

20th AMIC Annual Conference

Demystifying Crop Biotechnology: Issues and Concepts for the Asian Media

In-Conference Workshop

27 June 2011, Taj Krishna Hotel, Hyderabad
and ICRISAT-Patancheru, Andhra Pradesh, India



Sponsors

- Asian Media Information and Communication Centre (AMIC)
- Department of Biotechnology, Government of India (DBT-GOI)
- International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT)
- International Services for the Acquisition and Application of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA)

Overview

For scientists and world leaders, agri-biotechnology holds the key to food sufficiency and security. The challenge, however, is that agri-biotechnology has been misunderstood by the public, especially genetic engineering. Hence, there is widespread public suspicion and lingering resistance against agri-biotechnology, especially genetically engineered crops (GECs).

Communication is therefore crucial in overcoming the public's misperception against GECs and the need for informed decision-making towards supportive policies on GECs. Likewise, informed media coverage will help consumers understand and support agri-biotechnology.

Hence the media plays a crucial role in communicating agri-biotechnology since it is the public's primary source of science information. This role should be optimally harnessed to help scientists and scientific institutions, inform, educate and mobilize the public as an enlightened user of agri-biotechnology products.

In this context, a media colloquium on reporting agri-biotechnology will be jointly conducted by AMIC, the Department of Biotechnology, Government of India (DBT-GOI), International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) and International Services for the Acquisition and Application of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA).

The colloquium aims to:

- (1) Share contemporary challenges, issues and concerns related to crop biotechnology;
- (2) Enhance the appreciation and understanding of Asian media practitioners and researchers on crop biotechnology; and
- (3) Share science stories on crop biotechnology for the Asian media.

The colloquium will be conducted in two parts. The first part will be held as a plenary session at the Taj Krishna Hotel. For the second part, selected participants will be ferried to the Platform for Translational Research for Transgenic Crops (PTTC) at the ICRISAT campus in nearby Patancheru for lunch, a tour of its transgenic research facilities and a dialogue with the media.



Program

Part I (Taj Krishna Hotel)

- 0900 - 0945** Overview & Welcome Remarks – Rex Navarro, *Director of Communication, ICRISAT*
Special Address – Ang Peng Hwa, *Board Chair, AMIC*
Special Address – SR Rao, *Adviser, Department of Biotechnology, GOI*
Inaugural Address – William Dar, *Director General, ICRISAT*
- 0945 – 1015** Global State of Crop Biotechnology – Clive James, *Chair, ISAAA*
- 1015 – 1030** Tea/coffee break
- 1030 – 1050** Transgenics for Sustainable Agriculture – KK Sharma, *Director, PTTC and Principal Scientist, Genetic Transformation Laboratory, ICRISAT*
- 1050 – 1110** Communicating Agri-biotechnology – Randy Hautea, *Global Coordinator, ISAAA/ Mariechel Navarro, Manager, Knowledge Center, ISAAA*
- 1110 – 1120** Book launch: *Communication Challenges and Convergence in Crop Biotechnology* – William Dar, Clive James and Ang Peng Hwa
- 1120 – 1140** Agri-biotechnology and the Asian Media – Sundeep Muppidi, *Secretary General, AMIC*
- 1140 – 1240** Trip to ICRISAT

Part II (ICRISAT Campus)

- 1240 – 1330** Lunch and Tour at PTTC-ICRISAT
- 1330 – 1430** Media dialogue
Panelists:
William Dar, *Director General, ICRISAT*
Clive James, *Chair, ISAAA*
SR Rao, *Adviser, DBT-GOI*
Kalinga Seneviratne, *AMIC*
Moderator: Rex Navarro, *Director of Communication, ICRISAT*
- 1430 – 1440** Synthesis – Rex Navarro
Emcee – CP Bejosano, *Head, Science Writing and Media Relations, ICRISAT*