

1989 Statement of Eucarpia* on Risk Assessment Regarding the Release of Transgenic Plants

1. It is the prime competence and responsibility of every research worker to evaluate potential risks of his research and to find ways to control these.
2. The plant is a relatively easy organism to control. Many crop plants are fully dependent on man for their existence.
3. In assessing risks the potential gene flow is crucial. This is determined in amount by the mating type and by the degree of taxonomic relationship. Much knowledge on these phenomena is already available in the literature.
4. Secondly, the effect of the gene is relevant and not the way it was introduced into the genome.
5. It should be kept in mind that well-defined genes, such as those transferred to plants by molecular techniques, can precisely be identified and controlled at the molecular level. However, their phenotypic expression must always be monitored most carefully.
6. There are genes which a priori are known to be harmful. These are not to be transferred into crop plants.
7. Presently, case studies with the release of transgenic plants are underway in several countries. All results should be fully published.
8. Eucarpia has established a working group of competent scientists on the subject of risk assessment for the release of transgenic plants.

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