



Search the site

Go

[HOME](#) | [WHY A FREEZE](#) | [FREEZE SUPPORTERS](#) | [ACTION](#) | [PUBLICATIONS](#) | [NEWS & PRESS RELEASES](#) | [ARCHIVE](#) | [CONTACT](#) | [LINKS](#)

[HOME](#) > News & Press Releases

[PRINT](#)

GM Crop Expansion Limited in 2009 - ISAAA

Immediate release 23 February 2010

GM Crop Expansion Limited in 2009

ISAAA figures show reduced areas in seven countries

The latest data from the ISAAA on GM crops around the world [1] reveals that seven out of 25 countries had reduced GM cultivation areas in 2009 and another remained static. The data from the industry-funded group reveals that no new countries grew GM crops during this period.

The combined area of all GM crops in 2009 covered just 2.7% of all agricultural land. [2] Very little of this production went directly to feed people, as most went into animal feed (GM maize, soy and canola), industrial scale biofuels (GM maize, soy and canola) or to produce cotton.

The expansion of GM maize in Brazil alone accounted for over 60% of the 9 million hectares increase in GM cultivation area in 2009. In seven other countries the area under GM crops actually fell in 2009 (compared with 2008), including two of what ISAAA describe as "mega" countries:

- China's GM cultivation area was down 3%;
- Paraguay's GM cultivation area was down 19%.

The only other country with significant growth in area was India, where Bt cotton cultivation expanded. However the biotech industry received a major setback recently when the Indian government placed a moratorium on the approval of GM Bt brinjal (aubergine) for commercial production pending further scientific assessment on safety and cross pollination. The decision followed months of mass protests throughout the country. [3]

Globally the same six countries continue to dominate GM cropping: US, Brazil, Argentina, India, Canada and China grew nearly 95% of all GM crops, while the remaining production area in 20 other countries remains low. One crop, GM herbicide tolerant soybeans (mostly Monsanto's Roundup Ready), accounted for 52% of all GM crops. In all, GM soybeans, maize, cotton and canola accounted for over 99% of all plantings, demonstrating that no new GM crops have been adopted on any scale since GM crops were first grown commercially.

The US grew the highest number of different types of GM. However, deregulation of GM herbicide tolerant alfalfa and GM sugar beet have both been suspended by US courts because of the failure of the US Environmental Protection Agency [4] to conduct an environmental impact assessment on the crops.

The ISAAA report fails to assess weed resistance to glyphosate, which has

Press & News Releases

[GM Freeze response: NFU Scotland call for more GM "train wrecks"](#)
25/03/2010

[A Tale of Two Spuds: The tasty alternative to GM potatoes](#)
22/03/2010

[Monsanto's Bt Cotton Hits Resistance Trouble in India, New Pests Emerge](#)
08/03/2010

[EC approval of GM potato](#)
02/03/2010

> [GM Crop Expansion Limited in 2009 - ISAAA](#)
23/02/2010

[GM Freeze Welcomes GM Brinjal Decision](#)
09/02/2010

[Bayer hit by \\$1.5 million penalty for their failure to control GM Rice](#)
09/02/2010

[Major Concern about the Appointment of GM Scientist as CEO of Rothamsted Research](#)
28/01/2010

[GM Herbicide Tolerant Crops Escalate the Herbicide Arms Race](#)
19/01/2010

[FSA GM Dialogue Must Put Citizens First - New Survey raises concerns](#)
25/11/2009

[GM Freeze Calls for Re-Think on Research Priorities as Warwick HRI Merges](#)
19/11/2009

[Illegal GM flax found in UK bread – FSA fails to protect consumers](#)
05/11/2009

[France to introduce GM-free labelling](#)
04/11/2009

[Comment on Royal Society Agriculture Report: UK must reinvigorate non-GM research](#)
23/10/2009

[Illegal GM Flax now in 30 counties including the UK - No official action from the FSA](#)
08/10/2009

[Illegal GM flax in 10 EU countries? - FSA still fails to act in UK](#)
23/09/2009

[Illegal GM contaminates flax, UK fails to](#)

become a major problem in GM herbicide tolerant crops in North and South America. [5] More weed killers are being used to combat this problem, and in the US the total of amount of herbicide used each year has increased since GMHT crops were introduced in 1996. [6]

In Europe, the majority of GM maize (the only crop approved for cultivation) was again grown in Spain, but there was a 4% fall in the area grown in 2009. Figures given by ISAAA for the EU reveal that the area fell in five out of seven of the principal maize growing regions in Spain in 2009 [7] - a decline that began in some regions in 2004.

