Biotechnology Council was reviewing a genetically modified salmon designed to be infertile. The new salmon was intended to address concerns about farmed salmon escaping into wild environments. Aftenposten noted that researchers used gene-editing techniques, adding that Swiss authorities had declined to regulate those products as traditional GM crops. **See more.**
- U.S. news outlets continued to promote a new book by environmental writer McKay Jenkins, "Food Fight: GMOs and the Future of the American Diet." In an interview with The Washington Post, Jenkins said that there seemed to be little support for health concerns linked to the crops broadly but added that they promote an unsustainable agricultural model. Jenkins said that the book also highlights the work of pro-GMO scientists looking to improve agricultural sustainability. **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

Interview: Washington Post features McKay Jenkins, author of book about GMO controversy; Jenkins says concerns about negative health and environmental effects of GMOs fundamentally miss the mark, adding industrial agriculture system and its centralized power is what deserves criticism

News: In agricultural news roundup, Politico reports that the 2016 federal GM labeling bill looks to be exempt from the executive order requiring existing regulations to be removed before new regulations are implemented

Commentary: Conservative news site columnist says despite recent ABC poll showing over half of Americans feel GMOs are unsafe, lack of outrage over non-browning GM apples may mean perceptions are changing; adds improved apples would help reduce food waste, fight malnutrition, protect environment

Campaign: March Against Monsanto says area activists have joined to halt Monsanto's greenhouse project in Pima County, Arizona, call for additional support as soon as possible; GMO Free USA's call-to-action to contact Pima County representatives amplified

Commentary: Quartz contributor examines ways in which food politics have sparked nonpartisan populism on "common sense" issues such as GMO labeling, highlighting effect of Vermont's GMO labeling law on national policy; says while GMOs are deemed safe, anti-GMO movement's demands are being heard

News: Farm news service reports Kansas City, Kansas federal court will hold first of several class-action lawsuit hearings against Syngenta over Viptera corn in June; lawsuits claim company should have inspected and prevented harvested Viptera corn from being shipped to China in 2013 and 2014

More North America items

Africa

News: South African news outlet reports on threats posed to maize crops across the country by recent armyworm invasion, farmers have invested thousands on multiple pesticides, none of which have proven effective, farmer Klaus Wasserman noted GM crops have proven more resistant

News: Nigerian news outlet reports on Biotechnology Society of Nigeria President Benjamin Ubi's call for increased investment in biotech to improve food security and sustainable ag practices, calling for investment in international cooperation, research and extension services, gene banks

Letter to the editor: Concerned citizen writes to Rwandan news outlet, warning about potential health risks of GMOs, linking them to cancer and diabetes, advocates use of precautionary principle

More Africa items

Asia

Commentary: Malaysian news site guest columnist, Academy of Sciences professor, says R&D in rubber industry could be strengthened in biotechnology; adds understanding genome key to explore potential to improve yield and other properties

Study: Study in Regulatory Toxicology and Pharmacology found no adverse impacts of GmTMT transgenic maize in 90-day toxicity study in Sprague-Dawley rats, authors conclude the GM maize is as safe and nutritious as its conventional counterpart

News: The Hindu reports on collaborative research from Oklahoma State University and New Delhi-based International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology to better understand high salt tolerance in Pokkali rice endemic to Kerala, with goal of identifying specific molecules that enable growth in high-salinity conditions

News: Press Trust of India reports that GM mustard has undergone 10 years of safety assessments for human health and the environment, under oversight of three-tier statutory regulatory committees with external experts, according to Environment Minister Anil Madhav Dave

More Asia items

Europe

News: Norwegian news site Forskning reports Biotechnology Council considering approval of sterile GM salmon; researchers say sexless salmon won't be able to breed with wild salmon, will also be engineered to resist sea lice, disease, contain more omega-3

Report: Review in Sustainability argues organic farming should embrace co-existence with cisgenic late blight-resistant potato, noting advances in genetic engineering make it more predictable than conventional breeding, the resulting product could occur naturally, and that cisgenic potatoes may be exempt from GMO regulations

News: Italian news outlet reports on discovery that GM corn intended for animal use was made into polenta consumed at recent Sermoneta festival, resulting in product recall of 15 tons, highlights Italian law stipulating that products containing GMOs over 0.9 percent per kilogram must be labeled

News: EFE reports on recent EU vote on GM maize varieties which failed to reach qualified majority, Friends of the Earth's Blanca Ruibal claimed GMOs pose serious environmental and agronomic problems, and do not contribute to solving food security problems of rising population

News: French news outlet reports on recent College of European Commissioners debate on revision of the "comitology" procedure, as Brussels does not want to be in position of deciding on controversial issues such as GMOs and glyphosate as a last resort due to lack of qualified majority between Member States

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: World Grain reports Russia could ban livestock soy forage from Brazil over GMOs; notes of 318 agricultural producers in Brazil only 160 may supply products to Russia

News: U.K.'s Agrow reports industry legal challenge to suspension of GM crop trials in Mexico has failed; latest challenge came from a class action including Syngenta, Dow, DuPont and Monsanto

[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: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - Feb. 6, 2017
 Date: Monday, February 6, 2017 4:03:46 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

This week's Favorable Outcomes newsletter features fresh criticism of anti-glyphosate campaigns and lawsuits, a look at the ramifications of Europe's neonic restrictions on oilseed rape farmers and commentary on misleading campaigns against GMOs, pesticides and antibiotics.

Looking ahead, a meeting examining the future of the [Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management](#) (SAICM) highlights this week's calendar - and our spotlighted stakeholder has played a key role in the run-up to the proceedings in Brazil.

Please [contact us](#) if you have any questions. The full text of the articles below can be viewed by [logging in](#) to the Bonus Eventus Community site. First-time users will need to fill out the Request Membership form on the front page. To share articles, simply click on the Twitter icon.

In This Issue

[Stakeholder Spotlight](#)

[Stories Worth Sharing](#)

[What's Trending?](#)

[Calendar highlights](#)

Stakeholder Spotlight: International POPs Elimination Network



The International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN) has been working with the Center for International Law to coordinate lobbying activities related to SAICM, including advance work for this week's meeting in Brazil.

IPEN last week released a ["quick notes" document](#) detailing its SAICM goals, including recommending a levy on the chemical industry to pay for the program and an agroecology initiative.

Stories Worth Sharing

[Kavin Senapathy: Natural, non-GMO, cage-free and other buzzwords provide "provide the illusion of knowledge" about food products](#)

[Alison Van Eenenaam provides reminder of "damning criticism" of Seralini research repackaged in new anti-glyphosate study](#)

[OFAB's Rose Gidado: Nigerian farmers "can't wait" to have GMO technology, which can help ensure food security](#)

[Ruth Kava: Anti-GMO scaremongers making world wait to experience better-tasting tomatoes](#)

[Angela Logomasini: California should scrap plan to list glyphosate under Prop 65, lack of science behind cancer claims "appalling"](#)

[Ghanaian university faculty member: Politicians should pass bills to allow biotechnology, ignore "irrational and absurd" scaremongers](#)

[Farmers Weekly: Survey finds British oilseed rape farmers suffered 8 percent losses due to pests, drought, lack of neonics](#)

[Henry Miller: Genetic engineering could make production of blue jeans cheaper, more sustainable](#)

[French business writer compares Nutella cancer scare to NGO campaigning based on "misconstrued" IARC glyphosate cancer claim](#)

[Animal Health Institute VP: Scientific American article spreads](#)

IPEN claims to be a global network of more than 700 public interest, non-governmental organizations - primarily in developing and transitional countries - that are united in support of the elimination of persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and in opposition to multinational corporations and transnational trade agreements. The U.S.-based CIEL appears to be its primary financial backer and coordinating organization, providing \$300,000 to \$900,000 annually while other IPEN leadership includes Greenpeace and the Russian NGO Eco-Accord.

LEARN MORE about IPEN and its advocacy on the SAICM issue and its implementation for 2020 and beyond.

CLICK FOR MORE STAKEHOLDER PROFILES

[misinformation, fails to recognize agriculture's commitment to judicious antibiotic use](#)

[IFPRI report suggests Pakistan should better regulate seed markets, incentivize private investment in R&D of hybrids, transgenics](#)

[Center for Consumer Freedom ad counters "propaganda" from Humane Society of the United States president on antibiotic use](#)

CLICK FOR BONUS EVENTUS MONITORING

What's Trending?

[U.S. federal appeals court revives "mega" lawsuit challenging hundreds of pesticide registrations](#)

[Mexican NGO launches new campaign claiming GM crops are harmful to human health and the environment](#)

[Southern African countries mobilizing emergency measures in response to armyworm outbreak](#)

[Regulatory freeze puts implementation of U.S. GMO labeling law in limbo](#)

[California judge allows state to label glyphosate as carcinogen under Proposition 65](#)

Calendar highlights

February 7-8	February 7	February 7
1st Meeting of the Intercessional Process for SAICM Beyond 2020	Tyrone Hayes presentation at Claremont-McKenna College in California	New York Academy of Medicine "Antibiotic Stewardship in Agriculture and Health Care" panel
February 9-11	February 11	February 13
American Veterinary Medical Association global summit: "Food Security - Understanding the role of Animal Health & Well-Being"	Beyond Toxics Protecting Pollinators forum on declining native bee population, neonics	Closing date to request observer status for IARC monograph 119 on chemicals in food and consumer products

CLICK HERE TO ACCESS FULL EVENTS CALENDAR

Stakeholder database

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

Monitoring portal

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 Date: Sunday, February 5, 2017 10:56:51 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 an attorney for the Institute for Responsible Technology trying to persuade the Cayman Islands to use another method to reduce the mosquito population rather than releasing GM mosquitoes. In Virginia, a state GMO labeling bill was introduced that attempts to get around the federal bill that bans state labeling of GM food.

