

New rice strain could 'dramatically' increase yields

Scientists at the International Rice Research Institute have bred a strain of rice that could dramatically increase yields. The long-grain "indica" rice variety was bred to contain a gene, nicknamed SPIKE, which was discovered by Japanese researcher Nobuya Kobayashi when he was conducting research on a tropical "japonica" rice variety.

Preliminary tests show that yields of the new rice variety, containing the SPIKE gene, can rise by 13-36 percent. "Our work showed that SPIKE is indeed one of the major genes responsible for the yield increase that breeders have spent so many years searching for," says Inez Slamet-Loedin, IRRI's genetic transformation laboratory chief. IRRI spokeswoman Gladys Ebron stresses that the new variety was not created with controversial genetic modification techniques. There is currently no definite timetable for when the rice will be available to farmers.

Read the full, original story here: [Scientists Found A 'Wonder Gene' That Boosts Rice Growth](#)