Elsewhere in Europe the area of GM maize fell for the second year in a row:

- Germany's GM cultivation (where a ban was introduced in 2009) was down 100%;
- The Czech Republic's GM cultivation was down 31%;
- Romania's GM cultivation was down 57%;
- Slovakia's GM cultivation was down 54%.

The area in Poland under GM remained static in 2009. Five other EU countries have banned the cultivation of Monsanto's GM maize. [8]

Recently published figures reveal the extent to which GM crops are being converted to biofuels rather than used to feed people. In 2008 12.2 million hectares of GM crops in the US were used for biofuels (19.5% of total US GM area and 10% of the global GM area). [9] The majority of this was from the conversion of maize into bio-ethanol. GM maize and soya production in Latin America is also being used to produce biofuels, but detailed data are not available.

Africa remains an unreceptive area for GM crops with only three countries growing any. ISAAA claim a large increase in Bt cotton area in Burkina Faso. However, the Bt cotton seed price in Burkina Faso is reported to exceed the total input costs of non-GM cotton farmers in other parts of West Africa [10] by more than a third. A recent study of GM Bt cotton crops presented strong evidence that many poorer farmers had "been bypassed altogether" and were not benefitting from using GM seed. [11]

The percentage of smaller farmers growing GM crops remains very low at 2.75% of the 513 million [12] around the world. Via Campesina - the global network representing small and peasant farmers - has rejected GM crops. [13]

Commenting Pete Riley of GM Freeze said:

"The world continues to demand and rely on non-GM crops, with more than 97% of farmland producing non-GM food.

"Meanwhile the GM industry continues mainly to produce animal feed and biofuels. The lack of labelling of food products from GM fed animals has left the majority of people in the world in the dark and enabled the trade in GM soybeans and maize for animal feed to continue.

"The ISAAA report reveals that in many countries the appeal of GM crops is waning, and the growth they claim is heavily dependent on a handful of countries. Claims that GM crops are benefitting poor farmers do not stand up to close scrutiny.

"What the world needs is a rethink about how we apply our money and brain power. We need to shift away from expensive GM models geared to intensive, high carbon production systems towards agroecological methods

[Mega GM Contaminates Wax - UK fails to respond](#)

14/09/2009

[Egypt's Ban on GM Food "Sensible" - GM Freeze](#)

14/08/2009

[Defra/FSA Ignore Food Security as they try to please the GM lobby](#)

13/08/2009 21:08:36

[Defra/FSA Ignore Food Security as they try to please the GM lobby](#)

13/08/2009 21:08:36

[GM Jam Tomorrow is not a Sound Foundation for Food Security](#)

10/08/2009 21:08:33

[GM Freeze Calls for Openness and Transparency on GM Test Sites](#)

29/07/2009 21:08:33

[DFID's Agricultural Research Strategy Heading Down a Blind Alley](#)

20/07/2009 21:08:32

[Cautious Welcome for Welsh Measures on GM Coexistence](#)

30/06/2009 21:08:32

[GM Freeze Condemns EU Farm Ministers on Meat from Cloned Animals](#)

24/06/2009 21:08:32

[Dow GM Soya Crop: a step back into the Dark Ages](#)

12/06/2009 21:08:31

[GM Freeze responds to Attack on Academy Of Environmental Medicine](#)

28/05/2009 21:08:31

[Talk on GM Pesticide Risks in Parliament](#)

15/05/2009 21:08:31

[New report undermines Vatican meeting](#)

14/05/2009 21:08:30

[Open Letter Calls for the RTRS to be Abandoned](#)

12/05/2009 21:08:30

[Germans Ban GM Maize](#)

14/04/2009 21:08:29

[GM Freeze Welcomes Wales' GM-Free Resolve](#)

24/02/2009 21:08:29

[ECJ Ruling Scuppers Plans for Secret GM Test Sites](#)

18/02/2009 21:08:29

[UNDOING THE ISAAA MYTHS ON GM CROPS](#)

11/02/2009 21:08:28

[Industry GM Crop Figures Massaged: EU Four times too high for 2007 - 2008 ISAAA data due out soon](#)

22/01/2009 21:08:24

[Key Questions for GM Investigation Following Somerset OSR Contamination](#)

10/01/2009

[UK Companies Not Prepared for Cloned Animals - consumers could be left in the dark](#)

16/12/2008 21:08:18

[BBC had advance warning on unbalanced Horizon programme](#)

27/11/2008 21:05:54

[Joint Open Letter to Royal Society re: Crop Production Study](#)

26/09/2008 21:00:35

[GM Freeze calls for Thorough](#)

that use local natural resources and harness the combined knowledge of farmers and scientists to produce crops without wrecking the planet."

