
Biotechnology Industry Organization Research Priorities Presented to the USDA, CSREES

The agricultural biotechnology industry has celebrated two significant milestones in 2005. First, the year marks the 10th anniversary of commercialized biotech crop plantings, and second, in May, we marked the planting of the one billionth acre of biotech crops. These two points help to demonstrate that agricultural biotechnology is the most rapidly adopted technology in the history of food production.

The development and subsequent adoption of this technology could not have been possible without a strong regulatory system and federal research partnership. We recognize that this dependence on a strong regulatory system and federal research dollars will only increase as we move to the development of what is often referred to as "second generation" biotechnology products.

BIO supports sustaining and enhancing federal funding for food and agricultural research, extension and education to help bring about research outcomes that provide a range of major public benefits. *We believe increased federal support for food and agricultural research and education should be a key component to develop sound food and agricultural policy.*

BIO believes that public funding for agricultural biotechnology research conducted through programs of the USDA in CSREES and ARS is critical to discovery of new biotech solutions toward production of improved, healthful and safe foods that will feed the global population of the future. A recent analysis by the International Food Policy Research Institute of 292 studies of the impacts of agricultural research and extension published since 1953 found an average annual rate of return on public investments in agricultural research and extension of 48% -- an extremely high rate of return by any benchmark. Therefore, BIO supports increased funding for the key competitive grants and for intramural research, including the Biotechnology Risk Assessment Research Grants Program and the National Research Initiative.