

Opposition to GM crops counter-productive to environment, economy and consumer

The news that Britain could soon grow genetically modified crops commercially is a victory for commonsense over irrational opportunism, and also for the environment over pollution.

It is now clear that the opposition to GM crops has been counter-productive for the environment as well as harmful to the economy and the consumer. It has left us more reliant on pesticides than other parts of the world. For instance, potatoes currently require spraying with fungicides up to 15 times a season. Each spraying costs money, burns diesel, compacts soil and kills innocent fungal bystanders. Breeding blight-resistant potatoes the old fashioned way has proved difficult. By the time it is achieved, the blight is already immune to the resistance.

However, doing it the GM way proved straightforward for the Sainsbury Laboratory in Norwich, and promises stronger and longer resistance, because it is possible to introduce a cassette of several resistance genes. These come from wild plants in the same genus as the potato, which disposes of one source of opposition – that it's an unnatural cross. The new GM variety probably could have been developed years earlier if the eco-vandals had not driven much of that kind of ground-breaking research abroad.

The new campaign is based on no new science suggesting environmental or health risks. It's simply a sign of a movement addicted to scaremongering and in need of new funds. Fortunately it will not gain much traction. With 17 million farmers growing GM crops in 28 countries, on 12 percent of the world's arable land, this gene genie won't go back in the bottle.

Read the full, original article: [Eat up your GM crops. They're good for you](#)