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Pioneer Hi-Bred Seeks Commercialization of New Biotech Soybean

Report Categories:

Oilseeds and Products

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Report Highlights:

On July 26th, 2011, the U.S. branch of Pioneer in South Africa, Pioneer Hi-Bred International, announced that it is planning to introduce a new oleic-rich genetically modified soybean seed in South Africa. If commercialized, the introduction of a new soybean event with higher value oil and products in South Africa could increase soybean demand and stimulate continued growth in soybean production.

General Information:

On July 26th, 2011, the U.S. branch of Pioneer in South Africa, Pioneer Hi-Bred International, announced that it is planning to introduce a new oleic-rich genetically modified soybean seed in South Africa. The primary benefits of the seed are for cooking oil, under the Plenish brand, with secondary and tertiary applications to animal feed and industrial products.

The Plenish branded high-oleic soybean oil has zero grams of trans-fat and 20 percent less saturated fat than typical soybean oil. It also has increased monounsaturated fat, much like olive oil. These characteristics could ultimately reduce food costs for consumers by reducing production costs for cooking oil and other products. According to Pioneer, the high-oleic soybean oil can be a replacement for canola, traditional soybean oil, and other partially hydrogenated oils in edible applications.

Pioneer's high-oleic genetically modified seed is likely three to four years from commercialization. If commercialized, the introduction of a new soybean event with higher value oil and products in South Africa could increase soybean demand and stimulate continued growth in soybean production.

Last year, the South African Bureau for Food and Agricultural Policy (BFAP) projected that 605,000 hectares of soybeans could be planted in South Africa by 2020. Increasing yields and demand for animal protein are considered the largest drivers of production in recent years and the trend is expected to continue. As a result, soybean production could triple to 1.62 million tons within a decade.

BFAP's projection that a doubling of South African soybean area planted is feasible given the growth in soybean production in the past ten years. During this time, the area planted to soybeans in South Africa more than doubled from 134,000 hectares in the 2001/02 marketing year to 311,000 hectares in the 2010/11 marketing year. More information can be found on BFAP's projections in the following [GAIN Report from November, 2010](#).