



ABIC 2004

12-15 September, Cologne, Germany

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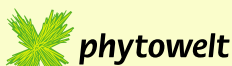
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Ludwigshafen, 01/06/04

Lifting of GM ban: A positive Sign for Plant Biotech in Europe

The recent decision of the European Commission to approve a GM corn variety for commercialization is a positive signal for the future of plant biotechnology in Europe. It is an important step to finally unblocking the approval process for new GM products after five years of stagnation due to the "de facto" moratorium. In addition, the Commission's legal guidelines on genetic engineering, labeling of GM products, and co-existence for GM and non-GM agriculture set clear conditions for exploiting the great potential of plant biotechnology in the European economy. Despite that, a number of member states are still hesitant to implement the EU directives as required in order to allow cultivation of GM crops in Europe as well. This might risk jeopardizing Europe's opportunity to reap the economic benefits and will also widen the gap

between Europe and other parts of the world where there is no doubt about the success of plant biotech. This is even more inconsistent because the European Union declared in Lisbon 2000 its intention to become, within a decade, "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world". The EU's position further states that biotechnology has the potential to improve the quality of foodstuffs and animal feed as well as the use of non-food crops for industrial applications. Only by quickly providing practical conditions for GM agriculture in the EU member states, can Europe profit from its excellent position in basic and applied biotech research. Such a sign is also needed by industrial partners which are able to transform research into products and are willing to invest in European biotech.



Dr. Hans Kast
President and CEO of BASF Plant Science
Hans Kast has a Ph.D. in chemistry from the University of Stuttgart and joined BASF in 1980. From 1993 to 1997 he was President of BASF Japan. Prior to heading the BASF Plant Science in 2000 Hans Kast was President of BASF's Consumer Products & Life Science Division in North America. Since 2001 he also serves as vice chairman of EuropaBio.

All BASF activities involving plant biotechnology are incorporated in BASF Plant Science. BASF Plant Science coordinates an international research and technology platform with seven sites in four countries in Europe and North America.

Through use of plant biotechnology BASF Plant Science seeks to develop crops that provide a healthier diet through improved constituents as well as plants with improved cultivation properties for example improved tolerance to drought.

Dr. Florence M. Wambugu is the founder and Chief Executive Officer of Africa Harvest Biotech Foundation International (AHBFI) www.ahbfi.org. An agricultural plant pathologist specialized in virology, she has spent the past 25 years researching genetically engineered plant protection solutions for agricultural and development institutions in Africa, Europe and America. She has authored or co-authored over 100 papers and publications in local and international journals and written the book **Modifying Africa: How Biotechnology can benefit the Poor and the Hungry** (www.modifyingAfrica.com). (2001)
Dr. Wambugu holds several awards and honors from local and international institutions in recognition of her outstanding work in Africa.



Nairobi, 01/06/04

Afrika needs Agbiotechnology

As an activist, Dr. Wambugu has long been a proponent of integrating biotechnology into efforts to improve Africa's food situation and promote self-sufficiency on the continent. As a scientist, her research played a key role in the development of an experi-

mental virus-resistant sweet potato that she hopes will one day find its place in farmer's fields. Her efforts have helped build scientific capacity in Kenya and stave off a food crisis there, but they've also ruffled the feathers of several [page 02_▶▶▶](#)

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Different varieties of sweet potatoes

anti-GM groups who say she's legitimizing their favourite bogeyman. In this month's featured interview, Wambugu answers those critics and lays out her plan for a more prosperous Africa.

? **We'll start with the name of your company: "Africa Harvest". You've written a lot about using the latest technologies to harvest Africa's genetic diversity and indigenous knowledge. Can you expand on that?**

■ There are 16 international centers gathering genes from plants in Africa and around the world, but this information is not being utilized equally on all continents. As a member of the board of the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute in Rome, I've had an opportunity to observe directly the way different countries handle their gene banks - and countries in North America and Europe are doing a much better job of mining the genetic diversity for traits than help them improve their crops. The diverse genes of maize, for example, have been selectively bred over the years, and that's one reason it's been so successful as a food plant. Another reason, of course, is that it is planted with the proper inputs, meaning water and fertilizer and whatnot. This combination brings productivity and surplus in places like Europe and the US.

