Biotech maize was planted in 58.9 million hectares in 2018, a slight decrease of 1% from 2017. The area planted to biotech maize fluctuated in 2018 due to unfavorable weather conditions in Latin America, low market price in the USA and Canada, lesser pest incidence in Europe, high year-end stocks, and the problem of counterfeit seeds in the Philippines.

Of the global area of 197.2 million hectares of maize grown in 2018, 30% (58.9 million hectares) were biotech maize.

The 58.9 million hectares comprised 5.5 million hectares insect resistant (IR), 5.6 million hectares herbicide tolerant (HT), and 47.8 million hectares stacked IR/HT maize.

There were 14 countries which grew biotech maize in 2018, including the United States of America (33.7 million hectares), Brazil (15.4 million hectares), Argentina (5.5 million hectares), South Africa (2 million hectares), and Canada (1.57 million hectares). Countries which planted less than one million hectares include the Philippines, Paraguay, Spain, Uruguay, Colombia, Vietnam, Honduras, Chile, and Portugal.

Vietnam had marginal increase in biotech maize adoption in 2018, despite the controversies of the technology in the country. Three new stacked IR/HT events with various gene combinations for glufosinate, glyphosate, and dicamba herbicide tolerance, coleopteran and lepidopteran insect resistance, were approved for food, feed, processing (FFP) and cultivation in Japan in 2018.

**BENEFITS FROM BIOTECH MAIZE**

The increase in income benefits for farmers growing biotech maize from period 1996 to 2016 was US$63.7 billion and US$6.9 billion for 2016 alone (Brookes and Barfoot, 2018).

**SOURCE**