Consolidated highlights include:

- An attorney for the Institute for Responsible Technology, founded by Jeffrey Smith, pitched using walbachia bacteria to infect mosquitoes carrying the zika virus in the Cayman Islands as opposed to releasing GE mosquitoes to reduce the aedes aegypti population. William Petrie of the Caymans' Mosquito Research and Control Unit explained the walbachia method involves releasing female mosquitoes, which bite, and said it is not self-contained while the GE mosquito method is self-contained. A Martinique media site reported the GE mosquito pilot project has been highly successful in reducing mosquitoes, and there had not been a Zika case in the islands since November. **See more.**
- In the Virginia General Assembly, a bill was introduced that would require a label on all food containing a GM ingredient that would read, "Congress prohibits states from requiring the on-package labeling of the GMO content of this product." A federal GMO labeling bill passed in 2016 would require GM labels or QR codes but would not go into effect for two years. The federal bill also bans states from labeling GM food. **See more.**

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

North America

Commentary: American Council on Science and Health urges supporters to participate in FDA's public comment period on gene edited food, noting participation in the conversation leads to stronger, science-based decisions

Commentary: Rachel Parent writes for Huffington Post Canada, criticizing Health Canada's plans to use findings of recent study of consumer perceptions of GMOs to improve communication, claims GMOs are not a legitimate tool for improving food production and that GMO labeling is a "basic human right"

News: Organic Authority reports on FDA and USDA's efforts towards modernization of GMO regulations, highlighting FDA's expanded scope of guidance on gene editing in animals, and its request for comment on whether voluntary premarket consultations could be skipped for certain gene edited plants

Commentary: Food & Water Watch voices concern on current "gag order" on USDA, noting the practice is not new, points to incident during Obama administration where ten USDA scientists petitioned USDA about suppression of science, complaining about agency efforts to support Monsanto's research agenda

News: Baltimore Business Journal reports famed stock picker bullish about Intrexon, a Maryland biotech that makes GE salmon and non-browning GM apples

News: Philadelphia news site reports cacao farmers are concerned about sustainability and says researchers are pinpointing disease resistant genes; quotes Penn State University scientist on the potential benefits of GM crop development

Report: Farm Journal Foundation policy briefing paper argues that it is in the US' best interest to invest in African agri-food systems and support a sustainable and efficient global food system, highlighting importance of public-private partnerships to help African organization develop their own tools

More North America items

Africa

News: African business news site reports Gates Foundation invests \$8.4 million to produce improved seed for small farms in Africa

Commentary: March Against Monsanto claims Monsanto, Gates Foundation attempt to control world food production by getting GM seed into Nigeria, says Nigeran Farmers Alliance asks farmers to reject GMOs

News: Big News Network reports on Zimbabwe's continued GMO ban in spite of increasing hunger, orphanage director notes they are not picky about whether food is GMO or non-GMO because the situation is "unbearable," government officials maintain the ban protects Zimbabwe's environment

Interview: AGRA president tells Deutsche Welle access to seeds and ag technology is vital to agricultural sustainability for small-scale farmers

Commentary: Belgian news site reporter, in series on GMOs in Africa, says Monsanto, Syngenta out to capture Africa's seed market by luring farmers with water-efficient GM maize; says small farmers cannot afford GM seed and expensive inputs; farmer says the corporations want to "cash in on climate change"

Commentary: Michigan State University professor Thomas Jayne writes for The Conversation, argues that investing in African agri-food systems is in the US national interest, believes US organizations should help African organizations develop their own technologies and services

More Africa items

Asia

News: Filipino news source reports Philippines provincial board seeks to add amendments to country's anti-GMO ordinance, board members want assurances that products with HFCS to be GMO-free, monitoring team planned for implementation

Study: Chinese researchers find Bt rice poses negligible risks to non-target insects, notes previous studies of Bt rice effects are either consistent with or more conservative than field study results

News: Reuters reports activists say only way to prevent Indian farmer suicides is to increase land holdings size, say smaller farms are unsustainable

More Asia items

Europe

News: U.K.-based Financial Times reports Dow and Dupont offer to sell research and development components to ease EU's antitrust concern

News: Reuters reports EU will approve ChemChina's purchase of Switzerland-based Syngenta; reports Chinese company to make minor concessions, including divesting in national product registrations

Commentary: Dutch magazine contributor dispels common myths about GMOs, noting gene transfer is not possible and that all GMOs on the market must undergo rigorous health and environmental risk assessments, highlights many benefits of GMOs and new techniques such as CRISPR

Audio: BBC radio segment examines GM crop safety debate in advance of Rothamsted GM wheat trials; Rothamsted researcher vouches for safety of the field trials, GM Freeze director argues safety can't be guaranteed and focus should be on food distribution, not production

News: European agricultural news site reports European Commission to revise rules on issuing GMO, pesticide permits; will present ideas Feb. 14

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Russia Today reports on opposition to Argentina's seed law, Carlos Vicente of the multisectoral 'No to the new Monsanto seed law ' claims the law would concentrate power over the food system into the hands of multinationals

Commentary: Contributor to Mexican news site amplifies Scientific Reports study and claims GM maize produces toxic compounds and is not equivalent to conventional maize

News: Mexican news outlet reports on Judge Pablo Vicente Monroy Gómez's criticism of federal government's attempt to block Yucatan's GMO-free status as unconstitutional, emphasizing importance of states' rights, defending Yucatan's sovereign right to protect itself from alleged harms of GMOs

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: New Zealand news outlet reports on Maori Party's praise of Pure Hawke's Bay's campaign video calling on them to withdraw support from legislation restricting local councils from banning GMOs, Party co-leader Marama Fox noted plans to negotiate the bill when Parliament resumes next week

[More Oceania items](#)

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Feb. 2, 2017
 Date: Thursday, February 2, 2017 9:01:18 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included a researcher and a dean of law questioning whether organic fruit can be exported from areas that use GM insects. An agricultural news site reported the European Commission will change the way member states influence draft legislation.

Consolidated highlights include:

- A molecular geneticist from the Max Planck Institute in Germany and the law school dean from the University of Saskatchewan questioned in a news release whether organic produce can be exported from countries that use GM insects. They point out the GM insects could be transported around the globe and say U.S. regulators must ensure organic producers they will not suffer losses due to the insects. **See more.**
- Agrow, a U.K.-based agricultural news site, reported the European Commission will change the way member states influence draft legislation, including those related to GM crops and pesticides. The announcement comes as the commission faces pressure to reject three GM maize varieties for cultivation after the crops were rejected by member states. **See more.**

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North America

News: Business Insider reports on habits associated with cancer risk; cites IARC on carcinogenicity of red and processed meats, positive effects of coffee; notes no conclusive link between GMOs or hormones in beef to cancer

News: Cayman Island news site reports Institute for Responsible Technology claims there are potentially other species of mosquitos in the Cayman Islands carrying diseases like Zika as a result of the MRCU's GM mosquito project, adding MRCU denies claims

Report: Report by Virginia Tech funded Information Systems for Biotechnology examines controversies surrounding GMOs, highlighting research by Brandon R. McFadden and Jayson Lusk on lack of consumer understanding about GMOs, as well as debate surrounding recently passed federal GMO labeling law

Commentary: Dana Perls of Friends of the Earth writes for STAT, calling for strict regulation of products of gene editing, claiming recently approved Arctic apples may pose health and environmental risks, claims traditional GMOs have increased pesticide use, highlights IARC's and Seralini's research on glyphosate

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News release: La Via Campesina condemns Tanzania's criminalization of traditional seed exchange among farmers, who now face heavy penalties and possible imprisonment, calls for promotion of traditional seed exchange and agroecological methods to meet increasing demand for healthy, sustainable food

Commentary: South Dakota State University Plant Science Ph.D. candidate writes for Ghanaian news outlet, calling on politicians to listen to science rather than scaremongers when making decisions on GMOs, notes that when activists make unsubstantiated claims that GMOs cause cancer, we should demand incontestable empirical data

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: Third World Network recaps upcoming USDA GMO regulatory issues, questions USDA's readiness to allow companies to use QR codes on GM food packaging with agency consumer study pending currently lacking needed funds, suggests QR approach might fool customers

News: Filipino news site reports government moves against high fructose corn syrup imports with proposal to amend province's ordinance on GMOs; experts say HFCS comes from corn but isn't GMO

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: RT reports British government has approved a new experimental crop of GM wheat, despite strong opposition from around 30 green groups; wheat variety has reportedly boosted yields by up to 40 percent

News: Romanian news site reports government bans GM crops within 200 meters of Bulgarian, Hungarian borders to avoid cross-border cross contamination

Commentary: Belgian news site reporter says in series on biotech crops that stories claiming GM crops will save world from hunger are urban legends

Commentary: Belgian news site reports farmers, NGOs say Golden Rice not solution to malnutrition; Greenpeace advocates vitamin supplements, Bangladeshi farmer says people need jobs, money to solve hunger issue

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Investment firm reports biotechnology company Bioceres S.A files to withdraw US IPO plans; had filed for US IPO of up to \$80.5 million of its ordinary shares in Sept. 2015

News: Nicaraguan news site reports agricultural union begins preparation to cultivate GM crops, but anti-biotech groups say they will oppose GM crops' introduction

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News release: GE Free New Zealand accuses AgResearch of wasting taxpayer money in GE ryegrass trials being conducted in the US, claiming there is no evidence of its benefits, and pointing to research linking GMOs to liver damage, and claims that GM crops do not boost yields or reduce pesticide inputs

[More Oceania items](#)

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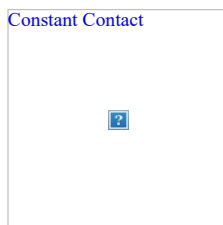
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 Date: Wednesday, February 1, 2017 9:00:55 PM

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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 U.K. researchers were preparing for a spring field trial of a new, efficient-growing GM wheat. Mexican news outlets reported on the launch of a new advocacy campaign against GM maize in the country. In Asia, Korean media outlets reported that a new GMO labeling law takes effect this week.

