



# RAFI-USA

Rural Advancement Foundation International-USA

**RAFI NEWS RELEASE**  
**For Immediate Release**  
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## **RAFI and RAFI-USA Announce Plans of Name Change for Globally-focused RAFI**

**Twenty-three years old, one of the world's most experienced biodiversity/biotech advocacy organizations is broadening its focus and changing its name, the directors of RAFI and of RAFI-USA announced today.**

**Long history:** RAFI and RAFI-USA staff have been working together for over 20 years. Work on agricultural genetic resources that began under the mandate of the International Coalition for Development Action (ICDA), a Brussels-based civil society organization (CSO), in 1977 quickly merged with similar work under the auspices of the Rural Advancement Fund in the southern United States and led to the formation of the Rural Advancement Foundation International (RAFI) as a Netherlands incorporated CSO in 1985. Although the international work began to be known as RAFI, the work was still under the auspices of the Rural Advancement Fund which fully supported the work through its staffing and fundraising efforts.

In 1990 senior staff of the Rural Advancement Fund joined together to form a new tax-exempt organization. This organization chose the name RAFI-USA. Meanwhile, RAFI and the internationally located staff (in Canada and Europe) continued to operate with its own independent international board and incorporation. In 1993, RAFI also incorporated a Canadian-based affiliate under the name RAFI-Canada.

RAFI and RAFI-USA have been working together as two independent and closely cooperating organizations for more than a decade. Together we produced over sixty issues of the RAFI *Communiqué*, and undertook advocacy and policy analysis around issues of biotechnology and biodiversity. The RAFI *Communiqué* and many other important and internationally recognized publications were produced under the leadership of a RAFI-USA staff person as part of this team effort and funded by RAFI-USA for ten years. RAFI-USA has served, and is currently serving, as the fiscal sponsor for RAFI in the United States.

**New name - wider scope:** RAFI now needs to establish a tax-exempt organization in the USA which can directly receive funds under the guidelines of the USA Internal Revenue Service. This is the perfect opportunity for RAFI to choose a new name - one that will more accurately describe the broader scope of RAFI's work beyond biotechnology and biodiversity – such as nanotechnologies, human genomics, and new instruments of ownership, control, and global governance. RAFI is calling for suggestions for its new name from friends and colleagues around the world. Please see RAFI's website ([www.rafi.org](http://www.rafi.org)) for

updated lists of name suggestions submitted so far. Regardless of its name change, "RAFI" will continue to produce the RAFI *Communiqué* and annual updates on Biopiracy, The Gene Giants, and the "Top Ten" lists of the Life Industry, etc.

**Continuing commitment:** RAFI and RAFI-USA will continue to work together as partners. RAFI-USA will continue its farmer-centered work around sustainability, diversity, and equity in agriculture both nationally and internationally. RAFI-USA will continue to focus on the implications of biotechnology and biodiversity for agriculture. RAFI-USA will continue to work for farmer and consumer choice regarding genetically engineered products and for alternatives to industrialized agriculture.

**For further information:**

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