



I.D.E.A. Industry Update - September 13, 2004

******EU Approves GMO Seed for Planting Across Bloc***

The European Union was cited last week as approving the first biotech seeds for planting and sale across EU territory, angering green groups who maintain they could contaminate other crops. The European Commission also dropped a proposal on seed purity, which would have set thresholds for the genetically modified organism (GMO) content in standard seeds, a move welcomed by the greens. The European Commission authorised 17 different seed strains of maize engineered by Monsanto from a parent crop that won approval for growing just before the EU began its biotech ban in 1998 that lasted nearly six years.

Health and Consumer Protection Commissioner David Byrne was quoted as saying in a statement that, "The maize has been thoroughly assessed to be safe for human health and environment. It has been grown in Spain for years without any known problems," adding that it would be clearly labelled as GMO maize to give farmers a choice.

Under an established legal procedure, once an EU state gives the green light for a seed to be sold on its territory -- and assuming all EU legislation is complied with -- the Commission is obliged to extend that authorisation onto an EU-wide basis.

The European Commission said it was unable to reach consensus on the purity of seeds containing GMOs and it would probably be the next executive, taking office in November, which would take a decision.

Spokesman Reijo Kemppinen said there were divisions within the 25-member college over the threshold level -- the proposal would have allowed batches of maize and rapeseed to contain 0.3 percent GMOs before being labelled as genetically modified. A more detailed economic impact assessment was needed, he added. *(Source: Agnet)*

******I.D.E.A. Annual General Meeting and Conference***

The I.D.E.A. 6th Annual General Meeting and Conference will take place February 7-8, 2005, Winnipeg, SK, in conjunction with the CAAR Convention. Keep posted for details.

502 - 45th Street West, Second Floor
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
CANADA S7L 6H2

Tel: (306) 933-4904
Fax: (306) 244-4497
office@independentdealers.com

*****Canol@Grow Speeds Canola Production Information Transfer**

The Canola Council has launched Canol@Grow, an exciting new Web-based agronomic tool designed to help growers and extension workers quickly find key canola production information to assist in maximizing canola profitability, says John Mayko, the Canola Council's Agronomic Research & Extension Manager. Canol@Grow merges key elements of three previously released tools, the popular Canola Growers Manual, the Canola Growers Decision Support System CD, and the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Matrix.

Mayko explains the recently revised (2003) Canola Growers Manual is the most comprehensive base of practical canola production information available. The Decision Support CD is an extension of the manual and uses an interactive menu driven approach to help diagnose production issues. The IPM matrix was developed by the federal Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) to assist in identifying and implementing practical IPM strategies on the farm.

Canol@Grow offers users an interactive approach to solving canola production issues, and access to a considerable storehouse of information on IPM, which is becoming a much more important factor in crop management, says Mayko. He explains that management refers to the timely and appropriate use of pest control methods including natural, cultural and chemical approaches.

Canol@Grow features a series of main topics, each with user friendly drop-down menus. For example, a grower looking for information on safe storage conditions for canola would simply click the menu item "Crop Production." From the drop down menu that appears, the user would then click on "Storing/Conditioning Canola" and highlight "Factors Affecting Safe Storage."

"Canol@Grow is designed to bring practical and pertinent canola production information to anyone with Internet access, in a format that is easy to navigate, and easy for us to update as new information becomes available," says Mayko.

Canol@Grow is a key component of the Canola Council's Canola Advantage program whose mandate is to extend practical crop production information to growers and industry in a timely and effective manner. Canol@Grow was developed with support from the Pest Management Regulatory Agency Sustainable Pest Management Program.

To access Canol@Grow, go to: www.canola-council.org/production/icp/icp.aspx (Source: Agnet)

*****Monsanto Sees Growth in Seeds**

Monsanto Canada is, according to this story, confident its acquisition of Advanta Seeds will accelerate its development of new commercial seed varieties for growers.

Monsanto spokesperson Trish Jordan was cited as saying the marriage of the two Winnipeg-based firms will create one of the top two canola companies in Western Canada and combine a pair of successful breeding programs, and that the eventual goal is to take the best attributes of both companies and combine them into a single entity, adding, "We're hoping to develop a new, strong and successful canola seed company. Heading into the 2005 season, growers won't see any difference. From a business perspective, I think it should send a pretty clear message to the marketplace that Monsanto is committed to Canadian agriculture and the success of Canadian growers."

Bruce Howison, president of Advanta Seeds, was cited as saying he thought the deal was a positive one for both businesses, adding, "Monsanto has made significant investments in the science and biotechnology and trait businesses and Advanta has been a clear leader in the hybrid canola sector of the industry. The combination of these two will better position the company and our customers for the future." (Source: Agnet)