

Three key opportunity areas for agri-biotech industry

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New Delhi: Looking ahead to the future of biotechnology in agriculture, International Service for Acquisition of Agri-biotech Crops (ISAAA) in its latest report has identified three key opportunities to realize continued growth in adoption of biotech crops.

ONE: New markets can boost growth

High rates of adoption (90 percent to 100 percent) in current major biotech markets leave little room for expansion. However, there is a significant potential in other “new” countries for selected products, such as biotech maize, which has a potential of approximately 100 million more hectares globally, 60 million hectares in Asia, of which 35 million is in China alone, plus 35 million hectares in Africa.

TWO: Huge ready to market product pipeline

More than 85 potential new products in the pipeline are now being field-tested; including a biotech

drought tolerant maize from the WEMA project (Water Efficient Maize for Africa) expected to be released in Africa in 2017, Golden Rice in Asia, and fortified bananas and pest-resistant cowpea in Africa.

THREE: CRISPR technology for high yield

CRISPR (Clustered Regularly Interspersed Short Palindromic Repeats) a new powerful genome-edited technology has significant comparative advantages over conventional and GM crops in four domains: precision, speed, cost and regulation. When combined with other advances in crop sciences, CRISPR could increase crop productivity in a “sustainable intensification” mode on the 1.5 billion hectares of global arable land, and make a vital contribution to global food security.