



## BIOTECH COUNTRY FACTS & TRENDS

# Argentina

**Argentina maintained its ranking as the third largest producer of biotech crops in the world in 2017, occupying 12% of the global biotech crop hectareage.**

A total of 23.6 million hectares of biotech crops were planted in Argentina in 2017. Of this, 18.1 million hectares were biotech soybeans, 5.2 million hectares were biotech maize, and 0.3 million hectares were biotech cotton.

Soybeans grown in Argentina in 2017 were 100% biotech. Out of the 18.1 million hectares biotech soybeans, 15 million hectares were herbicide tolerant and 3.1

million hectares were stacked IR/HT.

In 2017, the total biotech maize area in Argentina increased by 10% from 4.9 million hectares in 2016 to 5.4 million hectares in 2017.

Biotech cotton area in Argentina decreased by 38% from 400,000 hectares in 2016 to 250,000 in 2017. However, adoption rate increased from 95% to 100%, and all are stacked IR/HT traits.

### COUNTRY SITUATIONER

Argentina had a slight decrease in biotech area in 2017 due to reduced planting of biotech soybeans and biotech cotton. Despite the decrease in biotech soybean and cotton areas, there was a 10% increase in area planted to biotech maize.

Soybean stacked trait Intacta™ which was introduced to farmers in 2015 and launched on 70,000 hectares, increased to 3.1 million hectares in 2017.

Argentina is one of the pioneer countries which planted biotech crops in 1996. There are 62 biotech crop products approved for commercial planting in the country from 1996 to 2017: 42 maize events, 13 soybean events, and 7 cotton events.

In August 2017, Argentina was one of the five Latin American countries that signed a joint statement to streamline trade with third markets. Regional



collaboration among Latin American countries can boost biotech crop adoption as this will intensify information exchange in approval of biotech products, reduction of asynchronous approval in the region, and the promotion of biotech events in third markets with regional interest.

## **BENEFITS FROM BIOTECH CROPS IN ARGENTINA**

Recent data on the benefits from biotech crops estimate that Argentina has enhanced farm income from biotech crops by US\$23.47 billion in 21 years of commercialization of biotech crops 1996 to 2016, and the benefits for 2016 alone were estimated at US\$2.1 billion.

Another comprehensive study published by Eduardo Trigo on the benefits of biotech crops in Argentina for the 21 years of commercialization indicated a gross benefit of US\$126.97 billion, an unprecedented increase of 75% in benefits from the previous US\$72.4 billion which was determined by Trigo in 2011.

## **CONCLUSION**

The average adoption rates for the three biotech crops, soybeans, maize, and cotton in Argentina in 2017 was close to 100%. However, the country experienced climatic problems during the 2017 planting season, and this affected the total biotech crop area which, similar to 2016, was about -3% and was contributed by the decline in soybean and cotton areas. The maize area, however increased by 10%. With the government's plan to revolutionize agriculture accompanied by a reduction in export tax, as well as the increasing protein demand for food and feeds, both locally and



internationally, the soybean and maize areas are expected to increase in the very near future. Cotton area declined in two successive years, but the increasing global demand for cotton could revive the cotton production in the country.

## **SOURCE**

ISAAA. 2017. Global Status of Commercialized Biotech/GM Crops in 2017: Biotech Crop Adoption Surges as Economic Benefits Accumulate in 22 Years. *ISAAA Brief* No. 53. ISAAA: Ithaca, New York.

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