

Princess Anne rejects brother Prince Charles' anti-GMO views

Genetically modified crops have an important role to play in using land more efficiently and feeding the world's hungry, [Princess Anne said last week](#) on a BBC program, in opposition to brother Prince Charles' long-held anti-GMO views. She said opponents to GM crops should accept that genetic engineering is inevitable.

In 2008, Prince Charles [said](#) that the "mass development of genetically modified crops risks causing the world's worst environmental disaster," and "relying on 'gigantic corporations' for food ... would result in 'absolute disaster.'"

The Prince, in an exclusive interview with the Daily Telegraph, also expressed the fear that food would run out because of the damage being wreaked on the earth's soil by scientists' research. He accused firms of conducting a "gigantic experiment I think with nature and the whole of humanity which has gone seriously wrong".

Princess Anne, who has farmed her Gatcombe estate in Gloucestershire since the 1970s, spoke out in defense of GM crops, saying that "they do add to our ability to perhaps be more efficient users of the land," ([see video clip](#)). "I think in the long-term, when you've got the prospect of nine billion [people] to feed, you are going to need some help in doing that, and to do it well."

Princess Anne also admitted that she "seldom" talked about GMO issues with her brother, saying that such differences in opinion are part of family life. "I do think there are some things which, even if you don't like the sound of it yourself, you know that it's got to a point where you're not going to stop it, because you can't," she added. "So, you really must focus on how you can get the best out of it so it works for humans and the globe in the long run."

This is not the first time the Royals have clashed on this issue. In 2000, Princess Anne [said](#) that "it is a huge oversimplification to say all farming ought to be organic or there should be no GM foods" in response to Prince Charles' attack on GMO research. "I'm sorry – but life isn't that simple," she said.

The Princess, who is the President of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, told the magazine: "Man has been tinkering with food production and plant development for such a long time that it's a bit cheeky to suddenly get nervous about doing it when fundamentally you are doing much the same thing.

Princess Anne's comments are already becoming fodder with anti-GMO activists, one of whom, bizarrely, [blasted her](#) for 'supporting Monsanto'. But scientists are supportive. Her rebuke of Prince Charles' anti-GMO views drew praise from C.S. Prakash, Tuskegee University professor of plant molecular genetics and Genetic Literacy Project food security adviser:

Way to go Princess Anne! Glad you are smarter & sensible than your brother Prince Charles on the role of [#GMO](#) – <http://t.co/Dtqityis0D>

— C. S. Prakash (@AgBioWorld) [April 5, 2014](#)