

Plant biotechnologists “time travel” with their use of chemicals

In the last few months there have been two examples where we have seen brand new biotech crops that are tolerant to relatively old herbicides. It feels a little bit like time travel. Dow AgroSciences is developing 2,4-D tolerance trait for corn. That is an herbicide which was first [released in 1946](#). Monsanto is developing a dicamba tolerance trait. That herbicide was first [commercialized in 1967](#). Both have recently moved to the USDA comment period stage for their regulatory status.

Ok, going back 46 or 67 years isn't as exciting as traveling through space and time in, say, [Dr. Who's Tardis](#) (above), but it is an interesting phenomenon for agriculture.

As a 57-year old, I'm gratified that technologies of my general vintage are still relevant for agriculture. But what is the deal? Why are we talking about such old products? What does this tell us about biotechnology, chemistry, and science in general? I'd say several things:

- Plant biologists are practical realists who anticipated resistance issues
- A more diverse weed control “Toolbox” is always a good thing
- Some old chemistry is actually very good chemistry
- Its hard to find good, new herbicides

View the original article here: [Plant Biotechnology As Time Travel? – Science 2.0](#)