

In the European Union, there is a call for “evidence, not emotion” on GM foods

Professor Anne Glover said Europe could only achieve sustainable intensification if we become more open-minded. “What we do now will shape what happens in 2050,” said Prof Glover.

“We do need to improve crop yields and we need to improve wastage before harvest. Farming needs to have less chemical and water input. This has to be achievable and we will achieve it, but we need to be more open minded about how we achieve it.”

Prof Glover referred specifically to European attitudes towards genetically modified (GM) technology.

“If we just looked at the evidence base, we would have GM in the EU without a doubt. GM crops are subject to more scrutiny than any other type of agriculture,” she said, adding: “There is no substantiated evidence that I have ever seen that GM crops are harmful to the environment, animals or people”. Prof Glover also said Europe must have a more strategic approach to pesticides which were expensive both in terms of cost to the farmer and their impact on the environment.

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