

Drought in US creates more interest in biotech corn

AMERICAN farmers continue to demonstrate unprecedented confidence in biotech or genetically modified crops, Dr. Clive James, chairman of International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA), said.

James also said the current devastating drought in the US, that is badly affecting at least half of the corn crop, is generating increased interest in biotech drought-tolerant corn, which is currently being tested in extensive field trials.

He, however, said it is premature to comment on the performance of the biotech drought-tolerant corn in the US until the analysis of data from the field trials in that country is completed later this year.

James said drought tolerance is an infinitely more complex trait than herbicide tolerance and insect resistance and progress is likely to be on a step-by-step basis.

He said the encouraging results from the 2012 field tests in the US for biotech drought-tolerant corn would be a significant step to address drought, the most important constraint to increasing crop productivity globally, to which both conventional and biotech applications can contribute.

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