

ABC welcomes ISAAA report into the use of biotech to help meet the challenges of a growing population and climate change

- *70 countries adopted biotech crops through cultivation and importation in 2018.*
- *Biotech crops can increase yields, improve resistance to pests, and reduce waste.*
- *ABC calls on the government to adopt science driven, proportionate regulation in agriculture to ensure UK farmers are able to benefit from these technologies.*

A new report by the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA) has found that a total of 70 countries adopted biotech crops in 2018, to help meet UN Sustainable Development Goals including hunger, malnutrition and climate change.

Crop technologies – including advanced breeding techniques such as GM and genome editing – are improving productivity by tackling challenges such as pests, diseases and changing climatic conditions, whilst reducing water usage, greenhouse gas emissions and other inputs.

The report highlights that biotech crop plantings have increased to nearly 200 million hectares since their introduction in 1996, showing biotechnology is the fastest adopted crop technology in the world. However, neither UK nor most EU farmers are able to benefit from this technology, due to the dysfunctional EU approval system for new GM innovation.

Whilst Brexit will pose huge challenges to agriculture in the UK it does present a near unique opportunity to adopt science driven, proportionate regulation in agriculture, which fosters innovation to support UK farmers whilst also protecting consumers and the environment, reducing overall environmental impact.

Commenting on ISAAA's report, Mark Buckingham, Chair of the Agricultural Biotechnology Council said: *'We welcome the findings of the ISAAA's report, showing that across the world more farmers are choosing to adopt biotech crops to tackle key global challenges. Technologies in genetics, biological and digital tools for farming are moving fast, but the EU is failing to move with the pace of innovation. We call on the UK to embrace science and support innovation in farming'*.

ENDS

Notes to editors

For more information please contact Amy Trenter on amy.trenter@abcinformation.org or 020 7025 2300.

ISAAA report:

- You can access the more information about the report, including [executive summary](#), [infographics](#) and more at the following link: <http://isaaa.org/resources/publications/briefs/54/>

Agricultural Biotechnology Council (abc):

- abc is the umbrella organisation for the agricultural biotechnology industry in the UK.
- abc works with the food chain and research community to invest in a broad range of crop technologies – including conventional and advanced breeding techniques, such as GM.
- The member companies are BASF, Bayer, Corteva and Syngenta.