Rothamsted Research submits application to ACRE for permission to carry out GM field trial

22 June 2011

Rothamsted Research is a institute of Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council. Rothamsted Research is based in Hertfordshire (U.K) and is one of the largest agricultural research institutes in the country. The mission of Rothamsted Research is to be recognised internationally as a primary source of first-class scientific research and new knowledge that addresses stakeholder requirements for innovative policies, products and practices to enhance the economic, environmental and societal value of agricultural land.

Rothamsted Research submitted an application on 20th June to the Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment (ACRE) for permission to carry out a GM field trial on the Rothamsted Farm in 2012 and 2013. ACRE is an independent Advisory Committee composed of leading scientists. Main function is to give statutory advice to Ministers in the UK and devolved administrations on the risks to human health and the environment from the release and marketing of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs). ACRE also advises on the release of certain non-GM species of plants and animals that are not native to Great Britain. The purpose of this trial is to test whether GM wheat plants capable of making an aphid pheromone alarm are better able to resist aphids under field conditions. Aphids, also known as plant lice and in Britain and the Commonwealth as greenflies, blackflies or whiteflies. Aphids are small sap sucking insects, and members of the superfamily Aphidoidea. Aphids are among the most destructive insect pests on cultivated plants in temperate regions. The damage they do to plants has made them enemies of farmers and gardeners the world over, but from a zoological standpoint they are a very successful group of organisms. We expect to hear from ACRE in 3 to 6 months time. More information available to the media and other groups can be accessed at the ACRE website on the public register.