



Biotech Outreach on Genome Editing



Webinar on

Genome-edited Crops: Progress, Potential, and Policies

10 August, 10:00AM – 11:30AM

Hosted by ISAAA SEAsiaCenter

Zoom registration link:

<https://bit.ly/GenomeEditing2021Judiciary>

Background

The International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA) has always been in the forefront of knowledge sharing and information drive that raise awareness and understanding of agricultural biotechnology tools and products. Information, education, and communication activities on agri-biotech were conducted in collaboration with its strong network of partners targeting different stakeholders and audiences.

For the past years, ISAAA has been working with USDA/FAS Manila and the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture in leading and organizing the annual Biotech Outreach Program. The Program aims to create an interactive engagement with stakeholders to share timely and credible information on new trends on biotechnology and to dispel common misconceptions that affect the progress of maximizing the potential of biotechnology to improve the lives of people, especially those in the agricultural sector. This collaboration has successfully engaged executive and legislative officials, academic institutions, agricultural entrepreneurs, regulators, and the public in discussions on biotech regulatory issues, the science, and strategic importance and potential benefits of biotech products.

Last year, ISAAA successfully organized and implemented the Biotech Outreach Program 2020 through a week-long webinar series that focused on animal biotechnology. The webinars presented the global status of animal biotechnology and regulations and discussed current and emerging issues.

The biotech outreach was the first iteration that was conducted virtually instead of face-to-face activities because of the limitations of the pandemic. The webinar series provided a venue for knowledge sharing and learning with different stakeholders and contributed to improved understanding and acceptance of animal biotechnology in the country.

The annual biotech outreach is a critical piece of USDA/FAS's stakeholder engagement. ISAAA acknowledges the importance of continuing efforts in sharing science and evidenced-based information on biotechnology to different stakeholders. In view of its long, excellent, and reliable partnership, and successful engagements with USDA/FAS Manila on biotech outreach activities, ISAAA continues its partnership with USDA/FAS Manila in the conduct of the Biotech Outreach Program 2021 with focus on genome editing of crops.

Objectives

The webinar series aim to provide a venue for knowledge sharing and learning with different stakeholders and contribute to improved understanding and acceptance of biotechnology in the country, with focus on genome editing technologies in crops. The activity can serve as an avenue in creating an enabling environment for harnessing the potential of new breeding technologies in improving productivity, sustainable development in the agriculture sector and in the long run eliminate trade barriers of products derived from new breeding technologies.

Specifically, it aims to:

- Provide participants with a general overview of genome editing applications for crops and the necessity of regulatory frameworks that are science and evidence-based;
- Explain modern biotechnology to a range of audiences with varying levels of understanding, and to highlight examples of how it could benefit Philippine agriculture and the wider population;
- Present biotechnology trends using new breeding innovations and case studies of genome edited products in developed and developing countries;
- Discuss judicial and legislative processes involved in developing biotechnology regulations in developed and developing countries; and
- Engage lay audiences in biotechnology and modern biotechnology.

Speaker Presentation and Agenda

The webinar will constitute resource speaker presentations and open discussions allowing science-based understanding of genome editing and regulatory approaches. The invited international expert will give an overview of genome editing applications for crops and science and evidence-based regulatory frameworks. The local expert will discuss the regulatory approaches and prospects of genome editing in Philippine agriculture.

Duration	Activity	Resource person/ Officer-in-charge
30 minutes	<i>The webinar room will be opened half an hour before the meeting</i>	<i>ISAAA Staff</i>
10:00-10:15 AM	Welcome and Housekeeping Rules Opening Message	Moderator: Mr. Jerome Cayton C. Barradas <i>Project Coordinator II, SEARCA</i> Morgan Haas <i>Agricultural Counselor, USDA Foreign Agricultural Service, American Embassy, Manila</i> Dr. Rhodora R. Aldemita <i>Director, ISAAA Southeast Asia Center; Director, Global Knowledge Center on Crop Biotechnology</i>
10:15-10:40 AM	Genome-edited Crops (From the global perspective)	Atty. Gregory Jaffe <i>Director, Project on Biotechnology, Center for Science in the Public Interest Washington DC</i>
10:40-11:00 AM	Genome-edited Crops (Sharing from the local perspective)	Atty. Paz J. Benavidez II <i>Independent Policy, Institutional, Legislative & Legal Consultant</i>
11:00-11:25 AM	Open Forum	Moderator
11:25-11:30 AM	Closing messages/Way forward	Justice Jose Reyes <i>Chairperson, PHILJA Department of Special Areas of Concern</i>

Webinar speakers



GREGORY JAFFE, J.D.

Director, Project on Biotechnology
Center for Science in the Public Interest
Washington DC

Gregory Jaffe is the Biotechnology Project Director for the Center for Science in the Public Interest, a consumer organization located in the U.S. Mr. Jaffe came to CSPI in 2001 after a distinguished career in government service as a Trial Attorney at the U.S. Department of Justice and as Senior Counsel with the U.S. EPA. He is a recognized international expert on biotechnology and biosafety and has worked on biosafety issues in numerous countries in Asia and Africa. Greg is the Associate Director for Policy and Regulatory Affairs with the Cornell Alliance for Science and a Visiting Professor of Practice at Cornell's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Gregory Jaffe earned his BA with High Honors from Wesleyan University in Biology and Government and a law degree from Harvard Law School.



PAZ J. BENAVIDEZ II

Atty. Benavidez finished her Bachelor of Arts in History at the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy, University of the Philippines – Diliman, and graduated Cum Laude. She took her Bachelor of Laws at the UP College of Law, and was admitted to the Philippine Bar in 1996.

She has been an independent legal and policy consultant with a more than twenty year-experience in the areas of policy development, particularly on environment and natural resources, agriculture, and local government.

In 2013, she was an Assistant Secretary at the Department of Agriculture until 2016, and concurrently held the post of OIC-Director of the Bureau of Plant Industry from 2014 – 2016. During her stint at the DA, she was tasked to facilitate that drafting of the DOST-DA-DENR-DOH-DILG Joint Department Circular regulating the research, development, handling and its use, transboundary movement, release into the environment, and management of genetically modified plant and plant products derived from the use of modern biotechnology.

After her work at DA, she has continued doing policy work on biosafety. She was part of the Ad-Hoc Study Group to investigate the state of the art and regulatory landscape of GM animals among trade partners of the Philippines constituted by the DA-Biotech Program in 2017. In 2018, she was a member of the Ad-Hoc Study Group tasked to study the state of the art and regulatory landscape of plant breeding innovations in foreign countries, including trade partners of the Philippines. In 2019, she was invited by the National Commission on Biosafety of the Philippines (NCBP) to participate in the Ad Hoc Technical Working Group for the Drafting of Policy and Guidance Document on New Breeding Techniques. It is worth to note also that she was one of the legal staff members who helped craft Executive Order No. 514 in 2006, which established the National Biosafety Framework.