

## Ghana prostate cancer victim spreads misinformation as anti-GMO campaign ignites

Anti-GMO groups in Ghana are escalating their scare campaigns after the government completed regulations that could allow modified cowpeas and other selected crops to be grown following confined field trials.

In what appears to be a coordinated response to the government's receptiveness to the new technology, a cancer survivor has launched a speaking tour claiming that GMOs could trigger prostate cancer. "In general the more quickly prostate cells grow and divide the more chances there are for mutations to occur," stated Ralph Obu, founder of the Men's Health Foundation. "Therefore, anything that speeds up this process may make prostate cancer more likely."

There is no empirical evidence that the process of genetic engineering in any way effects prostate cell growth or division. There is no empirical evidence that GMOs cause cancer in humans or animals and there is no clear biological mechanism to do so.

Obu's erroneous comments were widely circulated and [echoed](#) in statements from other ant-science groups in Ghana who are committed to blocking food technology innovation. Last week, in response to the coordinated attacks on GMOs, the Ghana Health Service called for a a slow down and an extensive stakeholder debate before GM is accepted and produced commercially in Ghana.

The BT Cowpea is among three other crops – cotton, rice and sweet potatoes – which have been cleared for confined trials and evaluation. Scientists will seek to create a cowpea variety resistant to the pod borer or maruca, a species of moth that targets bean crops.

The choice of cowpeas, known elsewhere as blackeyed peas, is important because the legume plays a vital role in the nutritional needs of Ghanaians, especially those in the Northern Region. Rural families make use of the entire plant, from its leaf to the dry grain.

**Full, original article:** [GMO debate sparks confusion among intellectuals](#)