

Wild genes block growing rust threat

The following is an edited excerpt.

Researchers have identified two genes in ancient varieties of wheat that could combat a disease threatening one of the world's major food crops.

Since 1999, a fungal rust known as Ug99 has decimated wheat crops throughout Africa, Yemen and Iran. The rust targets the plant's stem and leaves, robbing it of nutrients and reducing crop yield by up to 80 per cent.

The last major epidemic of fungal rust disease broke out in 1950s, but was quelled with the introduction of a resistant strain of plants in the 1970s.

Read the full story here: [Wild genes block growing rust threat](#)