

## **GM crops area expanding**

Planting of genetically modified (GM) crops worldwide has considerably risen over the past five years and during this year. According to Monsanto Holdings Ltd., GM crops are being cultivated in 44.2 million ha, up 11 per cent from previous year's 39.9 million ha.

Since 1996, there has been a 25-fold increase in area compared with the last five years. This adoption rate of biotech crops was the highest for any new technology by agriculture industry standards, International Service for Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA) reported. Argentina was on the fast track for GM crops with a reported increase in area of 3.3 million ha for 2000, reflecting an increase in modified soya bean and corn, and a modest increase in cotton. In the United States, there was a net increase of 1.6 million ha in soya bean, cotton and canola. South Africa increased plantings by 100,000 ha for transgenic corn and cotton; Australia by 150,000 ha for cotton; and China by 200,000 ha for Bt cotton.

Four countries – the United States with 30.3 million ha, Argentina with 10 million ha, Canada with three million ha and China with 0.5 million ha – accounted for 99 per cent of the global transgenic crops' acreage in 2000. A significant rise was observed in cotton acreage worldwide. (Agriculture and Industry Survey, January 2001)