

UK Guardian botched 'suicide gene' story: 'Terminator seeds' will not usher in agricultural judgment day

Following renewed campaigning by anti-GM groups, a [recent article in the *Guardian*](#) disseminated widely discredited myths surrounding the genetic use restriction techniques (GURT)—or “terminator seeds,” as they are widely known—which are sterile in order to restrict the spread of new genes that have been introduced into the target plant.

The *Guardian* wrongly stated that new legislation under consideration in Brazil could lead to “suicide seeds” that might “threaten the livelihoods of millions of small farmers around the world.” But the truth is very different to this media sensationalism. Brazil is considering relaxing regulations that prohibit research on GURT. However, this would be applied to pharmaceuticals, not food crops. It is aimed in particular at allowing scientists to examine whether the technology could have biosafety applications – applications that would safeguard the environment against the unintended release and spread of modified genes.

A continued ban on GURT may sound sensible and precautionary, but could harm the potential of researchers to develop lifesaving vaccines and environmentally beneficial crops.

Read the full, original story: [Terminator seeds will not usher in an agricultural judgment day](#)