In Africa, we've done a good job of gathering genetic information on our plants, but the weak point has been utilization. We need to access science to get it to work for the poor. That means using genetic diversity to empower people economically by raising the productivity of our crops. It's important to stress that technology can't solve all of our problems, but it can be a component which, when combined with improved inputs in services, pesticides, infrastructure, and so on - as well as good governance policies and improved soil fertility - can rock development. Towards this end, we've concentrated on projects that deliver results, which we can use as a demonstration of what can be accomplished. The idea is that if you show how something can be accomplished in one region, you can then scale it up later and use it in other regions.

? **Would your efforts to develop a virus-resistant sweet potato fall into that category?**

■ Not exactly. The virus-resistant sweet potato is an unfinished project that I worked on a while back. It follows me everywhere I go, and I don't regret that, but I am not currently involved in it. The legacy of the work we did on that is that Nairobi now has a biotransformation lab where six Kenyan scientists are doing their own research. This is important for several reasons. Not only does it enable us to slow the brain drain by keeping scientists here, but it enables us to lay the groundwork for good regulatory policy. The reason for this is that regulators won't develop policy just because some foreigners tell them what to do. They need to have expert local scientists to help them develop it - and, of course, they have to have something to regulate in the first place.

? **And then you get this iterative effect of regulatory certainty allowing more entrepreneurial risk-taking and attracting more scientists...**

■ Yes, but for Africa it's important not to just hop on the GM bandwagon. You can't let this be perceived as a panacea. You can't let efforts to support biotech detract from efforts to improve infrastructure. Look at China - they're not just promoting biotech, but are developing the entire food safety sector. The same can be said of parts of South America - Brazil and Argentina and India.

In Africa, we need to concentrate on the banana, the cassava, yams, and other indigenous crops. Not all global crops, like canola and soybean, can be used to solve the food problems of Africa. We can't expect some big company to come in and provide us with genetically engineered yams, because there's no money in it. We have to have our own African agenda.

? **What, then, is an example of a project that has been scaled up to other regions?**

■ Well, there's the Biotech Tissue Culture Banana Program, which we started in 1996, when I was Director of the AfriCenter of the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications (ISAAA). We carried out this project using funding from the International Development Research Centre, which is a Canadian organization that has been active in Africa for decades. To date, we have helped more than 500,000 small-scale farmers improve their banana yields. This project began in Kenya, but is expected to spread - with support from the African Union (AU) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) - to Malawi, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and other African countries. We're also using tissue culture technology - as opposed to genetic engineering - on reforestation projects. The idea is to persuade farmers to use fast-growing trees such as eucalyptus for their firewood so they don't cut down the old-growth forests. It's important because people need firewood, and if you just tell them to not cut down the trees without giving them an alternative, they won't listen.

? **You mentioned regulation, and you concede there are risks in biotechnology. What are the legitimate risks we should be focusing on?**

■ The biggest legitimate risk is ignorance, because you can't discuss scientific risks with people who don't understand what you're trying to say. When you don't know about a subject, you might avoid something that can give you benefits - or, conversely, you might use something that you're not qualified to use. A child with a knife might cut himself, for example. Furthermore, if don't understand something, you become a target for people who have their own agenda, and you get pulled from one side or the other. This kind of ignorance can be deadly. Kenya and Zambia are good contrasting examples. When there was a food crisis in Zambia European-based anti-GM activists put pressure on the Zambian government to reject GM food aid. At one time, Kenya

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Cologne, 13/05/04

A NEW LANDMARK FOR COLOGNE

A seven-storey banner has been unfurled from the main building of BioCampus Cologne, home of the ABIC Conference Office and one of Germany's largest Biotech Business Parks.

Printed on a special weather-resistant material, the 12-meter-wide banner powerfully communicates the importance of Agbiotechnology for the future of modern agriculture and the significance of ABIC 2004 to the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia and the City of Cologne.

The BioCampus building, formerly the main building of the Nattermann AG - a pharmaceutical enterprise specialized on natural compounds - is the tallest building in the western suburbs of Cologne.

The BioCampus will be one of the stations of the Biotech-Tour that will be part of the ABIC 2004 program.

faced a similar situation, but the government - based on advice from scientists - made a decision to accept GM food aid. We are happy that Zambia is today building necessary human and infrastructural capacity that will enable it to make independent and informed decisions in future. Africa Harvest believes in providing factual information that will make Africans make informed decisions on the GM opportunity.

