

Industry "Wheat Biotechnology Commercialization" Statement

Author: Lucy

Sharratt<info@cban.ca><p>WheatBiotechnologyCommercialization
StatementofCanada

n,AmericanandAustralianWheatOrganizations</p><p>May14,2009</p><p>Intheinterestofexpressi

ngsupportformoreefficient,sustainableandprofitableproductionofwheataroundtheworld,theundersig

nedorganizationshaveapprovedthefollowingjointstatementconcerningcommercializationofbiotechno

logyinwheat:</p><p>1.Wheatisavitalfoodtoallpeoplesoftheworldandwebelievethatbydevelopinghigh

eryieldingbetterqualitywheatvarietieswecanbettersupplytheworldwithwheatfoodproducts.</p><p>2.

Oneimportanttoothelpfeedtheworldintothefutureisbiotechnology.Basicagronomicimprovements

to

wheatlikestrengtheningdiseaseandinsectresistance,enhancingwheat'suseofsoilnutrientsandwater,i

ncreasingitstolerancetoweatherextremeslikedroughtandfrost,areallpossiblewithbiotechnology.An

ot

hercriticalareaforbiotechnologyistoimprovethe nutritional aspects of wheat to facilitate healthier living for

peopleallovertheworld.Biotechnologyisnottheonlyanswer to these questions, but it will be a significant co

mponent in solutions.</p><p>3.Inmanyofourproductionareas,wheatproductionisunderpressurefrom

ompetingcropswhich,throughtheapplicationofbiotechnology,haveachievedhigherproductivity,red

ucedinputuse,andotherbenefitsnotavailableinwheat.Asaresult,thehistoricareaofwheatproductionhas

eclinedinmanyareasandeconomicshave driven producers away from wheat and into other crops if they hav

e alternatives.If wheat continues on a non-

biotech course, then farmers will continue to devote a greater share of their acreage to biotech crops, where p

rofitability is relatively greater, resulting in lower world wheat production than would otherwise be the case.<

/p><p>4.Ingeneral,wheat yields are on a very slow growth trend in comparison with competing crops, and th

elonger it takes to increase the growth rate the bigger will be the hole from which the industry must climb.</p>

<p>5.Biotechnology is a proven technique to deploy traits of interest with a high degree of precision in agricul

tural crops.Crops derived through biotechnology are subjected to strict regulatory scrutiny before commer

cialization.Over10yearsofglobalexperiencewithbiotechnologyhasdemonstratedaconvincingrecordof

safetyandenvironmentalbenefitsaswellasqualityandproductivitygains.</p><p>6.Lackofprivateandpu

blic investment in wheat research has left wheat development behind the advances in competing commodit

ycrops,andhasalsoledtoashortageofscientificexpertiseinwheatresearchgenerally.Byprovidinganopp

ortunityforprivatecompanies,thelevelofactivityinwheatresearchwill expand and attract a new generation

ofscientistsintothe field.</p><p>Inlightoftheseresolutions,wewillworktowardthegoalofsynchronized

ommercializationofbiotechtraitsinourwheatcrops.Whilenoneofusholdavetoovertheactionsofothers,w

ebelieveit is in all of our best interests to introduce biotech wheat varieties in a coordinated fashion to minimize