

Meet Calestous Juma, Africa's GE crop 'optimist'

The following is an edited excerpt.

When Calestous Juma was 9 years old, floods inundated his family's village. Port Victoria sits on the Kenyan shore of Lake Victoria, just shy of the Ugandan border.

As residents began considering how to replant family farms on less land, Calestous' father, John Juma, travelled to Uganda. He returned with cuttings of the cassava plant, a starchy, carbohydrate-rich tuber. At the time, cassava was unfamiliar in that part of Kenya.

The village debated whether to plant the cassava. Some wanted to wait until the water subsided and replant traditional crops. When wild pigs, displaced by the flood, came and ate some seedlings, villagers blamed John Juma's cassava for attracting them. And "they were worried these plants would breed demons," says Calestous Juma.

Read the full story here: [Meet Calestous Juma, Africa's genetically modified crop 'optimist'](#)