

BIOTECHNOLOGICAL APPROACH IN WEED RESEARCH - AN OVER VIEW

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Abstract

Research on weeds has been reported extensively and in most cases traditional techniques have been used. But during the last two decades, emphasis has been given on the use of biotechnology in weed research. As a result, some advances have been made (Sharner et al, 1985; Mujeeb-Kazi & sitch, 1989; persely, 1990). Potential exist for further advances in weed research with modern biotechnologies. The present paper gives an over view on biotechnological approach in weed research.

1. Introduction

Broadly speaking biotechnology is any technology Where living organisms are made use of. Good examples, with a long history in Sri Lanka are making curd and toddy. Preparation of kassippu (illegally prepared alcoholic drink) in also a biotechnology. Although the term "Biotechnology" has been highlighted recently, it has always been there throughout the civilization of man. It is not new. We all know that man has a long history of marking beers, wine and cheese which are also biotechnologies. However, even at present, this term appears to cause some illusion in our country.

The term "Biotechnology" is most suitably defined as "Any technique that make use of living organisms or substances from these organisms to make or to modify a product, to improve plants or animals, or to develop microorganisms for specific uses" (Office of Technology Assessment, US Congress, 1989).

As mentioned, biotechnology is not new. What is new about this "modern biotechnology" that scientists talk today is the style of approach and methodologies available. At present biotechnology research has a great impact in the whole world and is similar to the impact that electronics made in 1960' s.

Internationally, considerable sums of money is being spent on the biotechnology research and development. It is very much hoped that through modern biotechnology, the existing problems in food and health would be tackled. Developing countries are naturally attracted to the potential application of