



Attn. Mr Ladislav MIKO (Deputy Director General, DG SANCO, European Commission)

9 April 2014

Re: Invitation to the multilateral meeting 'the future of plant breeding techniques in the European Union' on 25 June 2014

Dear Sir,

In the last ten years, significant progress has been made by scientists in the field of plant genetics to develop new methods of plant breeding which can be used to bring in desired characteristics more precisely and efficiently in a wide variety of crops. In particular, the European plant breeding sector has been playing a leading role in the development of these new technologies in order to provide innovative solutions to worldwide challenges relating to food security, sustainability and climate change.

Today, the application of these innovative solutions on the EU market is hampered due to the absence of legal certainty as to if and how these so-called New Breeding Techniques (NBTs) should be regulated at EU level. We however understand that the European Commission is committed to remedy this situation, as reflected by its recent initiative to clarify the status of these techniques with regard to the GM legislation (i.e. Directive 2001/18/EU on the deliberate release into the environment of genetically modified organisms).

The New Breeding Techniques (NBT) Platform - a coalition of SMEs, large industry representatives and members of prominent academic and research institutes - has been created in 2011 with the aim to bring clarity to the European debate on NBTs. The purpose of the multilateral meeting 'the future of plant breeding techniques in the European Union' which will be hosted by the NBT Platform and the European Technology Platform 'Plants for the Future' on the 25<sup>th</sup> of June is to continue providing national policy makers and stakeholders with clear and precise information on NBTs. This meeting will take place from 09h00 until 15h00 at Copa-Cogeca premises (61 rue de Trèves, 1040 Brussels).

I am pleased to invite you to this event and give you the opportunity to contribute to the discussion on the future of NBTs. Intended for policy officers and experts on agricultural (bio)technology from the Competent Authorities of all 28 EU Member States, as well as representatives from industry, academia and associations, this meeting will consist of 3 different blocks, namely the followings:

- the new breeding techniques explained;
- the socio-economic impact of these techniques;
- a legal analysis of Directive 2001/18/EC with regard to these techniques from the NBT Platform.

We intend to conclude this discussion with a panel debate which should be composed of high-level speakers coming from both the public research (i.e. one representative from EPSO, one representative from the JRC) and the private sector (i.e. the EU farming sector as well as the EU seed industry).

**I would like to invite you to take part in this panel and give you the opportunity to answer, on behalf of the European Commission, any questions coming from Member States or other stakeholders on the future of NBTs at EU level.**

I would be glad to discuss with you or with one of your expert the objectives and the scope of your intervention, in the event you had any particular question in that respect.

Should you decide to reply favourably to this invitation, **I would kindly ask you to confirm your participation, by contacting our Secretariat** (i.e. you may contact either by mail to the following address:  
or by phone to the following number:

We would be glad to get an answer from you within 3 weeks.

In any case, I would like to thank you in advance for the attention you may give to my invitation and I remain at your disposal should you have any particular question concerning the event above described.

Sincerely yours,

Schuttelaar & Partners