

New anti-GMO battleground: Genetically engineered yeast for medicines and fragrances

Andrew Pollack, who covers business and biotechnology at the *New York Times*, recently reported on the revolutionary new trend of using genetically modified yeast to produce flavors and chemicals for popularly sought-after foods and fragrances. The use of GM yeast, Pollack writes, brings more issues to the debate over whether GMOs are natural or not.

“It’s just like brewing beer, but rather than spit out alcohol, the yeast spits out these products,” said Jay D. Keasling, a co-founder of Amyris, a company based here that is a pioneer in the field. However, while yeast makes alcohol naturally, it would not produce the spices without the extensive genetic rejiggering, which is called synthetic biology.

The advent of synthetic biology raises thorny economic and regulatory issues, such as whether such yeast-made ingredients can be called natural and whether developing countries dependent on these crops will be hurt.

Read the full, original story here: [“What’s That Smell? Exotic Scents Made From Re-engineered Yeast”](#)