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107TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2343

To support research and development programs in agricultural biotechnology and genetic engineering targeted to addressing the food and economic needs of the developing world.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 27, 2001

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas (for herself, Mrs. CLAYTON, and Mr. REYES) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

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A BILL

To support research and development programs in agricultural biotechnology and genetic engineering targeted to addressing the food and economic needs of the developing world.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Biotechnology and Agriculture in the Developing World Act of 2001''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Portions of the developing world are facing a pandemic of malnutrition and disease. 200,000,000 people on the African continent alone are chronically malnourished. Traditional farming practices cannot meet the growing needs of the developing world. Africa's crop production is the lowest in the world and even with about ⅔ of its labor force engaged in agriculture, Africa currently imports more than 25 percent of its grain for food and feed.

(2) Biotechnology can help developing countries produce higher crop yields while using fewer pesticides and herbicides.

(3) Biotechnology can also promote sustainable agriculture, leading to food and economic security.

(4) The quality and nutritional content of food can be improved through biotechnology.

(5) Vitamin-enhanced foods, foods higher in protein, and fruits and vegetables with a longer shelf-life have been developed using biotechnology.

(6) Biotechnology offers the prospect of delivering vaccines to immunize against life-threatening illnesses through agricultural products in a safe and effective manner that overcomes the infrastructure

and cost limitations faced by traditional vaccination methods in the developing world.

(7) Biotechnology can play a useful role in increasing crop yields and thus reduce the amount of land that needs to be farmed. Since most food production and farming in the developing world is done by women, such an increase in productivity enables women to spend their time on other productive activities and better care for their families.

(8) One obstacle for biotechnology in the developing world is the capacity of scientific organizations and public funding for agricultural research. Increased funding for international research programs from the United States would have a great impact.

(9) To get the full environmental, food, and economic benefits of biotechnology for the developing world, it must be available in the international marketplace.

SEC. 3. AGRICULTURAL BIOTECHNOLOGY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT FOR THE DEVELOPING WORLD.

(a) GRANT PROGRAM.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall establish a program to award grants to entities described in subsection (b) for the development of agricultural biotechnology with respect to the developing world.

The Secretary shall administer and oversee the program through the Foreign Agricultural Service of the Department of Agriculture.

(b) PARTNERSHIPS.—(1) In order to be eligible to receive a grant under this section, the grantee must be a participating institution of higher education, a nonprofit organization, or consortium of for profit institutions with in-country agricultural research institutions.

(2) A participating institution of higher education shall be an historically black or land-grant college or university, an Hispanic serving institution, or a tribal college or university that has agriculture or the biosciences in its curricula.

(c) COMPETITIVE AWARD.—Grants shall be awarded under this section on a merit-reviewed competitive basis.

(d) USE OF FUNDS.—The activities for which the grant funds may be expended include the following:

(1) Enhancing the nutritional content of agricultural products that can be grown in the developing world to address malnutrition through biotechnology.

(2) Increasing the yield and safety of agricultural products that can be grown in the developing world through biotechnology.

(3) Increasing through biotechnology the yield of agricultural products that can be grown in the developing world that are drought and stress-resistant.

(4) Extending the growing range of crops that can be grown in the developing world through biotechnology.

(5) Enhancing the shelf-life of fruits and vegetables grown in the developing world through biotechnology.

(6) Developing environmentally sustainable agricultural products through biotechnology.

(7) Developing vaccines to immunize against life-threatening illnesses and other medications that can be administered by consuming genetically engineered agricultural products.

(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section $25,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2002 through 2006.

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