The area planted to biotech cotton in 2017 was 24.1 million hectares, an unprecedented increase of 8% from 22.3 million hectares in 2016. The 8% increase in total biotech cotton area globally was due mainly to the improved global market value and the high adoption rate of stacked insect resistant and herbicide tolerant (IR/HT) cotton in 2017.

The 24.1 million hectares comprised 18 million hectares IR, 828,000 hectares HT, and 5.2 million hectares IR/HT cotton.

Based on a global hectarage of 30.2 million hectares, 80% were biotech cotton and grown in 14 countries of the 24 biotech crop countries worldwide.

Four of the 14 countries that grew biotech cotton in 2017 planted more than 1 million hectares. These countries are, in descending order of hectarage, India (11.4 million hectares), USA (4.6 million hectares), Pakistan (3 million hectares), and China (2.8 million hectares).

Another 10 countries grew biotech cotton in 2017 including Brazil, Australia, Myanmar, Argentina, Mexico, South Africa, Paraguay, Colombia, Sudan, and Costa Rica.

The highest year-on-year increment in the biotech cotton area was obtained in South Africa (315%), followed by the USA (24%) and Brazil (19%).

**BENEFITS FROM BIOTECH COTTON**

The increase in income benefits for farmers growing biotech cotton during the 20-year period 1996 to 2016 was US$52 billion and US$3.4 billion for 2015 alone (Brookes and Barfoot, 2018).

**SOURCE**