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Public Support For Biotech on the Rise

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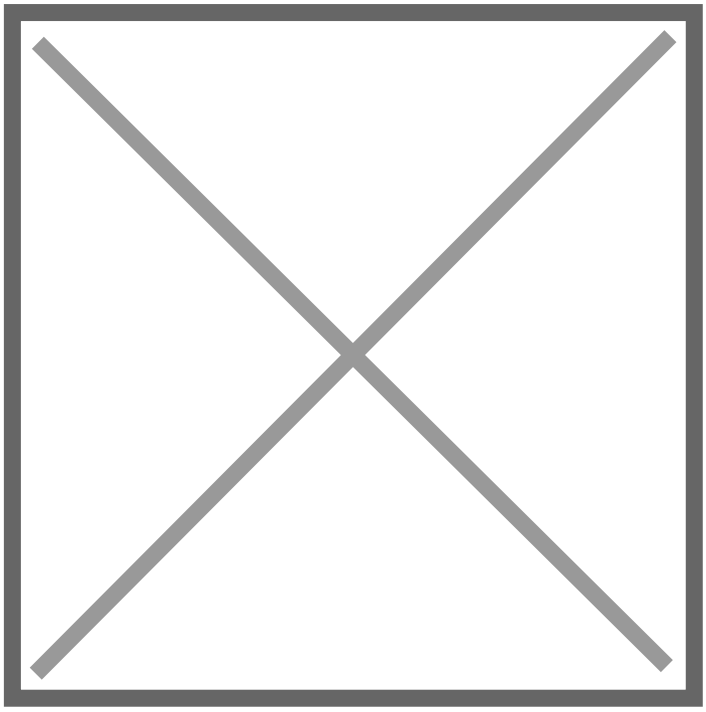

Public Support For Biotech on the Rise

BIO 2007 International Convention reflects stable and stronger image for biotech

This year's annual BIO International Convention, held during May 6-9, 2007, surpassed all the records. The BIO International Convention, produced by the Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO), drew a record 22,366 attendees. With representatives from 48 states and 64 countries, the number of attendees saw almost a 15 percent increase compared to that during the previous year's BIO in Chicago. One-third of attendees came from outside the United States.

This year's theme was "New Ideas, Bold Ventures, Global Benefits". This perspective was symbolized by a large globe, about 20-25 feet in diameter, at the entrance of the conference center to highlight biotech efforts in areas around the world. "The host cities generally desire to be recognized as major biotech hubs. But this conference has taken a much broader view, since Boston doesn't really need anything to prove," said BIO president and CEO Jim Greenwood. Boston area is home to two of the world's largest biotechs--Genzyme and Biogen Idec.

"The 2007 BIO International Convention was a phenomenal success. With nearly 30 percent of our attendees coming from outside of the United States and pavilions from 39 countries or geographic regions, it truly was the global event for biotechnology," added Jim Greenwood.

Further, the BIO Exhibition featured the largest gathering of biotech exhibitors in history, with more than 1,900 companies and 60 domestic, country and regional pavilions representing every aspect of the biotechnology industry.

The BIO Business Forum also set records for attendance and partnering meetings. More than 6,000 attendees representing 1,503 companies participated in the Forum and held 12,103 partnering meetings.

The event marked keynote addresses from Michael J Fox, founder of the Michael J Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research, and Her Majesty Queen Noor of Jordan. Fox called the biotechnology industry to continue to innovate and accelerate the translation of basic science into improved therapies for patients. Queen Noor discussed the opportunities presented by biotechnology to address global health and poverty issues. The final keynote session focused on "A Hopeful Future: Gaining the Edge with Biotechnology." Greenwood moderated a panel featuring Robert S Langer of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Craig C Mello, PhD, of the University of Massachusetts Medical School, author Virginia Postrel and Dr Phillip A Sharp of MIT. The panelists discussed their visions of the biotechnology industry over the next 10 to 20 years.

BioSpectrum presents some of the trends that were discussed at BIO 2007 in the next few pages.

Ch. Srinivas Rao in Boston