



## Gene Ethics Media Release - Monday May 8 2017

### GM crops stalled in 2016

#### **Genetically Manipulated (GM) crops grew on less than 13% of global cropland in 2016.**

**"Two countries that grew GM in 2015 planted none in 2016**, reducing GM countries to 26. And around 90% of all GM crops are grown in eight North and South American countries so it is not a global industry," notes Gene Ethics Director, Bob Phelps.

**"In 2015 Burkina Faso grew 400,000 ha of GM cotton** but the crop was banned last year, after poor GM fibre quality had ruined the country's top reputation and down-graded its product.

**"Romania had Europe's longest GM crop history**, but just one farmer grew 2.5 ha of commercial GM maize in 2015 and last year Romanian farmers also imposed a national GM ban.

**"Only 18 million broad-acre farmers grew GM commodities**, for the second year in a row - just 3% of the world's 570 million growers.

**"Yet the ISAAA's \* annual GM crop report** shows over a 3% increase in GM plantings in 2016 when the net gain was a marginal 2%, after a fall in 2015. The USA and Brazil - by far the two biggest GM crop countries - drove a small rise in GM plantings while most other countries had minor increases or declines.

**"Most GM crops - soy, corn, canola, cotton and sugarbeet** - still contain only the two GM crop traits first released in 1996 - Roundup weed killer tolerance and Bt insect toxins.

**"More complex traits** - drought and salt tolerance; nitrogen fixation in grains; more nutritious foods; higher yields; etc. - were long promised but never delivered.

**"Most GM crops are sold for animal feed, biofuel production, or fibre**, as few people willingly eat them.

**"Big agricultural ingredient suppliers like Cargill** are responding to strong shopper demand for GM-free labelled foods and ingredients in North America, driving a return to conventional varieties.

**"Faced with failure, GM seed companies** are merging and cross-licensing their seeds and traits to stay viable. Soon three agrochemical and seed giants - Bayer/Monsanto; ChemChina/Syngenta; and Dow/Dupont - will own over 70% of all commercial crop seed globally, including all GM varieties.

**"It's time to accept that Genetically Manipulated crops have stalled** and to move on," Mr Phelps concludes.

**More comment: Bob Phelps 0449 769 066 / 03 5968 2996**

\* <http://www.isaaa.org/resources/publications/briefs/52/pressrelease/pdf/B52-PressRelease-English.pdf>

\*\* [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/attacks-on-cargill-over-non-gmo-moves-based-on-fear\\_us\\_58ffb28ce4b0938fb73e9637](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/attacks-on-cargill-over-non-gmo-moves-based-on-fear_us_58ffb28ce4b0938fb73e9637)