Consolidated highlights include:

- British media outlets reported that scientists with Rothamsted Research have received permission from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) for field trials of a new, high-yielding GM wheat variety. The trials are scheduled for the 2017-18 growing season. The Daily Mail reported on resistance to the field trials from activist groups such as GM Freeze. **See more.**
- In Mexico, activists with the Colectividad del Maíz held a news conference to launch their latest campaign calling for a complete ban on GM maize in the country. The campaign, organized under the social media hashtag #NoMásAbusosVsElMaíz, plans to issue new scientific reports on the "dangers" of consuming GM maize. **See more.**
- South Korean news outlets reported that the country's new zero-tolerance GMO labeling law will go into effect on Feb. 4, though the regulations remain surrounded by controversy. Consumer activist groups claimed that the law should follow European guidelines and require GMO labeling if biotechnology is used in any part of the production process. **See more.**

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

North America

News: Inverse Culture reports climate change will affect the way people eat, effort invested in genetic engineering of existing crops to produce higher yields, make them less vulnerable to climate change

News: Newsweek reports on controversy surrounding USDA's quick decision to deregulate GM bentgrass made by Monsanto and Scotts', Oregon State University weed science professor Carol Mallory-Smith noted farmers who didn't introduce the grass and won't gain from it will now be responsible for controlling it

News: BuzzFeed reports on potential trade deal between US and UK post-Brexit, American Farm Bureau Federation hopes the UK will be more open to negotiating use of GM foods, hormone-treated beef and chlorinated chicken

News: Law firm reports marketing GE crops just got easier as CRISPR gene edited crops may face reduced regulatory hurdles; says USDA has determined many aren't regulated under Plant Protection Act

Commentary: Daily Kos contributor emphasizes overwhelming scientific consensus on GMO safety, highlighting statements in support of GMO safety from scientific groups and government bodies across

the globe, notes about half of GMO food research is independently funded

Commentary: Henry Miller writes for Wall Street Journal, promotes several benefits of genetic engineering, highlights potential for the technology to make blue jean production cheaper and more sustainable, using Bt cotton and indigo dye made with GE bacteria

Interview: In advance of DC Food Tank Summit, Cancer Schmancer executive director advocates regenerative, organic non-GMO sustainable farming, claims current ag practices lead people to consume animals, plants filled with pesticides, herbicides, hormones, antibiotics, GMO Round-Up Ready

More North America items

Africa

News: ISAAA reports Ugandan Parliament member wants his constituents to be first to benefit from drought- and pest-resistant GM maize; pledges his support for biosafety bill

Report: USDA GAIN Report finds, despite being drafted in 2014, there is no clear timetable for when or if the Jordanian biosafety law will be ratified by parliament; notes country's animal industry relies on feed imports

More Africa items

Asia

News: Kazakhstan news site reports Kazakhstan business making Italian cheeses without GMOs or additives, says demand is growing for its products; adds cheeses as good as European types

News: Korean business news outlet reports on controversy surrounding recently introduced GMO labeling standards, civic organizations criticized the rules for failing to advocate for consumers' right to know, industry officials noted stricter standards would lead to increase in expensive non-GMO imports

News: Korea Times reports on controversy surrounding government's new rules on GMO labeling, highlights consumer groups' opposition to exemption for processed foods which contain no traces of GMOs in the final product, as well as debate surrounding non-GMO labeling rules

More Asia items

Europe

News: Daily Mail (UK) reports on government approval of field trials for GM wheat by Rothamsted Research, designed with enhanced photosynthetic abilities to boost yields, highlights potential application in other important crops, as well as opposition from GM Freeze

News: BBC reports planting of experimental crop of GM wheat will occur this spring following UK government approval; green organizations concerned the wheat will escape into wild

Commentary: Trinity College professor highlights EU 'paralysis' on GM crop decision-making; says UK absence due to Brexit will not impact on regulatory committee outcomes

News: Italian ag news site reports Italian scientific research association hosted conference to present correct information on GMO benefits and opportunities to overcome ideological opposition to biotechnology; official says precautionary principle is out of date

News: French news site reports police summon man suspected of helping to destroy GM crop field in Dijon on Nov. 4

News release: Hungarian Ag Minister Sándor Fazekas recently spoke at International Green Week in Berlin, affirming Hungary's commitment to moving forward with "traditional, sustainable, non-GM food production and farming practices"

More Europe items

Latin America

Commentary: Mexican news site says Corn Collective accuses Monsanto of dishonesty during lawsuit, launches campaign to publicize studies that claim GMOs damage health, environment

News: Mexican news site reports plaintiffs in GM maize lawsuit against corporations, Corn Collective, launches campaign to present scientific research that GMOs harm health, environment

News: La Jornada reports Corn Collective announces campaign to ban GM maize in Mexico, says it will present scientific research on "dangers of consuming" GMOs

News: Mexican news site reports attorneys in lawsuit against GM maize say Monsanto wants to illegally plant GMOs during trial despite opponents' claims the crop harms human health, environment; say Monsanto wants to prolong the trial

News: Mexican news agency reports plaintiffs in GM maize suit launch campaign to highlight claims of health, environment damage from cultivating GM maize

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Audio: Radio New Zealand interviews Environment Minister Nick Smith on proposed changes to Resource Management Act, he explains why local council restrictions of GMOs won't work, voicing concern about liver cancer treatment trials in Auckland, emphasizes problem with marketing that isn't science-based

Audio: New Zealand news site reports local councils disagree with federal government over who has right to determine if farm land is GMO-free; local farmers say government wants to interfere in GMO decisions

[More Oceania items](#)

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Jan. 31, 2017
 Date: Tuesday, January 31, 2017 9 04:36 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included new media analysis of a recent Trump administration executive order and its impact on a GMO labeling proposal. Commentary on the EU's recent vote to reject new GM maize varieties continued. In Latin America, Greenpeace Mexico released a report on its well-publicized advocacy coordination trip to Cuba.

Consolidated highlights include:

- U.S. industry and political news outlets reviewed the implications of a recent executive order issued by the Trump administration that called for the removal of two regulations for every new regulation approved. The order also required all new regulations to be budget-neutral. The Progressive Farmer reported that the Trump administration's regulatory freeze meant that the USDA might not make its June 2018 deadline for public feedback on a new GMO labeling law. Politico Pro, in a report issued late Monday, noted that the new order was likely to stall the GMO labeling proposal despite the law's Congressional mandate. **See more.**
- In Europe, commentary on last week's European Committee vote over GM maize authorizations continued. Italian media reports noted that Greenpeace Italy and Slow Food Italy had criticized Italian MEPs for voting in favor of the authorizations. The groups noted that Italy currently maintains its moratorium on GM crop cultivation. **See more.**
- Following an advocacy coordination visit to Cuba, Greenpeace Mexico issued a report that praised Cuba's agricultural system for its protection of smallholder farmer rights. The group called for more investment in agroecological practices and praised regional governments in the Yucatan for attempting to implement GE-free zones. **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: Politico reports on latest Trump executive order, indicates demand to cut two regulations for every regulation rule will essentially halt all D.C. rule-making; GMO labeling bill likely to be stalled

News: The Progressive Farmer reports Trump administration's broader regulatory freeze halts USDA plans to seek public comment on implementing legislation creating a nationwide labeling system for foods made with GMOs

Commentary: Forbes columnist Senapathy suggests planned March for Science demonstrates that stifling science is unacceptable; adds anti-science views on vaccines, GMOs cut across political lines, adding biotech isn't inherently good nor bad

Commentary: Seattle news site columnist reports Washington Apple Commission director says industry trusts science behind GMO apples, though fears backlash from consumers less certain about GMO safety

Commentary: Organic Lifestyle Magazine contributor says despite USDA approving non-browning GM apples, like many GM plants, only time will tell if they're safe; adds consumers should buy organic

apples

Commentary: UC Davis animal geneticist Alison Van Eenennaam debunks recent Seralini study claiming to demonstrate link between Roundup and fatty liver disease in rats, pointing to multiple flaws in data and methodology, laments that the study was accepted by a peer-reviewed journal

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Ghana News Agency - Peasant Farmers Association of Ghana claims ag ministry attempted to misinform Ghanaians about implication of Plant Breeders Bill; reaffirms group's opposition to bill

News: Ghanaian news outlet reports on Ag Minister Afriyie Akoto's pledge to support farmers' use of modern technology to boost yields, he noted modern methods other than GM will be employed, and criticized Food Sovereignty Ghana's opposition as uninformed, noting Plant Breeders Bill has nothing to do with GMOs

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science promotes establishment of Gates Foundation-funded Sub-Saharan Africa seed production entity aimed at supplying high quality seed to small and medium enterprises; describes move as way to boost yields, offset crop losses among small-holder farmers

News: Nigeria-based Guardian newspaper reports HOMEF director Nnimmo Bassey tells Bassey Andah memorial lecture attendees the Nigeria Bio-safety Management Act is 'extremely permissive,' and hurts environmental protections

Interview: Nigerian news outlet interviews Country Coordinator of the Open Forum for Agricultural Biotechnology (OFAB), Rose Gidado, who dispels common myths about GMO safety and farmers' ability to save and reuse seeds, she notes farmers are ready for the technology, which will empower them and boost food security

Announcement: African Centre for Biodiversity announces submission of comments on Plant Breeders' Rights and Plant Improvement Bills to the Select Committee on Land and Mineral Resources, voicing concern that the bills will restrict saving, trading, exchanging and sale of seed

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

News: Pakistan news site reports IFPRI report argues Pakistan needs to build up resilience of its ag sector through investment in ag research, science to maintain and increase yields and build tolerance to pests, diseases and disasters

News: Indian news site summarizes GMO controversy, notes scientific consensus says food derived from GM crops poses no greater risk to health than conventional food

News: Filipino news outlet reports on Negros Occidental Governor Alfredo Marañon Jr.'s assessment that its GMO ban ordinance is difficult to implement, following call by sugar industry to ban beverages containing GM high fructose corn syrup

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Eco-activist blogger for GreenBiz amplifies Slow Food Italy criticism of Italy's vote on GM maize authorizations, calls the decision 'hypocrisy' and says legislators aren't listening to citizens

Commentary: Spanish anti-GMO NGO Ecologistas en Accion provides details of recent vote on three GM maize varieties, listing how each member state voted, notes EU Commission's next step is to send the decision to an appeals committee

Commentary: Norway's Biotechnology Council examines frequent evocation of Frankenstein in connection with GMOs, highlights historian Siv Frøydis Berg's opinion that Frankenstein speaks to people's concerns that interfering with nature may produce uncontrollable results

Announcement: Norway's Biotechnology Council announces agenda for its upcoming meeting, which will include discussion of gene drives and GM crop approval applications

News: German news agency reports survey finds most consumers more likely to buy conventional foods than organic products; adds main reason for purchase of organic is consumer concern about pesticides or antibiotics

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News release: Greenpeace Mexico announces publication of new report following its recent visit to Cuba along with members of Mayan communities from Campeche and Yucatan, promotes strengthening agro-ecological model in Mexico, citing Cuba's success, praises Yucatan's declaration of GE-free zone

News release: Mexico's Center of Biological Investigations of the Northwest (CIBNOR) announces development of portable kit to detect 97 percent of genes used to modify crops, Dr. Gracia Alicia Gómez Anduro noted that while GMOs are safe, the kit will provide organic producers with certainty about their crops

[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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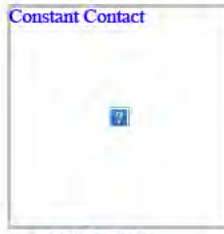
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 Date: Monday, January 30, 2017 9:00:29 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included NGO statements about Ghana's ongoing controversy over the appointment of an agricultural minister. In New Zealand, GE-free regions launched a social media campaign asking for support. Reuters reported on a Mexican court's decision to delay its ruling on GM maize.

