Biotechnology Guiding Principles

Plant biotechnology is about improving the genetic makeup of crops. Selected genes are inserted into the plants to improve their growth properties or ingredients. This is a refinement of traditional breeding methods.

At BASF, we believe that the responsible application of this technology is helping humankind in facing the huge challenges we are expecting in agriculture. Plant biotechnology is expected to produce nutritional, healthy and affordable food for a growing world population. It is also expected to produce renewable feedstock and conserve resources.

Plant biotechnology delivers totally new opportunities to improve crop characteristics. The result is for example a higher yield per acre. Plant biotechnology can also make plants less sensitive to adverse environmental conditions and to benefit the consumer, e.g. with a healthier diet.

We recognize and fully appreciate the unique scientific, philosophical and ethical implications of plant biotechnology.

At BASF, we have adopted principles to guide decision-making as we apply biological knowledge and techniques to develop products and services for the benefit of our customers, shareholders and society.

We pursue biotechnology in alignment with Responsible Care®, EuropaBio’s Core Ethical Values and our BASF Corporate Values:

1. We believe in promoting dialogue. Although, there is an enormous support from thousands of studies and a long term practical experience with the cultivation of genetically modified plants showing that genetically enhanced plants are as safe as conventionally bred crops, we take the concerns about plant biotechnology seriously.

2. We take an active part in the ongoing public debate and dialogue with stakeholders to understand their concerns and to help us progress responsibly.

3. We inform the public about benefits, relevant risks, and potential implications of our biotechnology products and processes, and encourage others to do the same.

4. We are sure our plant biotechnology products are safe. Rigorous safety studies are available for every single genetically enhanced crop on the market. As a result, these plants are much more extensively checked for their potential effects on humans, animals and the environment than any other new crop developed by conventional breeding. Respective studies are conducted according to international standards and are the basis for commercial approval. In addition, environmental monitoring is done during cultivation of GM plants.

5. We promote research on the potential benefits and safety of our biotechnology products and services for humans, animals, and the environment.
6. We support the development and implementation of internationally harmonized approaches to biotechnology safety analysis and promote the creation of a predictable and scientifically sound regulatory framework to manage potential risks, and assure public confidence.

7. We apply our established corporate Standard Operating Procedures for highest quality in laboratory, greenhouse, transport and field as well as quality control; our Stewardship Program including Quality, Compliance and Responsible Care; our Identity Preservation System for greenhouse and field; the Regulatory Guidance Documents; and our Emergency Response Plan. In addition, we follow the standards of the Excellence Through Stewardship ETS, a global initiative of the biotech industry, as well as the Biotechnology Quality Management System BQMS. This process includes a thorough consideration of the safety, identity preservation and traceability of our work and our products as well as of the impact on humans, animals, the environment, and society, throughout the lifecycle of all our biotechnology products and services and take appropriate corrective actions, that means improve our procedures if needed.

8. We support the sustainable use of biological resources. We promote studies on measuring the sustainability of products and production processes through the entire life and production cycle of a product and a plant.

9. We promote these principles throughout the industry and value chain.