? What is your primary critique of NGOs, and which ones do give high marks to?

The majority of the groups out there are interested in killing business or making this a GM-free world. It's a crusade, and there's nothing in between. If somebody is not willing to listen, you cannot discuss anything with him.

Having said that, I think NGOs such as Oxfam have a right approach to the GM debate. Others like Christian Aid also seem genuinely concerned with how the poor are going to access technology. They're asking right questions. Their attitude is: show us how this benefits the poor. And they raise legitimate issues. I see what they mean, for example, when they say technology alone won't make a difference. But you also see them listening when you argue that the use of GM technology would not be increasing 15% each year if it were so dangerous, or when you ask them to look at the reduction of pesticides in America, which is well-documented.

The key thing here is that I can show you people who have benefited from our work, but I have not met one person who has been fed by anti-GM lobby groups. They're running around telling people not to eat GM food, but they're not giving them an alternative. If you tell me not to eat GM food, the next thing you know is that I'll be eating poisonous roots or dying.

Cologne, 27/05/04

Green meets Green

On May 27th, Dr. Peter Welters, chairman of ABIC 2004 and CEO of the biotech companies Phytowelt and GreenTec, had the opportunity to publicly discuss the current European GMO regulations and their treatment by the German government with two local consumer protection powerhouses: Bärbel Höhn, a member of the environmental Green party and secretary of Consumer Protection, Agriculture and Ecology for the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia, and Waltraud Fessers, a representative of an NGO for consumer protection in the state of Rhineland-Palatinate. Roughly 100 people attended the panel discussion in Cologne's Ehrenfeld (Field of Spikes) quarter, which was moderated by the journalist Andreas Vollmert from the local TV and radio station WDR. The discussion focussed on the issue of how GM food should be labelled. Dr. Welters approved fully of

? A lot of these groups worry that American industry is just using Africa as its laboratory. Is that a legitimate charge?

Not only is that unfounded, but it's patronizing. It implies that Africans are too dumb to manage their own affairs. The truth is that only countries with regulatory systems are seriously considering the technology. If you want to do biotech research in Kenya or South Africa or Egypt, you have to apply for permit, you have to demonstrate proper testing, you have to show it's safe. Only then are you allowed to do a release.

? You've talked about the agenda of certain NGOs, but the fact is that the agenda of big companies is to make money and not to save the world. How do manage that agenda?

I don't see the big companies as being evil, and there is absolutely nothing wrong with their agenda to make profits. There is a greater challenge for African governments, proponents of biotechnology and those with genuine concerns to define an African agenda. This is what Africa Harvest has been saying in the last three years. We have been saying that biotechnology must address African problems. Recently, the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), expressed concern that the GM industry was concentrating on four crops. Our view is that there is space for the biotech companies to make profits while helping Africa address some of its immediate challenges related to hunger, malnutrition and poverty. Through the Africa Agriculture Technology Fund (AATF), private sector biotech companies have responded to the challenge to help Africa by offering some of their intellectual property (IP) free of royalty. We believe this is a step in the right direction.

Interviewer: Steve Zwick



from left: Bärbel Höhn, Waltraud Fessers and Peter Welters

strict labelling rules as he believes that "Genfood" will become a synonym for "Good Food". The audience proved to be well-versed on the issues of the day, asking pointed questions about biosafety trials with transgenic maize, determinations of running beetle populations by Phytowelt, experiences with transgenic cotton, and the significance of GMOs for small scale farmers in developing countries.

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CALL FOR POSTERS

Best three posters will win one delegate ticket.

You are invited to take part in the ABIC Poster Session competition. The contest is open to all non-commercial institutions. The subject of the work presented should be in relation to the topics of the program (see below).

The best 3 posters selected by an independent committee will be awarded with a free ABIC 2004 delegate ticket. The deadline for poster submission is July 2nd, 2004.

For participation, registration as a delegate is required. For more details please contact the **ABIC Conference Office** or mail to:

posters@abic2004.org

► PROGRAM UPDATE

The full program can be downloaded as a PDF-file from this location:
www.abic2004.org/download/ABIC2004_program.pdf

Trade Fair Conditions and Rates

Complementary with the conference, the business of AgBiotechnology will have the unique chance to present products and services. The Trade Fair will take place in the localities of the Cologne Fair. Main Sponsors will present in the especially well located exhibition area at the Auenplatz, which is the central place of the Congress Center West. Due to its immediate vicinity to the Netherlands, Belgium and France and being less than one flight hour from Great Britain, the Cologne Fair is the place of choice to get in contact with European customers and partners.