Consolidated highlights include:

- In Ghana, the new administration's ministerial appointments continued to generate commentary on agriculture issues. In a statement, the Peasant Farmer Association of Ghana (PFAG) announced that it supported the minister-designate for agriculture, Owusu Afreyie Akoto, in his calls for more investment in the country's agricultural development. However, it added that Akoto was misleading in his statements on the Plant Breeder's Bill and criticized his rejection of Food Sovereignty Ghana's expertise. Food Sovereignty Ghana also issued a statement claiming that the committee reviewing the appointment ignored its objections. [See more.](#)
- New Zealand regions that have declared themselves "GM free" have launched a new social media and video campaign seeking support for regional bans on GM crop cultivation. Government and community leaders from Hastings, the Far North, Whangarei and Auckland have issued a series of videos highlighting the economic benefits of being able to market their exports as GM-free. [See more.](#)
- Reuters reported on the implications of last week's Mexican Collegiate Court decision in which a judge decided not to rule on the temporary suspension of GM maize cultivation permits. The news service quoted a Monsanto executive who said she expects the legal process to continue for "years." [See more.](#)

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

North America

News: Philadelphia Inquirer reports two former U.S. secretaries of agriculture are framing nationalistic pro-merger arguments for Dow-DuPont deal, explaining it would create a US-based giant that could compete with Bayer, Syngenta foreign takeovers

News: Chemical & Engineering News reports on Dow and DuPont's confirmation that planned merger will likely not close until the second quarter, due to prolonged negotiations with EU officials, DuPont CEO Edward Breen noted they will not reduce scientists working to develop new products

Commentary: Bloomberg columnist reports new research identifying way to improve taste of tomato may change public opinion of GMOs; University of Florida biologists says he could make the best tomatoes if public didn't resist GE technology

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: Agrow reports International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications highlights Oklahoma State University study showing Burkina Faso GM cotton adoption has cut pesticide usage by two-thirds

News: Bloomberg reports on Ghana's goal of creating 1.5 million jobs over next two years with increased agriculture investment, Ag Minister Owusu Afriyie Akoto noted government will provide farmers with better seed, fertilizers and training, and will allow use of non-gmo varieties developed by Council for Scientific and Industrial Research

News release: Peasant Farmers Association of Ghana (PFA) praises Ag Minister Owusu Afreyie Akoto for not using his personal opinion on GMOs to promote their introduction in Ghana, but criticizes him for misinforming the public about true purpose of the Plant Breeders Bill, claiming it benefits foreign corporations

News release: Food Sovereignty Ghana criticizes Parliamentary Appointments Committee for neglecting basis of its specific objections to nomination of Owusu Afriyie Akoto as Ag Minister, re-emphasizes position that there is no scientific consensus on GMO safety, and objections to Plant Breeders Bill

News: News Agency of Nigeria reports Nigerian government denies rumors it imported and flooded market with GM rice; biosafety director Rufus Ebegba says the government has banned the import of GM rice, and none is available commercially anywhere in the world

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Commentary: IFPRI blogger summarizes NGO research initiative to develop Nepal strategy to adopt high-quality seeds, citing yield benefits; recommends private sector involvement, mechanisms to strengthen the country's private seed companies

News: Indonesian news outlet reports on People's Coalition for Food Sovereignty (KRKP) National Coordinator Said Abdullah's call on government for support of farmers' seed sovereignty, noting that increasing reliance on imports threatens to introduce new diseases, and highlighting importance of domestic seed production

News: Pakistani news outlet reports ban on cotton sowing before mid April after early planting designed to reduce costs resulting in more pesticide sprayings against pink bollworm, Bt crops became easy hosts to the pest

News: Pakistani news agency reports on unpredictability in growth and performance of ag sector due to climate change, according to Regional Standing Committee on Horticulture Exports chairman Ahmad Jawad, who noted 40 percent of total ag production was wasted in post-harvest due to insufficient utilisation of biotech

News: Times of India reports on Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR) approval of three domestically produced Bt cotton seed varieties by Central Institute for Cotton Research (CICR), with more approvals expected soon, farmers can reuse seeds in subsequent seasons, unlike with Monsanto's varieties

Commentary: Former Chief Technical Advisor of WMO/UN, S Jeevananda Reddy, criticizes Green Revolution technology, claiming it has increased pollution while serving Western multinationals over the Indian public, calls for new Green Revolution to focus on organic production methods

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Serbian news blogger says WTO GMO prerequisites may prompt Serbia to allow import, sales of GM foods

News release: Greenpeace Italy criticizes Italian vote in favor of GM maize authorizations at the EU level

as "pure hypocrisy," as GM crop cultivation is currently banned in Italy, Greenpeace's Federica Ferrario called on EU to reject GMOs and shift towards ecological agriculture

News: U.K. farming news outlet reports on Defra's support of GM maize authorizations in recent vote, suggesting possibility of UK GM crop cultivation post-Brexit, Agricultural Biotechnology Council chairman noted that the maize varieties are not relevant to the UK, but UK's pro-science stance is reassuring

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Food First founder says Monsanto and Bayer were 'waiting in the wings' for the new Administration's approval of Bayer's takeover; note mergers involving Syngenta, DuPont, Dow and ChemChina likely to follow

News: Reuters reports Monsanto executive expects Mexico's GM corn ban to continue for years as slow-moving legal battle continues; adding Trump position on NAFTA may force country to source corn from non-US countries

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: New Zealand news site reports regional councils from GM-free territories launch social media, video campaign aimed to persuade Maori Party to reject government effort to remove power of local bodies to declare free of GMOs

News: New Zealand Herald reports on anti-GMO social media video campaign seeking Maori Party support against proposed changes to Resource Management Act that would prevent local councils from restricting GMOs, Environment Minister Nick Smith noted importance of marketing New Zealand's food via science-based claims

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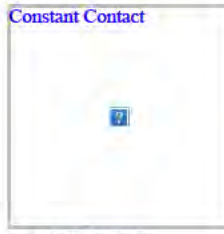
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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - Jan. 30, 2017
 Date: Monday, January 30, 2017 4:03:19 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

A new campaign by the American Chemistry Council has brought added attention to ongoing efforts to challenge the methodology and conclusions of the International Agency for Research on Cancer in its monographs on glyphosate, 2, 4-D, red meat and various other substances. In addition to the ACC campaign, this week's newsletter includes unrelated articles on the flaws in IARC's work.

Other pieces examine the challenges of communicating accurate scientific findings on food and agriculture issues in an era of fake news, alternative facts and truthiness. Developments on several regulatory issues and litigation can be found in the What's Trending section while this week's Stakeholder Spotlight focuses on an effort in Maryland to curb antibiotic usage in animal agriculture.

Please [contact us](#) if you have any questions. The full text of the articles below can be viewed by [logging in](#) to the Bonus Eventus Community site. First-time users will need to fill out the Request Membership form on the front page. To share articles, simply click on the Twitter icon.

In This Issue

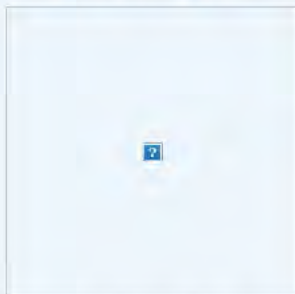
[Stakeholder Spotlight](#)

[Stories Worth Sharing](#)

[What's Trending?](#)

[Calendar highlights](#)

Stakeholder Spotlight: Maryland Campaign to Keep Antibiotics Working



Healthcare, public health, environmental, consumer and animal welfare organizations making up the Maryland Campaign to Keep Antibiotics Working coalition ramped up their advocacy in support of a bill that aims to ban antibiotic use for disease prevention in animals.

The Keep Antibiotics

Stories Worth Sharing

Joseph Perrone: [Activism, inaccurate scientific reporting taking toll on public policy for GM foods, glyphosate](#)

Reuters: [American Chemistry Council campaign seeks reform of IARC, deeming it "responsible for countless misleading headlines"](#)

Julie Kelly: [Congress should investigate IARC after scientists accuse it of causing "unnecessary health scares"](#)

Healthy Directions chief science officer: ["Total loss of credibility" for IARC by putting red meat in class with plutonium, tobacco, asbestos](#)

Walter Sandow Alhassan: [Activist group Food Sovereignty Ghana spreading "misinformation" on GMOs, which have been endorsed as safe by WHO and Nobel laureates](#)

Wayne Parrot and Val Giddings: [Food companies should step forward and defend GMOs, resist activist propaganda](#)

Washington Examiner: [Greenpeace has "damning scientific record," as shown by Nobel laureates' opposition to anti-GMO activism](#)

Graeme Taylor: [Communicating real science on pesticides more challenging as social media replaces conventional media](#)

Oklahoma State University study: [Bt cotton reduced pesticide use and](#)

Effective Act of 2017 was introduced last week in the Maryland Senate, with a hearing set for Feb. 14. A similar bill introduced in the 2015 session died in committee.

The NGO is supported by large national organizations Natural Resources Defense Council, U.S. Public Interest Research Group and Sierra Club. Its members include Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility and Maryland Environmental Health Network, as well as Fair Farms Maryland, whose "partnerships" include Organic Consumers Association, Friends of the Earth, Food Water Watch and Humane Society of the United States. Fair Farms Maryland recently unveiled a "Jermie Superbug" cartoon villain to attract attention to the effort.

LEARN MORE about Maryland Campaign to Keep Antibiotics Working advocacy.

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labor costs, improved yields in Burkina Faso

Alex Berezow: Whole Foods ignores actual food safety issues to focus on "alternative fact" that non-GMO food is tastier and healthier

U.K. researcher: GM crops could help solve food security problem by boosting growing efficiency and nutrition

Science 2.0: Journals becoming lax with peer-review guidelines, notes example of Tyrone Hayes choosing friend to look over atrazine research

Alison Van Eenenaam: U.S. FDA guidance on gene-edited animals is "nonsensical"

Washington Post: Non-browning Arctic apple could sway public opinion on genetically modified foods

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What's Trending?

