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RESOLUTION GENETICALLY-MODIFIED COTTON: RESISTANCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Delta Council views that any resistance management strategy for genetically-modified cotton must include methods which are economically viable and scientifically valid. Transgenic cotton has enabled farm operators to drastically reduce their reliance on man-made pesticides to control insects and weeds. Any resistance management plan which undermines the economic viability of utilizing genetically-modified cotton in whole farm units will have the effect of forcing farm operators to utilize alternative cropping strategies for reducing insect costs and damages.

After reviewing the science-based approaches that are currently available to the Environmental Protection Agency, it is the view of Delta Council that there is insufficient field data or research trials that specifically support the concept of structured refuge areas. In fact, there are serious scientific questions as to whether refuges, as a strategy for insect resistance, is actually relevant.

Delta Council encourages the Environmental Protection Agency and USDA to examine the data related to the efficacy and relevance of refuge requirements as a resistance management tool and determine whether this method possesses benefits commensurate with the costs of the practice. If scientific data supports the abandonment of structured refuge requirements in favor of another approach to resistance management, Delta Council urges that this action be taken promptly.

Finally, Delta Council urges the Administration and the Congress to carefully examine the merits of restoring the responsibility of resistance management in the field of animal and plant protection to the USDA research and education functions.

Adopted by: Delta Council Board of Directors
May 23, 2008

