



Biotechnology

Overview: Biotechnology offers great promise for consumers around the world. Acceptance by consumers depends on a continued effort to better inform about the environmental and health benefits this technology provides. Due to the complexity of the technology and the lack of acceptance by some markets, the future of biotechnology will require new management practices by biotech providers, producers, grain merchandisers, and food processors.

NCGA has attempted to balance producers' desire for new technology with the critical need to meet customers' needs. The very integrity of the U.S. corn crop is at stake. We have adopted policy that states we "Support the commercial release of biotech corn hybrids or products that have been fully approved by the relevant U.S. and Japanese regulatory agencies and for which the product registrant is aggressively pursuing approval in every country or bloc that requires approval prior to importation of corn, corn products, or food containing corn ingredients."

Some biotechnology products require extensive management. Trained and certified growers must have the skills and ability necessary to produce these crops with proper audits. Containment and isolation of plant derived biologicals (PDBs) are critical issues that must be resolved in order to protect traditional markets, and realize the promise of this technology.

NCGA supports the following:

1. Federal policy should allow the opportunity to develop and grow these new products based upon scientific risk assessment(s).
2. Each class of proteins should be grown and handled based on the scientific risk assessment.
3. Each class of proteins should have specific requirements for regulatory approval.
4. We believe the following requirements should be adopted when growing PDBs:
 - a. Isolation from commodity corn
 - b. A grower training, testing and auditing program to implement standard operating procedures.

5. NCGA recommends a review of the following procedures used by the PDB industry for:
 - a. Seed production;
 - b. Grain production; and
 - c. Utilization of by products.
 - We are working with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to ensure that these agencies understand farmer views and production limitations. Also, we continue to explain to international consumers the strength and accuracy of the U.S. regulatory system.
 - NCGA supports FDA's voluntary labeling system for food and feed products that identifies attributes that are important to consumers. The information conveyed by the label must be accurate, and based on sound science.
 - As a grower organization, NCGA has worked diligently to assure insect resistance management (IRM) procedures are based on sound science and that they are easy to understand and implement. NCGA has helped educate growers on the importance of insect resistance management.
 - NCGA continues to have a complete database of biotech hybrids. This database is utilized through the Know Before You Grow program. The Know Before You Grow program goal is to help farmers and grain buyers around the globe identify hybrids with marketing restrictions prior to finalizing purchasing decisions.