European Union vote on GM maize authorizations fails to reach qualified majority

Center for Food Safety, other NGOs file lawsuit challenging U.S. EPA approval of XtendiMax dicamba products

Iowa Supreme Court rules Des Moines Water Works cannot collect damages from agriculture drainage districts

Youth Senate demands Kenyan government lift GM ban within 30 days

Canada's PMRA provides new timeline for release of neonic pollinator risk assessments, now due out in December

Calendar highlights

January 31	February 2	February 3
Dave Goulson "Saving Our Bumblebees" lecture at U.K.'s University of Dundee	Food Tank Food Policy Summit in Washington, D.C.	Minnesota Environmental Congress featuring discussions of pollinator health, governor's "Year of Water Action"

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, January 29, 2017 9:27:15 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 European Union member states voting to reject GM maize varieties, although the vote fell short of a qualified majority to defeat the issue. A Mexican civil court postponed a decision on GM maize cultivation after Monsanto requested the case go before Mexico's Supreme Court.

Consolidated highlights include:

- EU member states voted against authorizing three GM maize varieties for cultivation. However, the vote fell short of a qualified majority, leaving the final decision with the European Commission. Anti-biotech NGOs such as Friends of the Earth said the commission should take its cue from the member states and oppose the GM maize authorization. Italian media criticized Italy for voting to approve the GM traits despite the fact that they are banned in the country. **See more.**
- Mexican news sites reported a civil court suspended an expected decision on GM maize cultivation after Monsanto filed a brief to request the matter go before the Supreme Court. An attorney for Demanda Colectiva Maiz, a group of NGO plaintiffs in the case, said Monsanto had lied to the court and now pressured the judges. The NGO group said it would host a news conference Tuesday at which it would announce "new actions" to keep the area GMO-free. **See more.**

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

North America

Commentary: Genetic Literacy Project contributor examines potential of Arctic apple to open door to other GM fruits and vegetables, highlighting its ability to reduce waste, notes anti-GMO activists efforts to intimidate fast food companies against using GM potatoes and apples will only perpetuate cycle of food

Commentary: Forbes' Senapathy writes to "watch out" for buzzword food marketing on issues like organic, non-GMO, natural, cage-free, etc. which incentivize food marketers to imply false food quality and health claims

News: Daily Wire reporter calls Greenpeace good at stunts that inconvenience or endanger others and accomplish nothing, but group takes anti-science, "alternative fact" stance on GMOs, delaying or banning products that help people

Commentary: Gizmodo commentary says scientists must get involved in politics to counter anti-science policies such as GMO labeling, denying climate change

News release: Referencing a study published in the journal Science, University of Florida promotes professor Harry Klee's team that identified the chemical combinations for better tomato flavor

Commentary: Zen Honeycutt of Moms Across America describes experience of attending Monsanto

shareholder meeting where she made wide-ranging health and environmental accusations against glyphosate, dicamba, GMO crops, says meeting was "infuriating" because of unfounded confidence Monsanto has in safety of its products

Commentary: Farm Journal editor posts 'Top 10 Megatrends' that will shape ag industry; says producers should watch GM labeling strategy, ag specialization, and growing environmental regulations

More North America items

Africa

News: South African newspaper reports massive invasion of fall armyworms expected; Crop Life South Africa seeking emergency registration of pesticides not registered for corn armyworms, notes armyworms resistant to pyrethroids

News release: Grain SA reacts to government issuance of US GMO maize import permits, noting imports do not promote local producers' competitiveness if the same GM events are not available to them, believes such exceptions should be made only when food security is at risk

More Africa items

Asia

News: Iranian English language news site reports agricultural minister objects to Iranian Parliament's GMO ban, notes no harm to health, benefits of GM crops, says objections are economically motivated

Interview: The Times of India reports scientist MS Swaminathan says scientists must communicate their work more, help India overcome malnutrition

News: Indian business newspaper reports some blame slowness of agriculture ministry to rein in indiscriminate pesticide, herbicide use for cancer cases in state of Punjab

Report: Report in Acta Horticulturae examines challenges in conducting transgenic research and development in the Philippines, author notes key issues are access to technology and/or lack of know-how, funding constraints, strict regulation, and acceptance and activism, recommends dissemination of science-based information

More Asia items

Europe

Commentary: Swiss news site criticizes media for not reporting on NYT article reports on claims by former Agroscope researcher Amy Hilbeck that GM research is "corrupted," urges Swiss to investigate undue industry influence over public research

News release: EU Green Party argues lack of support from member states in vote on authorization of GM maize varieties means Commission should withdraw its proposals, criticizes member states with GMO bans who abstained or voted in favor of authorization, such as German and Italy, respectively

News: French news site reports anti-GMO activist accused of participating in destroying GM oilseed rape crops in November, group demands public trial

News: UK's Financial Times reports Trump-May trade talk likely to include GM food acceptance, ; the meeting strains both nations' trade relations with EU

News: Citing new Science study, associate editor at The Verge says breeders have identified tomato taste genes, quotes University of Minnesota breeder who says local markets likely to benefit before long-distance commercial growers

More Europe items

Latin America

Commentary: Union of Scientists Committed to Society member writes for Mexican news outlet, believes court should maintain suspension of GM corn permits, links GMOs to several health disorders and negative environmental impacts, claims GM crops have failed to boost yields and reduce pesticide use

Announcement: Contributor to Mexico-based CIMMYT notes its scientists, and those from UK-based Rothamsted Research, have agreed to pool expertise to develop disease-resistant and more nutritious wheat

News: Bloomberg reports on Chile's double standard on GM crops, noting it is a large producer of GM seeds for export, but prohibits domestic farmers from cultivating them, highlights farmers' frustrations in face of worsening drought, Monsanto in partnership with ChileBio seeks to persuade Chileans that GMOs are safe

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News release: New Zealand-based Pure Hawke's Bay notes local GM Free growing regions are calling on the Maori Party to stop the government from removing local powers that protect their GM Free growing status

News release: New Zealand NGO Pure Hawkes Bay launches social media video campaign against Clause 360D of the Resource Management Act bill, which would prevent regional councils from restricting GMOs, the group calls on Maori Party for support, emphasizing economic advantage of GE-free status

News: New Zealand news outlet reports on owner of snack food company Kiwi Garden, Taine Randell's social media campaign calling on Maori Party to oppose government's proposed restriction of regional GMO bans, noting overseas customers do not want GMO foods, and that the move would harm competitive advantage

[More Oceania items](#)

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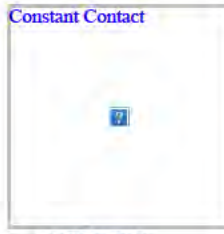
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From: Jay Byrne
 To: [Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS](#)
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Jan. 26, 2017
 Date: Thursday, January 26, 2017 9:01:04 PM

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 reports on European Union member states preparing for Friday's vote on three GM maize varieties. A White House order sent all U.S. Department of Agriculture, Environmental Protection Agency, and Food and Drug Administration rules back to the agencies -- including GM labeling proposals.

Consolidated highlights include:

- NGOs, government officials, and media commented and reported on the expected vote Friday (Jan. 27) by EU member states on whether three GM maize varieties can be cultivated. Politico reported Portugal and France plan to vote against the measure, and Greenpeace noted Luxembourg also would oppose it. Germany's Environmental Minister Barbara Hendricks and the German Union for Environment and Nature Conservation also called on member states to reject the GM maize. [See more.](#)
- Politico reported an order sending rules and proposals back to agencies will delay the USDA's pre-rule proposal to establish a national disclosure standard. [See more.](#)

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

North America

Commentary: Reason Magazine science correspondent Ronald Bailey says FDA draft guidance on regulating GM livestock, issued two days before end of the Obama administration, is 'rife with scientific nonsense'

Commentary: Alex Berezow of American Council on Science and Health criticizes Whole Foods for spreading idea that organic, non-GMO food is healthier and tastier than conventional food, while they ignore real food safety issues, pointing to recent Listeria incident in three regional Whole Foods kitchens

News release: The Donald Danforth Plant Science Center, with grant funding from the Gates Foundation, expands multi-institutional research program to optimize breeding of African sorghum

News: Capital Press reports policy director for Oregonians for Food and Shelter says in-state producers should watch for 'localized efforts' to restrict GM crops and pesticide use at the county and city level

Commentary: CropLife Media Group field editor describes Trump's decision to withdraw from the TPP as puzzling, says it just dealt domestic agriculture interests a 'tremendous blow'

Video: Hawaii Center for Food Safety video features Science Policy Analyst Bill Freese, who claims biotech company operations involving GM crops on the islands serve to increase pesticide use and create pesticide dependence, linking pesticides to several health disorders

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News: iBlackVoices reports on Food Sovereignty Ghana Communications Director Edwin Kweku Andoh Baffour's clarification that the group opposes the Plant Breeders Bill only in its current state, objecting to potential to open up Ghanaian seeds to monopolization by multinationals, following criticism of Ag Minister nominee

News: Ghana News Agency reports on Ag Minister nominee Owusu Afriyie Akoto's promotion of "Planting for Food and Jobs" program before Parliament's Appointments Committee, noting his support of the Plant Breeders Bill is not to promote GMOs, but to provide support to Ghanaian-made improved seeds

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Announcement: International Food Policy Research Institute announces success of zinc fortified rice program for Bangladesh, with three varieties developed by HarvestPlus in partnership with EU Commission, IFPRI-led CGIAR Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health (A4NH), and Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI)

News: Indian news outlet reports on Quality Control Laboratory's (QCL) discovery of misbranded pesticide product, instructing farmers not to use it to avoid crop damage, Directorate of Agriculture Kashmir's enforcement wing conducted various raids and seized 10097 Kilograms of Dithane M-45 manufactured by Saraswati Agrochemicals

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Spanish news outlet contributor warns about negative health and environmental impacts of GMOs and pesticides, noting Spain is the only EU country that grows GM crops on a large scale, believes GMOs, glyphosate and other pesticides should eventually be eliminated, calls on health authorities to put citizens first

Commentary: German anti-biotech NGO Testbiotech announces launch of "Set limits to biotech" project, to provide critical analysis and present political demands regarding biotech, will start by opposing Intrexon products

News: German news outlet reports on recent interview with Monsanto's Robb Fraley at St. Louis headquarters, highlights his belief that feeding the world's growing population will not be possible without GMOs, and that Monsanto's pending merger with Bayer will help improve research and innovation

News release: Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences reports researchers claim organic food offers health benefits due to higher nutrients, restrictive use of pesticide, antibiotics compared to conventional, GMO food; some experts say low levels of difference in nutrients, other chemicals unlikely to result in health difference

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

Commentary: Brazilian NGO warns about increased political power due to agribusiness mergers and impact on peasant agriculture and agroecology, says 'it is our duty to press and make these mergers difficult'

News: Mexican news site reports on protests by peasant groups asking Yucatan state's governor to resist federal government efforts to allow GM corn in country

News: Dominican Republic news site reports agencies present 10 varieties of biofortified beans, includes

those produced with GM, conventional breeding

More Latin America items

Oceania

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

More Oceania items

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 Date: Wednesday, January 25, 2017 9:03:14 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Today's global biotechnology developments included ongoing controversy over the appointment of Ghana's new agriculture minister. Local news outlets also highlighted concerns over Kenya's policy on GM crops. In the U.S., media outlets continued to respond to recent Trump administration decisions on trade and agriculture.

