Crop biotech has cut global pesticide use by 9%–474 million kilograms

Crop biotechnology has significantly reduced the amount of chemical pesticide spraying worldwide by 474 million kilograms, or 9 percent, over the past 15 years, according to a report by PG Economics, a UK-based advisory and consultancy services provider specializing on plant biotechnology, agricultural production systems, agricultural markets and policy.

The reduction is equivalent to the total amount of pesticide active ingredient applied to arable land in member countries of the European Union over a period of one-and-a-half crop years, the report noted.

“As a result, this has decreased the environmental impact associated with herbicide and insecticide use on the area planted to biotech crops by 18.1 percent,” the PG Economics report said.

Modern agriculture biotechnology has allowed the development of crop varieties with built-in resistance to traditional pests. Due to their natural ability to fight pests, such crop varieties no longer require the massive application of chemical pesticides.

The report also pointed out that “crop biotechnology has contributed to significantly reducing the release of greenhouse emissions from agricultural practices.”

Read full original report: Global pesticides use down as biotech crop adoption rises, study shows