

10.0 BIOTECHNOLOGY

- 10.1 The biotechnology industry is a small sector in the South West – employing around 7,000 people and contributing £220 million to regional output.
- 10.2 The industry is fragmented:
- ◆ One large research establishment, DERA, in Wiltshire undertaking biotechnology and applied research;
 - ◆ A variety of academic institutions undertaking research in environmental microbiology and agricultural and plant biotechnology;
 - ◆ A substantial group of SMEs, particularly around Plymouth and Exeter with strengths in medical applications and protein engineering.
- 10.3 However, the sector is growing particularly in Wiltshire and Swindon and Bristol with employment growth of around 11% in the 1990s.
- 10.4 The sector is viewed as an emerging one for the South West therefore, with significant growth potential linked to DERA and the academic base in the region and to the region's strong agricultural and land-based industries.
- 10.5 The sector is currently the subject of intensive research as to its skill demands and as to ways in which work demands should be serviced. This research, co-ordinated by *Greater Western Enterprise*, will shortly be made available in the region. It was determined that this report should not seek to address skills issues in respect of biotechnology since this more complete review would deal with these issues in considerably greater depth than would be possible here.