

How biotech corn transformed the lives of Filipino farmers

Ryan Lising, 39, has lived all his life in a farming community in Mandani, Magalang, Pampanga, one of seven provinces in Central Luzon, Philippines. Like his father before him, Ryan is a corn farmer, and corn is his family's main source of income. Corn gives him money not only to send his four children to school, but also to help him expand his business and buy his own farm machinery. His crop also allows him to assist other corn farmers in their community. But unlike his father who planted white corn before him, Ryan plants biotech corn now — a crop that has made him an important person in their community.

Ryan became one of the early adopters of Bt corn when it was introduced by seed company technicians in Mandani in 2003. Though uncertain about the new corn that the technicians introduced in the farm demonstration, his frustrations with white corn – his crop then – urged him to try it. “White corn is very laborious to plant. It needs more insecticides and we need to apply granular insecticide to each plant on a daily basis depending on the level of infestation,” he said.

Following his first Bt corn harvest, it became clear to Ryan that there was no turning back. He knew that it was the beginning of a new life for him and his family, who has faced so many hardships in trying to make ends meet. “When I realized that I will earn more if I plant Bt corn, I decided to add two more children to my brood. Sending my children to school was not that difficult anymore,” he said.

Read the full, original article: [How Biotech Corn Transformed a Farmer's Life and Made Him the Community's VIP](#)