BOOTH RATES

In HALL 3 50 pre-equipped booths of 9 m² will be available. The price per square meter is Euro 250,- (+ V.A.T.). In addition, raw space is available with minimum size of 15 m²; the price for the raw space will be Euro 190,- (+ V.A.T.) per square meter.

9m² booth (pre-equipped):

Regular: Euro 2250,- + V.A.T.

Premium: Euro 3750,- + V.A.T.

15m² booth: Euro 2850,- (raw space) + V.A.T.

The full exhibitors manual will be sent to you on request.

DELEGATE REGISTRATION RATES

Prices include Breakfast, Lunch and Beverages

Regular Rate: Euro 750,- + V.A.T.

(after July 2nd 2004)

Academic Rate*: Euro 375,- + V.A.T.

Student Rate*: Euro 250,- + V.A.T.

One Day Delegate Rate: Euro 250,- + V.A.T.

Exhibitor Delegate Rate: Euro 250,- + V.A.T.

Group Discounts: 3-5 Delegates: - 10 %
6 or more Delegates: - 15 %

Early Bird Rates:

(all before July 2nd 2004)

Early Bird Regular Rate: Euro 675,- + V.A.T.

Early Bird Academic Rate*: Euro 350,- + V.A.T.

Early Bird Student Rate*: Euro 200,- + V.A.T.

* Academic and Student Delegates: You must provide verification of academic or student status to qualify for the Academic or Student rate.

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Special Partnering Event

One session of the Conference program will be fully dedicated to the subject of Business Partnering (see program below). Approximately 20 companies will be given time and technology to appropriately present themselves as part of the **Premium Partnering Package**. Throughout ABIC a special area in the trade fair hall will provide optimized partnering procedures for registered partnering event participants. In addition a special section of the ABIC website www.abic2004.org will be reserved for the partnering event. This service will be made available in due time.

PARTNERING RATES

Regular Partnering: Euro 350,- + V.A.T. (one to one meetings plus Web Partnering)

Premium Partnering: Euro 750,- + V.A.T. (Business Presentation at Forum plus Regular Partnering)

Prices are added to Delegate Rates. Partnering possible throughout ABIC to allow participants to arrange meetings at convenience.

Session (Day)	The Business of Biotechnology	Advances in Plant Improvement	New Opportunities through Biotechnology
01	The Role and Importance of Ethics for Agricultural Biotechnology in Europe <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Round Table Discussion 	Controlling Expression in Transgenes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulating Expression of Transgenes in Plants • Expression of Genes in specific Tissues • Environmental Assessment of Risks and Benefits of Regulated Expression 	Plants as green factories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies for producing PMPs* in Plants (Molecular Farming) • Improvement of Fiber Crops by Genetic Engineering • Engineering New Biosynthetic Pathways * Plant-made pharmaceuticals
02	Co-existence of Transgenic and Non-Transgenic Crops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gene Flow and Co-Existence • Scientific Basis of Co-Existence • Ecological Impact of GMOs 	Synergies between Breeding and Biotechnology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genomics/Allele Mining • Advanced Mapping Tools • Use of Model Genomes 	Biotechnology and Food Security for the Resource-Poor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of the Need for new Solutions: Africa • Case Study of a real Biotech Solution: Mexico • Biotechnology for Food Security in Developing Countries in the Context of Global Warming and Prospects for Organic Agriculture
03	Business Forum: Consumer Benefits and Industrial Perspectives of AgBiotechnology / Industry Presentations		
04	The Business of Biotechnology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investments in Biotech in Japan • Dos and Dents for Biotech Start-ups • Today's and Future Markets in Plant Biotech 	Improvements in Non-Food Crops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biotechnological Applications in Forestry • Oil Palm Breeding and competitive Approaches • Biotechnology and Ornamental Plants 	Nutraceuticals as Links between Food and Health: Using Biotechnology to Improve Our Food <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polyunsaturated Fatty acids • "Golden Rice" • Classical Breeding / Food Processing / Fortification

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