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African countries tasked on adopting agricultural biotechnology

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NAN

April 10, 2009 03:33PMT

The Director-General of the National Biotechnology Development Agency (NABDA), Bamidele Solomon, on Thursday in Abuja, called on African countries to adopt genetic modification of agricultural biotechnology to ensure high yield.

Solomon stated this at the launch of the Open Forum on Agricultural Biotechnology in Africa organised by NABDA in conjunction with Africa Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF) Kenya and the Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria (ARCN).

Solomon said scientific facts were often mixed with social, ethical and political considerations, in the face of a rapidly growing population, declining agricultural productivity and reduced resources available for agricultural research.

He said that agricultural productivity could be increased in numerous ways by using inorganic and organic fertilizers, improved seedling, pest and weed control, soil and water conservation, using improved plant varieties.

These varieties, according to him, can be developed either traditionally or through agricultural biotechnology.

Also speaking, Muhammad Magaji, Director of Plant Resources Department, ARCN, said that biotech crops had improved the income and quality of life of small and poor farmers and their families and contributed to the reduction of poverty in countries such as India, china, South Africa and the Philippines.