

Nobel biologist: Zero evidence that crop biotechnology is harmful; GM safer than conventional food



Sir Richard Roberts, a British biologist, joined a long and growing list of Nobel laureates, saying that he believes much of the European opposition to GM foods was political, rather than scientific, in nature. He also [claimed](#) that GM food is safer than traditional farmed food, due to the fact that the transgenic technology allows for the use of smaller amounts of pesticide in harsh environments.

On [May 24](#), Roberts likened anti-GM activists to “prophets of doom” and emphasized the fact that “there is a complete absence of evidence that GMOs can cause any harm.” Ian Campbell, a professor from Australia’s Peter MacCallum Cancer Center, agreed and emphasized that no scientific evidence showing that GM food is harmful to people’s health has been presented to date.

For years, the debate over the safety and benefits of genetically modified foods has been charged. There are pro-GM and anti-GM scientists on both sides of the controversy. Martin Evans, a Nobel winning scientist, took a more precautionary view. While there may be no direct evidence of environmental or health harms, he says the evidence is not all in: “The belief that transgenic technology is safe is not entirely founded and any conclusion should be based on test results,” he commented.

But evidence of the safety of GM foods is slowly mounting. Recently, seven European scientists evaluated the results of 24 long term [GM food](#) safety studies, concluding: “The studies show that GM plants are nutritionally equivalent to their non-GM counterparts and can be safely used in food and feed.” These studies included many different crop and animal models. None of the results suggested any health hazards.

While science may slowly be vindicating GMOS, they are still on trial in the court of public opinion, and that may take some time to turnaround.