Consolidated highlights include:

- Food Sovereignty Ghana continued to protest over the recent nomination of Owusu Afriyie Akoto to be the country's minister of agriculture. In an interview on Pulse Ghana, the NGO's director said that Afriyie Akoto appeared to misunderstand the difference between GM crops and hybrids. Meanwhile, a spokesperson for the Open Forum on Agricultural Biotechnology criticized the activist group's misleading claims on GM crop health and safety. Afriyie Akoto spoke before the appointments committee today; additional media coverage of his remarks are likely. **See more.**
- In Kenya, university students reiterated their criticism of the federal government's delay in adopting more friendly regulations towards GM crop imports and cultivation. The "Youth Senate" called on the environment ministry to approve GM crop field trials within the month, or else the group would mobilize current and former biotechnology students to seek compensation for their "wasted" education. Also in Kenya, the government announced today that it would implement a GMO labeling scheme in anticipation of the GM crop ban's repeal. **See more.**
- U.S. media outlets continued to analyze recent Trump administration decisions on agricultural policy, including an announced -- and revoked -- gag order on public communications from U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists. The Washington Post reported that the initial order had not been approved by the ranking agency leader and that, in a follow-up news conference with reporters, he clarified that the measure should only apply to policy statements. **See more.**

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North America

Commentary: Wayne Parrot of University of Georgia and Val Giddings of Information Technology and Innovation Foundation write for Forbes, criticize op-ed claiming GMOs had a good 2016; point to several anti-biotech measures over the year and call on biotech and food industries to defend themselves

Commentary: Joseph Perrone of Center for Accountability in Science writes for National Review, examining continued fear-based campaigns against GMOs and glyphosate, in spite of scientific consensus that both are safe, believes pervasiveness of inaccurate science reporting has taken a toll on the public and on policy

News: The Washington Post reports USDA 'scrambles' to clarify memo ordering employees not to communicate with public; notes updated guidance only intended to apply to press releases and policy statements

Announcement: Cargill posts update on its GMO policies, says science is clear on GMO safety and

environmental benefits; adds that Cargill sources both GM and non-GM ingredients, opposes zero tolerance policies

Campaign: OCA asks local readers to attend Oregon Town Hall and to urge state Reps Duane Stark and Sal Esquivel to support a bill that would 'once again' allow counties to regulate GM crops

More North America items

Africa

News: Nigerian TV news site reports scientists say GM rice will help nation meet its own needs, negating need to import rice; "agriculture watchers" worry about GMO safety

News: Ghanaian news outlet reports on Food Sovereignty Ghana communications director Edwin Kweku Andoh Baffour's response to Ag Minister-designate Afriyie-Akoto's statement that he does not support introduction of GMOs, says Members of Parliament do not understand the difference between GMOs and hybrids

News: Ghanaian news outlet reports on Ag Minister nominee Owusu Afriyie Akoto's dismissal of claims that he seeks to introduce GMOs into the country; he told parliament's Appointments Committee that his goal is to provide farmers with improved seeds, fertilizers and extension to boost production

News: Ghanaian news outlet reports on Ag Minister nominee Owusu Afriyie Akoto's dismissal of Food Sovereignty Ghana's claims that he is promoting use of GM seeds in the country, noting his goal is to promote Ghanaian scientists and to provide farmers with access to improved seeds and fertilizers

Commentary: Open Forum for Agricultural Biotechnology (Ghana Chapter) member, Walter Sandow Alhassan writes for Ghanaian news outlet, criticizing Food Sovereignty Ghana's arguments opposing appointment of Owusu Afriyie Akoto as Ag Minister, pointing out flaws in their claims on GMOs

News: Kenyan news outlet reports on government's launch of GMO label for products on sale, in spite of current import ban and lack of commercialization of any GM crops on the market; National Biosafety Authority CEO Willy Tonui noted the label is to prepare for eventual lifting of the ban and future commercialization

News: Kenyan news outlet reports on "Youth Senate" group's ultimatum calling on government to lift GMO ban within 30 days, threatening to mobilize biotech students to seek compensation for "wasted time," and calling on government to order National Environment Management Authority to allow field trial permits

News: Kenyan news outlet reports an activist who questioned National Environment Management Authority's (NEMA) decision to block Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Services (KEPHIS) permit for GM maize research, noting several university biotech students' careers and livelihoods are at stake

More Africa items

Asia

News: Indonesian news site reports officials believe using GM maize will help farmers increase yields

News release: Mauritius announces plans to discuss a National Biotechnology Institute; Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security says biotech is a source of innovation that could contribute to nation's economy

More Asia items

Europe

News: Sputnik reports GMO apples to make US debut in February in a pilot program in ten grocery stores in the Midwest; notes 'concerns and theories abound over genetically-modified crops'

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Mexican news site reports court will decide on an ampore allowing GM maize cultivation, notes main trial still pending; AgroBIO Mexico notes country still imports significant amounts if maize

News: Mexican news site reports civil court will decide on whether or not keep suspension of GM maize cultivation on Thursday

[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 - Jan. 24, 2017
 Date: Tuesday, January 24, 2017 9:03:40 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 that a Mexican court plans to rule on the country's GM maize moratorium this Thursday. Regional news outlets reported that the European Union Trade Committee voted to approve the controversial EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA). In the U.S., local news outlets reported on a recent FDA announcement proposing new regulations for GE animals.

Consolidated highlights include:

- Demanda Colectiva Maiz announced that a Collegiate Court in Mexico was scheduled to rule on the country's GM maize moratorium this Thursday (Jan. 26). The moratorium, implemented during amparo lawsuits filed by NGOs, has been in place since September 2013. La Jornada and Arpo both amplified the statement, quoting litigators associated with the lawsuits who claimed that GM maize could cross-pollinate with native maize varieties. **See more.**
- European news sites reported that MEPs with the Trade Committee voted to approve a free-trade agreement between the EU and Canada. A Portuguese news site reported that the deal could open up the EU market to Canada's GM animal feed and hormone-treated beef products. **See more.**
- U.S. news outlets amplified a Food and Drug Administration statement from earlier in the month, requesting input for its proposed rules on regulating GE animals. Science and technology news outlets quoted a University of California-Davis researcher who warned that the new regulations would negatively impact academic research. Technology media outlet Gizmodo cited those reports and criticized the FDA's proposal, calling the new rules "nonsense." **See more.**
- The Washington Post reported on plans to commercialize genetically modified Arctic Apples, with the initial distribution planned for some Midwestern stores. The article was amplified on National Public Radio and in supportive commentary from the Information Technology & Innovation Foundation. **See more.**

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North America

Commentary: Washington Post blogger predicts Arctic Apple could change public's mind about GM foods since enhancement offers consumer convenience benefit instead of crop yields

Interview: National Public Radio program Here & Now interviews Washington Post reporter about Arctic Apple commercialization

Commentary: Information Technology and Innovation Foundation senior fellow amplifies Washington Post article on commercialization of Arctic Apple, says controversy is made up by organic groups to protect their market share from new, consumer-friendly crops

News: Smithsonian reports first non-browning GMO apples slated to hit US shelves in February; notes new Arctic apples take weeks to turn brown; questions if the modified fruit can 'take a bite out of food

waste'

Commentary: Gizmodo contributor criticizes FDA's proposal to regulate GE animals as animal drugs; echoes UC Davis animal geneticist Alison van Eenennaam's concern that such regulations will make the process more costly, preventing farmers from accessing beneficial new technologies

News: Wired reports on scientists' concerns regarding FDA decision to regulate GE animals as animal drugs, Fyodor Urnov of Altius Institute for Biomedical Sciences in Seattle questioned FDA's logic, noting de-horned cattle could occur in nature, but that gene editing just accelerates the process

News: Molecular research news site reports USDA is considering tighter rules regarding gene-edited animals, UC Davis' van Eenennaam say move creates burden on academics, limits GE research to multinationals

News: BuzzFeed reports USDA scientists have been ordered to stop all science communications, including social media engagement; notes the rule also applies to communications with Congress

Campaign: Canadian NGO Vigilance OGM launches campaign on Metro grocery chain, seeking clear stance on GE salmon, calls on supporters to call Metro or visit their local branches

Commentary: Activist Jonathan Latham criticizes recent article by organic movement leaders in which they called GMO labeling "parochial," argues it is wrong to qualify significance of GMO labeling in any way, claims GMOs are responsible for ecosystem damage, as well as kidney and liver dysfunction

[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: Indonesian news site reports on Lamongan regional farming conference, quotes local administrator who says region could be a pilot project for commercial release of biotechnology-developed varieties

News: Wall Street Journal reports on China's increased food imports from Russia, head of Russia's Far East Investment and Export Agency, Petr Shelakhaev, noted China sees Russian food as safe, following alleged health problems caused by GM foods

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

Commentary: Writing in The Conversation, University of Westminster lecturer says new research areas in GM crops could improve growing efficiency and nutrition; calls technology "powerful" food security tool

News: Portuguese news outlet reports on EU Parliamentary Committee on International Trade's approval of CETA, CETA will allow for Canadian exports of GMOs and hormone-treated beef, opponents criticize lack of transparency and argue that it will benefit multinationals over citizens

Campaign: Corporate Observatory Europe launches manifesto opposing TTIP, CETA, claiming deals will increase imports of cheaper ag products into EU

