

Oregon maps GM crop fields to establish system for coexistence

Before residents in southern Oregon overwhelmingly voted to ban genetically modified crops last month, farmers negotiated for months with a biotech company that grows engineered sugar beets near their fields.

Their goal was to set up a system to peacefully coexist, an online mapping database of fields to help growers minimize cross-pollination between engineered and non-engineered crops. But the effort between farmers and Swiss company Syngenta failed, leading to the ban.

Last October, Oregon Gov. John Kitzhaber directed the state's Department of Agriculture to undertake something far more ambitious than that failed mapping effort — map GMO field locations across the entire state and establish buffer zones and exclusion areas for GE crops. The move was spurred by several instances of genetic contamination in the region that rendered non-engineered crops unsellable on the export market.

If the mapping goes ahead, Oregon would be the first state to map fields and mandate preventive measures for modified crops. Advocates say Oregon could become a model for the rest of the nation. Already, dozens of seed associations across the nation — organizations for farmers who grow crops for seed — do mapping, also called pinning, and set isolation distances among crops to limit cross-pollination.

Read the full, original article: [Oregon hopes to be first state to map GMO fields](#)