

Block party: Are activists thwarting GMO innovation?

Is there evidence that groups fighting against genetically modified food have thwarted good technologies that would otherwise make agriculture more sustainable?

“I think genetic engineering is not as easy as the initial scientists envisioned it being,” said Greg Jaffe, director of biotechnology at the Center for Science in the Public Interest. But “the debate, the controversy, clearly does have an impact on this technology.”

But you can’t fully separate the technological delays from the regulatory delays, says Jose Falck-Zepeda, a researcher at the International Food Policy Research Institute. When the regulatory process is murky, as it is in some countries, public institutions are less likely to invest in the work to develop a plant that may never be approved.

So is the controversy over genetic engineering slowing innovation? Of course. But often the controversy is blamed for delays that have nothing to do with it. Often the setbacks are technical, not political.

Read the full, original story: [Block party: Are activists thwarting GMO innovation?](#)