News release: FAO announces Canada's decision to contribute an additional \$1 million towards scientific and technical work of Codex Alimentarius, International Plant Protection Convention, and World Organisation for Animal Health

Commentary: Anti-biotech site Keine Gentechnik amplifies German Green party statement asking the Bundestag to vote against GM maize cultivation, criticizes possibility of EU approval for new GM maize varieties

News: German news outlet reports on recent protest in Berlin against industrial farming, GMOs and impact of big agribusiness attended by 18,000 people, Roderich Zauscher of Dachauer Bund Nature Conservation was pleased at how well they were represented and at the peaceful nature of the protest

News: Italian news outlet reports on recent biotech conference organized by Chamber to the Luca Coscioni Association, in which treasurer Marco Cappato promoted gene editing as a way to overcome anti-GMO ideologies and revive competitiveness of Italian agriculture

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News release: Demanda Coletiva Maiz reports that, on Thursday Jan. 26, a Circuit Collegiate Court will decide on Mexico's three-year-old moratorium on GM corn; group notes transgenic pollen threatens landrace maize varieties

News: Mexican news agency Apro reports on upcoming court decision on challenges to GM maize suspension brought by ag industry giants, including Monsanto, Bayer and Syngenta, opponents of GM maize argue that it contaminates native varieties

News: La Jornada San Luis reports on upcoming First Collegiate Court in Civil Matters decision on challenge filed by Monsanto and other corporations against suspension of GM maize cultivation, industry argues the courts are not authorized to suspend planting permits, and that the citizen class action is unfounded

News: Mexican news outlet reports on first Civil Collegiate Court of the First Circuit's upcoming decision on whether or not to allow cultivation of GM maize, expected this Thursday, members of Colectividad del Maíz reemphasized their reasons for opposing GM maize, noting they have been released without legal authorization

News: Mexican news outlet reports on First Collegiate Court in Civil Matters of the First Circuit's announcement that it will issue its resolution on transgenic maize cultivation on Thursday, 90 permits are currently being detained by the court's suspension three years ago

News: Mexican news outlet reports on Yucatan's plans to argue case in support of maintaining GE-free status before Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation, and has turned to Greenpeace and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (CEMDA) for its defense

News: Oaxacan news outlet reports on second International Poster Biennial, organized by Institute of Graphic Arts of Oaxaca (IAGO), Union of Scientists Engaged with the Society (UCCS), Pro-Oax and the artist Francisco Toledo, UCCS member Emmanuel González Ortega explained importance of creating awareness of GM maize contamination

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

News: New Zealand Herald reports local research team discovers GE cow's offspring shows phenotype was passed to next generation, appear to have potential to produce genetically altered, hypo-allergenic, high-protein milk

[More Oceania items](#)

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 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Jan. 23, 2017
 Date: Monday, January 23, 2017 9:03:14 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 continued U.S. commentary on the implications of the new administration's policies in agriculture. In Europe, German political groups issued statements late last week criticizing proposed changes to the country's law on genetic engineering. Controversy also continued surrounding the choice of Ghana's new agricultural minister.

Consolidated highlights include:

- In the U.S., food activists criticized President Donald Trump's selection of Sonny Perdue for head of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Civil Eats summarized activist reactions, which highlighted Perdue's ties to the fertilizer industry and his mixed record on environmental protections. Center for Food Safety, in a response to both the USDA and Environmental Protection Agency appointments, said that it would remain vigilant in its protection of human and environmental safety. Late in the day, agricultural groups criticized Trump's decision to withdraw from the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement. **See more.**
- German political groups responded late last week to proposed changes to the country's genetic engineering law. The German Green party and the SPD said that the new changes were too complicated and would make it difficult to enforce GM crop cultivation bans. **See more.**
- Ghanaian farmers told a local media outlet that they supported the appointment of Owusu Afriyie Akoto as Minister-Designate for Food and Agriculture. The Ghana National Association of Farmers and Fishermen (GNAFF) pushed back against anti-biotechnology group Food Sovereignty Ghana, questioning the advocacy group's understanding of farming and farmers' needs. **See more.**

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North America

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science fellow promotes success, further adoption of Bt brinjal in Bangladesh in profile of local farmer who learned that the crop requires no pesticide, has no adverse impact on human health, environment

News release: Center for Food Safety voices on concern of USDA and EPA nominees Perdue and Pruitt, claiming their records of serving interests of agribusiness and pharma-chemical companies will conflict with obligation to serve public good

News: Civil Eats gets reaction from food policy experts to Trump's nomination of Sonny Perdue to be secretary of agriculture; Andy Kimbrell, executive director of Center for Food Safety, points out Perdue signed law as governor of Georgia that barred CAFO regulations, opposed GMO labeling

News release: U.S. Sens. Wyden and Merkley letter to federal officials expresses concerns about deregulation of GM grass they say threatens Oregon's agriculture, recreation, grass seed industry

News: Hawaiian news source reports Kauai County Council expected to pass Bill No. 2643 seeking to

repeal GMO bill at Jan. 25 meeting; Councilwoman JoAnn Yukimura says issues are not dead, public concern still high about GMOs, pesticides

News: Food Navigator reports FDA, USDA push to update on GMO regulation before presidential power shift is in question now that Trump administration has vowed to undo much of Obama administration's policies

Commentary: Community Alliance for Global Justice contributor criticizes World Bank's new Enabling the Business of Agriculture (EBA) indicators for African agriculture, argues that privatization and patenting of seeds makes it more difficult for smallholder farmers to access the technology

More North America items

Africa

News: Ghanaian news outlet reports on Ghana National Association of Farmers and Fishermen's (GNAFF) support of Ag Minister-designate Owusu Afriyie Akoto, in spite of opposition from Food Sovereignty Ghana (FSG), GNAFF Vice President John Awuku Dziwornu questioned FSG's understanding of GMOs, noting they are not farmers

More Africa items

Asia

Commentary: Cornell Alliance for Science fellow promotes success, further adoption of Bt brinjal in Bangladesh in profile of local farmer who learned that the crop requires no pesticide, has no adverse impact on human health, environment

Letter to the editor: Pakistani news source prints letter arguing agriculture needs to be strengthened nationally, biotechnology is underutilized, is solution to build up sector

News: Bangladeshi news source reports Bangladesh Fruits, Vegetable and Allied Products Exporters' Association warns GM potatoes could cause export setback if production is approved, noting many countries do not allow import of GM foods

Commentary: Colin Todhunter writes for Global Research against development of GM mustard in India, claims push for GMOs may lead to food with lower nutrients, increased use of agrochemicals, and worsening soil and environmental health, believes it will only benefit wealthy corporations

More Asia items

Europe

News release: German Bundstag announces recent hearing in Parliament's Committee on Food and Agriculture on proposed draft amendment to Genetic Engineering Act, experts criticized the draft for being too complicated, noting it would be difficult to enforce GM crop bans and could limit innovation

News: German news outlet reports on Green party spokesman Harald Ebner's call for strict regulation and labeling of products of CRISPR, citing possible unexpected consequences, while German Federation of Plant Breeders chair Stephanie Franck noted CRISPR is extremely precise, rejecting call for labeling

News: European Biotechnology magazine reports EU Commission selects two biotech CEOs to advise EU on breakthrough innovations

News: French news outlet reports on activists with Vigilance OGM's operation at a Saint-Maur Jardiland shop, where they filled baskets with seeds to draw attention to sale of "hidden GMOs," produced via mutagenesis

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Brazilian news source reports producers are waiting for National Technical Biosafety Commission to release three new GMO cotton varieties by Bayer, Dow, Monsanto in 2017

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Announcement: Western Australia NGO FOODwatch announces its delivery of petition to WA Government calling for protections for farmers from economic losses caused by GM contamination, claiming coexistence between GM and non-GM crops is not possible

[More Oceania items](#)

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes newsletter - Jan. 23, 2017
 Date: Monday, January 23, 2017 4:05:15 PM

Bonus Eventus Favorable Outcomes Newsletter

Dear Diane,

This week's newsletter begins with a must-read article from David Zaruk's "The Risk-Monger" blog that exposes conflicts of interest behind the creation of the European Food Safety Authority's bee risk guidance document that would make it nearly impossible to prove pesticides pose no risk to bees. The piece offers comparisons to the International Agency for Research on Cancer's classification of glyphosate as a possible carcinogen and goes on to describe how Europe's honeybee population is not even declining, how farmers are spending more time and money using products less effective than neonics and how the lack of access to neonics has **cost European oilseed rape farmers nearly 1 billion euros annually**.

Other articles of note include an update on biotech crop development in Nigeria, a response to Environmental Working Group's annual "Dirty Dozen" list and a warning on how Donald Trump's election has energized fund-raising by environmental NGOs.

As always, please **contact us** with any questions. The full text of the articles below can be viewed by **logging in** to the Bonus Eventus Community site. First-time users will need to fill out the Request Membership form on the front page. To share articles, simply click on the Twitter icon.

In This Issue

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

Stakeholder Spotlight: Food Tank



NGO and consultancy Food Tank recently announced its annual Washington, D.C., conference with speakers including Andrew Kimbrell from the Center for Food Safety. The Feb. 2 **Food Policy Summit** is one of four major events planned this year by the NGO - with others in Boston in April, Sao Paulo

■ Stories Worth Sharing

[David Zaruk exposes conflicts of interest, activism behind creation of EFSA's "unworkable" bee risk guidance document](#)

[Bad Science Debunked: If "Health Ranger" Mike Adams is so against GMOs, why does he sell so many in Natural News Store?](#)

[Sri Lanka ag research scientist questions whether there is any proof linking glyphosate to chronic kidney disease](#)

[Kavin Senapathy: Girl Scouts should avoid "non-GMO" fluff, stand by scientific consensus on biotechnology](#)

[Paul Driessen: Listing of bees as endangered an unjustified power grab by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Obama's last days as president](#)

[Henry Miller and Drew Kershen: International Seed Treaty "runs counter to science, agricultural development, and intellectual property rights"](#)

[Capital Press: Environmental NGOs report surge in donations following Trump election, with litigation a key tactic on farming issues](#)

[Ohio State University professor: Genetic engineering helps](#)

in August and Los Angeles in October.

Food Tank's advisory board includes organic industry consultant Charles Benbrook and Food & Water Watch executive director Wenonah Hauter.

The NGO notes corporate sponsors include Chipotle, Annie's Organic and Organic Valley while it also receives validation from "partnerships" with major international food and agriculture development organizations.

