Dr Harmison

4/12

Note to:
Norm / Frank - We need to get our Fed'l strategy worked out and a plan for implementing it by Department's region of the country. (P.S. see last page) Jeff.

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A communications vacuum at the national level threatens the US competitive position in biotechnology. There is no evidence of a groundswell of national political support for or commitment to the biotechnology industry. This commitment is a prerequisite for the United States to compete successfully in the worldwide biotechnology industry.

At the recent AgBIOTECH '88 Conference, John F. Hussey warned biotechnology company executives not to ignore national policy makers who can support and send signals to go for it. Such signals will create a more stable environment that will allow the industry to proceed as rapidly as good science permits. Effective communications is essential to create an atmosphere of public trust. Misinformation or the lack of information can undermine public confidence in the science and derail industry's progress.

Noting that members of Congress generally share a cautious support for biotechnology, Hussey encouraged industry executives to provide objective, credible information to legislators in order to win their confidence and leadership. He called on industry to meet with governors, state legislators, state farm group directors and other state opinion leaders to generate support for biotechnology.

Hussey, former corporate vice president of public affairs for Monsanto Company, applauded the industry for its communications programs associated with field tests and new products, noting fewer incidences of demonstrations, vandalism and protests by critics.

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