

**International agbiotech leaders confirmed for Kiwi event**

**AUCKLAND, 13<sup>th</sup> February:** Organisers of the world's top international agricultural biotechnology conference, being held in New Zealand this year, say the event is attracting an outstanding line up of globally respected agbiotech leaders.

NZBIO, which represents New Zealand's biotechnology industry, is hosting ABIC 2012 – the annual conference of the Agricultural Biotechnology International Conference – with support from AusBiotech, Australia's biotechnology organisation. The event will take place in Rotorua in September.

The line-up of keynote speakers reflects the depth of investment and commercialisation expertise expected to be at ABIC 2012.

Global bio innovation leader Novozymes will be represented by its Regional President of China, Michael Christiansen, who has spent 16 years in Asia. As a board member of the EU Chamber of Commerce to China and the Danish Chamber of Commerce to China, he facilitates trade between the EU and China.

Novozymes works with partners across a broad array of industries, including agriculture, bio energy and bio pharmaceuticals, to create new products that are sustainable, affordable and offer superior performance.

Dr Gunter Festel, founder of the Swiss-based advisory and investment firm Festel Capital., will also attend ABIC 2012. The firm supports technology development in areas such as energy, environment, health, materials and nutrition.

As well as co-founding biotechnology start-ups in Germany and Switzerland, Dr Festel has worked for Arthur D. Little in Zurich, been a consultant for McKinsey, and held management roles in research and development and marketing for Bayer. He has written numerous books and more than 250 publications on topics such as biotechnology, buy-outs, innovation management and start ups/spin offs.

They will be joined by leading New Zealand-born Professor of Animal Science Dorian Garrick who holds the Jay Lush Chair in Animal Breeding and Genetics at Iowa State University. Professor Garrick has been integrally involved in the development and implementation of national animal evaluation programmes, performance recording databases and breeding schemes.

NZBIO Chair Dr Paul Tan says: "We have a cross section of global leaders in their field confirmed to attend the event. Those people will not only lead debate on critical issues facing the world, such as food security and sustainable food production, they will also inspire innovative and collaborative solutions.

Dr Tan expects the strong speaker line-up to encourage registrations from throughout New Zealand and Australia and around the world.

"This really is a not-to-be-missed event on the agricultural biotechnology calendar." The Ministry of Science and Innovation is a key sponsor of ABIC 2012 and CEO Murray Bain says ABIC is an excellent opportunity for New Zealanders involved in

agricultural biotechnology to strengthen their international research and business connections, and learn about the latest developments in the area.

“New Zealand's innovative world class scientists have played a major role in building New Zealand's outstanding international reputation in the agricultural sector over many years. MSI is an important backer of New Zealand's agricultural research and is glad to support this conference. Engagement with the world is key to New Zealand's business and scientific success.”

#### **Further Information**

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#### **About ABIC**

The first ABIC conference was held in Canada in 1996 and in 1998 the ABIC Foundation was set up to ensure the continued success of ABIC meetings. The Foundation is a not-for-profit corporation overseen by a board of directors with representation from several countries and based in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Its goal is to ensure ongoing opportunities for continuous learning and networking within the agbiotech community through the annual Agricultural Biotechnology International Conference. ABIC conferences are held on a four year rotation in the following regions: Europe/Africa/Middle East; Asia Pacific; United States/Canada/Mexico; and South America.

[www.abic.ca](http://www.abic.ca)

#### **About NZBIO**

NZBIO is a vibrant member-based organisation focused on growing New Zealand's prosperous bioeconomy. With hundreds of individual and corporate members from across agbiotech, human health, industrial and environmental and food bioscience, NZBIO plays a leading role in providing practical support for companies to grow. NZBIO's activities include member events, seminars and conferences, policy advocacy, national and international outreach and promotion. Our membership base ranges from start up bioscience companies, to mature corporates and major multinationals. We also represent New Zealand research institutes and universities, specialist service professionals, corporate, institutional, individual and student members from New Zealand and around the world.

NZBIO is an important voice of the New Zealand bioscience sector informing policy makers, enabling collaboration and investment, showcasing New Zealand's capability to the world and demonstrating how biosciences can contribute to societal, economic and environmental challenges.

[www.nzbio.org.nz](http://www.nzbio.org.nz)

#### **About the Ministry of Science and Innovation**

The Ministry of Science and Innovation (MSI) has an exciting and ambitious mandate to coordinate and harness the scientific and innovative capability of New Zealand. MSI has a strong enabling and connecting role across the government, business and science sectors within New Zealand and a role in building New Zealand's international profile as a smart country. By increasing collaborations and connections, MSI aims to create an environment where cutting-edge science and innovation can flourish.

As a major supporter of New Zealand's Bio sector, MSI is proud to support the

2012 Agricultural Biotechnology International Conference (ABIC).

[www.msi.govt.nz](http://www.msi.govt.nz)

**About AusBiotech**

AusBiotech is Australia's biotechnology industry organisation representing 3,000 members covering the human health, agricultural, medical devices and diagnostics, food technology, environmental and industrial sectors in biotechnology. AusBiotech is dedicated to the development, growth and prosperity of the Australian biotechnology industry, by providing initiatives to drive sustainability and growth, outreach and access to markets, and representation and support for members nationally and around the world. Its membership base includes biotechnology companies, ranging from start-ups to mature multinationals, research institutes and universities, specialist service professionals, corporate, institutional, individual and student members from Australia and globally.

[www.ausbiotech.org](http://www.ausbiotech.org)