

Arable crops – a source of renewable raw materials

Once the easily accessible reserves of oil are exhausted, plants will become increasingly important as an industrial resource.

For this reason there will probably be a renaissance in wood, linseed, straw and other plant products as raw materials. The objective of research and development should be to optimise the practicability of production processes and the usefulness of the end products. There is a great need for research into the relatively new area of transgenic plants which could in some cases deliver specific high quality substances. We should be thinking about bio-refineries rather than oil refineries. Our most important task will be to improve public perception of such technologies and to consider the social consequences of introducing them and their implications for the overall safety of foodstuffs, not only in industrial nations but also in developing countries.

12 pages, German and French