LEARN MORE about Food Tank advocacy.

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environment by reducing pesticide usage, boosting water quality and soil health [?](#)

Washington Post: Diet rich in fruits and vegetables outweighs the risks of pesticides; dietitian says foods on "Dirty Dozen" list are safe [?](#)

Alliance for Science fellow promotes Nigeria's biotech prospects, including hope to commercialize Bt cowpea and Bt cotton in 2018 [?](#)

Cracked: Despite listing of a few species as endangered, America's bee population is rising [?](#)

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What's Trending?

U.S. Food and Drug Administration seeks comments on draft regulations for gene-edited foods, animals

Seralini research claiming glyphosate causes fatty liver disease promoted by NGOs, activist media - [Monsanto response](#)

NGO creates "Jermie Superbug" character in push for Maryland legislation to curb antibiotic use in livestock

French court throws out beekeepers' lawsuit against Bayer, finds no causal link between bee deaths and Gaucho pesticide

Calendar highlights

January 23-24	January 24	January 24
EU Commission Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed meeting	Center for Food Safety "Biotech Myths Busted" webinar	PBS airs documentary on "Silent Spring" author Rachel Carson
January 25	January 27	January 31
Meeting of the Presidential Advisory Council on Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria	Guelph Organic Forum featuring Jonathan Latham keynote on "What is the future of genetic engineering?"	Dave Goulson "Saving Our Bumblebees" lecture at U.K.'s University of Dundee

CLICK HERE TO ACCESS FULL EVENTS CALENDAR

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

Monitoring portal

Catch up on the latest news and other developments impacting regulations on agriculture.

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From: Jay Byrne
 To: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Jan, 20-22, 2017
 Date: Sunday, January 22, 2017 9:53:33 PM

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Global Biotech Snapshot

Expert analysis from v-Fluence

BONUS EVENTUS A communication cooperative seeking good outcomes in food and agriculture

Global biotechnology developments over the weekend included national and international media, academic and NGO commentary on the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's proposed regulations governing genetically altered animals. Reporting continued regarding Arctic apples, which will be released in test markets in February.

Consolidated highlights include:

- The FDA's revised biotech regulation proposals generated substantial reaction from industry, media, and activists. Friends of the Earth criticized the proposal, saying loopholes would allow gene-edited products to escape oversight. The University of California-Davis criticized the regulations that treat gene-altered animals as drugs. The American Seed Association and the American Soybean Association reacted favorably to the new rules. **See more.**
- Media, including CNN and The Huffington Post Canada, reported that Arctic apples will be sold in 10 stores in the Midwest beginning in February. Okanagan Specialty Fruits director Neal Carter says the non-browning GM apples will provide cost savings by eliminating anti-oxidation treatment. The apple also will be a the first test of QR labeling, according to Food Dive. **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: [Kavin Senapathy writes for Forbes, criticizing Girl Scouts for bowing to anti-GMO pressure in releasing their first verified non-GMO cookie variety, notes it conflicts with the organization's STEM advocacy, and demonizes a safe technology that can improve sustainability and boost food security](#)

Commentary: [Genetic Literacy Project contributor notes in part 1 of 3-part series that GMOs originating in "labs" are no different than conventional food, notes much DNA already shared by different organisms](#)

News: [Capital Press analysis claims environmental NGOs financially benefiting from Trump election; analysts outline anticipated campaign tactics](#)

News: [Independent news site reports Oregon senators ask FDA to reconsider GE bentgrass deregulation due to invasiveness of the product, says eradication attempts have failed](#)

News: [Restaurant news magazine reports restaurants still reject GMOs despite approval by FDA due to consumer concerns](#)

News: [Politico's "Morning Agriculture" column reports Iowan Sam Clovis leading Trump's "beachhead" team at USDA to lay groundwork for new president's agenda; Trump praises his nominee for USDA secretary of agriculture; environmental groups petition USDA, SBA for moratorium on loans to poultry farmers in Arkansas](#)

Commentary: [CFS Policy and Program Coordinator recognizes women farmers participating in the](#)

'Women's march on Washington'; highlights Navdanya among participants

More North America items

Africa

Commentary: Alliance for Science Ghana's open letter urges Ghana president to support scientific innovation, agricultural biotechnology

News: The Ugandan reports as members of Parliament resume the debate over GMOs, activists tell local MPs 'GM foods will maim and kill Ugandans'

News: Kenyan news outlet reports on National Assembly's Agriculture Committee's support of research for locally produced GMOs to boost food security, committee chairman Adan Mohammed Noor noted they are against lifting the ban on GMO to encourage local production, which will empower farmers and researchers

Commentary: IFPRI Director says Africa's youth employment issue is fundamentally one of 'investment in science'; notes current levels of investment in Africa 'cannot support modernization'

News: Nigerian news outlet examines debate surrounding GM crop adoption, highlighting government promotion of public sensitization efforts, as well as activist opposition, examines calls to promote indigenous biotech activities

More Africa items

Asia

News: Indian news site reports ICAR professor says India needs GM crops to help meet developing foodgrain crisis, to empower poor farmers, notes Nobel laureates endorse GMOs

Study: Chinese researchers' study finds GM plants impact soil microbial communities, but draw no definite conclusions on whether or not the impact is negative

More Asia items

Europe

Commentary: Inf'OGM says Trump's agricultural secretary appointee is pro-GMO, received money from Monsanto, BIO named him governor of the year

Commentary: German news outlet contributor examines several useful developments in gene editing, believes public mistrust of old GMOs does not bode well for the new generation, highlights researcher Joachim Schiemann's belief that over-regulation will make it so that only corporations can afford to invest in gene editing

News: Wall Street Journal reports on EU antitrust authorities' concern that Dow-DuPont merger will inhibit innovation competition, Dow states the merger is pro-competition and will provide customers and consumers with greater innovation and choice

Commentary: French General Confederation of Labour says Canadian trade agreement will open up European market to GMOs, ban farm seed production, and increase corporate control of food

News: Belgian news site reports Monsanto notified EU of error in paperwork for Roundup-ready GM soy approval 10 years ago, notes GM soy used for 10 years was not like the one authorized

News: EU Observer reports a proposal to allow member states to ban use of GM ingredients in food will likely remain in "legislative limbo" for several months, as Maltese presidency has not planned any discussion by ag ministers, summarizes debate surrounding the proposal

More Europe items

Latin America

News: Mexican news site reports National University of Córdoba researcher says GM soy and pesticides have "terrible impact" on health of those living near fields

News: Mexican news site reports group stages sit-in at Mexican agency for indigenous people, says GM corn affects the land, damages honey production by bees

Event: Mexican news agency reports on Jan. 21 forum on food sovereignty and risks of GM maize in Oaxaca with UNAM official and director of city's botanical gardens

News: Bolivian news site reports using GM corn, soy would increase yields, generate \$66 million in income

News: Mexican news site reports peasants protest, request governor to declare Yucatan a GMO-free zone

[More Latin America items](#)

Oceania

Campaign: FOODwatch urges voters to tell candidates in upcoming election they want Western Australia to be GMO-free

[More Oceania items](#)

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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: Wray-Cohen, Diane - FAS
 Subject: Global Biotech Snapshot - Jan. 19, 2017
 Date: Thursday, January 19, 2017 9:02:56 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 reporting and commentary on the U.S. Food & Drug Administration plans to regulate gene editing. A letter from a group of NGOs requested that the World Bank stop funding business interests in agriculture.

Consolidated highlights include:

- *Genome Web* reported the FDA plans to take a "product-specific, science- and risk-based approach" to regulating gene-edited animals, food, and therapeutic products. A *Nature* contributor asserted that many researchers may be disappointed, having hoped for less stringent rules. The article pointed out it's unclear how Donald Trump's administration will proceed with the proposal. **See more.**
- The Oakland Institute released an open letter from NGOs calling on the World Bank to end a project supporting business interests in agriculture because it threatens farmers' access to seeds. **See more.**

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North America

Campaign: Organic Consumers Association says corporate interests have overrun government, outlines plan to force companies to reduce use of GM ingredients and force transitions to organic or regenerative ag

Commentary: Mother Jones' Tom Philpott criticizes Donald Trump's likely approval of Bayer-Monsanto merger, following his recent meeting with the companies' execs, dismissing jobs pledge, notes the new entity would control 29 percent of global seed market and 25 percent of global pesticide market

News release: Friends of the Earth blasts President-elect Trump's pick of Sonny Perdue to lead USDA, asserts ag secretary must support farmers in meeting consumer demand for cleaner food grown without "synthetic hormones, routine antibiotics, GMOs or toxic pesticides"

Commentary: Food Integrity Campaign blogger examines potential for CRISPR to revolutionize food and medicine, highlighting current and possible future applications, as well as debate on regulations, believes medical applications may make CRISPR more acceptable to the public

News: In brief report, Politico says USDA has sent pre-rule for federal GM labeling legislation to the Office of Management and Budget; agency seeks public comment on options for implementing the law

[More North America items](#)

Africa

News release: Food Sovereignty Ghana strongly objects to nomination of Dr. Owusu Afriyie Akoto as

Minister-Designate for Food and Agriculture, in light of his belief that GMOs are safe, FSG argues that America and Burkina Faso are attempting to shift away from GMOs, and claims safety studies are all industry-funded

[More Africa items](#)

Asia

Study: Chinese researchers find potential gene expression changes in wolf spider exposed to Bt rice through consumption of rice pests, call for additional review of the interaction

Campaign: Third World Network email campaign amplifies Jack Heinemann's article highlighting multiomics studies that claim GMOs not equivalent to non-GMOs, urges re-assessment of GM crops, glyphosate

[More Asia items](#)

Europe

News: Agence France-Presse reports Trump's appoints Sonny Perdue as Agriculture Secretary, says Perdue supports GMOs, pesticide use

News: French environment news outlet reports on recent CRIIGEN event, featuring presentations on two studies which question GMO safety assessments, one of which claims to demonstrate lack of substantial equivalence and toxicity in GM corn, and the other claiming that application of Roundup can cause disturbances in GM plants

[More Europe items](#)

Latin America

News: Mexican news site reports 80 people protest against government support for GM maize in Yucatan

Report: USDA GAIN Report finds that while Panama has made progress in animal biotech, and has approved GE corn seed imports for local production, overall biotech development is 'not a current government priority'

News: Mexican news site reports artist Francisco Toledo asks Oaxacan governor to declare area GMO-free to protect native corn

[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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