

## China decides against renewing GM permits, raises questions about future for research

China's Ministry of Agriculture has decided not to renew biosafety certificates that allowed research groups to grow genetically modified (GM) rice and corn.

The permits, to grow two varieties of GM rice and one transgenic corn strain, expired on 17 August. The reasoning behind the move is not clear, and it has raised questions about the future of related research in China.

Why the ministry allowed the certificates to lapse is in dispute. Some environmentalists say public worries about GM crops played a decisive role. "We believe that loopholes in assessing and monitoring [GM] research, as well as the public concern around safety issues are the most important reasons that the certifications have not been renewed," writes Wang Jing, a Greenpeace official based in Beijing, in an e-mail to *ScienceInsider*.

Others believe agricultural economics also influenced the decision. China has nearly reached self-sufficiency in producing rice using conventional varieties, so the ministry has decided there is no need to commercialize Bt rice in the near future, says Huang Jikun, director of the Chinese Academy of Sciences' Center for Chinese Agricultural Policy.

**Read the full, original article:** [China pulls plug on genetically modified rice and corn](#)