Calls to Pete Riley 0845 217 8992 or 07903 341065

Notes

1. ISAAA (International Service for the Acquisition of Ag-biotech Applications), Brief No 41, Global status of Commercialized Biotech/GM Crops 2009. ISAAA *"shares the benefits of crop biotechnology to various stakeholders, particularly resource-poor farmers in developing countries, through knowledge sharing initiatives and the transfer and delivery of proprietary biotechnology applications"*. ISAAA is funded by the major biotech companies, industry bodies and USAID and USDA (see <http://www.isaaa.org/inbrief/donors/default.asp> <http://www.isaaa.org/inbrief/donors/default.asp>). The current report is sponsored by two banks: Fondazione Bussolera in Branca, Italy and Ibercaja in Spain.
2. According to ISAAA GM crops occupied 134 million hectares in 2009. This is out of total area of agricultural land of over 4.9 billion hectares (source FAO).
3. See <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/india/7196372/India-drops-GM-food-plans.html>
4. See <http://www.ca9.uscourts.gov/datastore/opinions/2009/06/24/07-16458.pdf> and http://www.earthjustice.org/library/legal_docs/9-21-09-order.pdf
5. See http://www.gmfreeze.org/uploads/resistance_short_final.pdf
6. See http://www.organic-center.org/science.pest.php?action=view&report_id=159
7. See table 36 of ISAAA report. In some areas the appeal of GM crops started to wane several years ago - in Madrid the area has fallen by 90% since a peak in 2004, and in Castilla-La-Mancha by 62% in the same period.
8. France, Germany, Austria, Greece, Hungary and Luxemburg have banned Monsanto's Bt maize MON810 because of health and environmental concerns.
9. See <http://checkbiotech.org/node/27660> <http://checkbiotech.org/node/27660>
10. See <http://www.grain.org/research/contamination.cfm?id=84>
11. Glover, D, 2009. *Underlying promise: Agricultural Biotechnology's Pro-Poor Narrative Ten Years on*. STEPS Centre, University of Sussex.
12. Von Braum, J, 2008. *Poverty, Climate Change, Rising Food Prices and Small farmers*. Presentation to the International Fund for Agricultural Development Rome, April 2008. See http://www.ifad.org/gbdocs/repl/8/ii/e/presentations/IFAD_21-04-08.pps
13. See http://www.viacampesina.org/main_en/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=721&Itemid=37

Last updated 23/02/2010

© GM FREEZE

[Investigation of GM Contamination Incident](#)

12/09/2008 21:02:31

[GM Freeze Welcome Prince Charles's Comments on GM Crops](#)

14/08/2008

[GM Test Locations Should Remain Public says GM Freeze](#)

28/07/2008

[Cabinet Office Food Report Lacks Balanced Analysis on GM](#)

07/07/2008

[Brown and Woolas short on GM facts and history](#)

19/06/2008

[Non-GM Crops Dominate in World Agriculture](#)

17/06/2008

[Defra approve GM Potatoes Application](#)

09/05/2008

[Debenham's GM Ban Welcomed](#)

28/04/2008

[GM Freeze Call for Government, Industry and Scientists to Respond To IAASTD](#)

15/04/2008

[Science and Agriculture Panel Urged: Don't Be Taken in by GM Hype](#)

02/04/2008

[Illegal GM Rice "Unsafe" say FSA](#)

27/03/2008

[Urgent Action Needed on Potentially Hazardous Illegal GM Rice Contamination](#)

10/03/2008

[GM Industry Claims Grossly Exaggerate GM Importance](#)

14/02/2008

[GM Freeze Supports Call for Moratorium on Synthetic Biology After Artificial Genome Assembled](#)

25/01/2008

[GM Freeze Calls on IAASTD to Press on Despite Biotech Industry Taking Their Ball Home](#)

18/01/2008

[Chief Scientist's Misleading GM Claims: GM Freeze calls for a public apology](#)

17/12/2007

[King Exaggerates GM Progress](#)

27/11/2007

[FSA face GM Rice Review - Freeze Calls for Select Committee to Oversee Agency](#)

27/11/2007

[Defra Coexistence Consultation Farce](#)

08/11/2007

[Internal Documents Reveal Government Collusion with Industry on GM Potato Trial Licenses](#)

31/10/2007

[GM Freeze Welcomes Suspension of GM Crops in France](#)

30/10/2007

[Key Questions for the FSA's GM Rice contamination Review](#)

25/10/2007

[GM Rice Contamination Remains a Mystery – Lack of Records Hampers investigation](#)