

Nigerian scientists declare opponents of biotech 'enemies' of African development

As the controversy over the safety of biotechnology continues, Nigerian scientists yesterday reiterated their stand on the safety of the technology, declaring that opponents of biotechnology were enemies of Africa's development. Leading the discussion at the Open Forum on Agricultural Biotechnology (OFAB) in Abuja is Professor Lucy Ogbadu, the director-general/chief executive officer of the National Biotechnology Development Agency (NABDA). Ogbadu maintained that those opposed to biotechnology were people who want Africa to remain backward by spreading false information on the technology.

"Nigeria needs to use biotechnology to create wealth in the country and eradicate poverty in the country. We are not saying biotechnology can do all but it can contribute immensely in agricultural productivity, affordable health care delivery services, sustainable environment and industrial growth," Ogbadu said.

The continuous absence of bio-safety law might make Nigeria a consumer nation of foreign GMO foods, particularly maize products, instead of a producer, thereby holding farmers hostage to those of other countries, she said.

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