

## Filipino farmers appeal ban on Bt eggplant

Farmers have urged the Filipino Supreme Court (SC) to junk the writ of *kalikasan* against *Bacillus thuringiensis* (*Bt*) eggplant, saying that the *Bt* eggplant does not need deadly pesticides as it is designed to kill pests.

Edgar Talasan of Impasug-ong, Bukidnon, issued the appeal on behalf of 40,000 vegetable growers nationwide who would be spared from using pesticides that are applied to eggplants almost every day if they would use *Bt* eggplant. The use of biotech eggplant would cut the infestation by stem borers that burrow deep into eggplants which render up to 90 percent of the crop unsuitable to sell.

“Among eggplant growers, it is normal to apply pesticides regularly. I apply pesticides twice a week but in Pangasinan, they do it nearly every day,” Talasan said in Filipino.

The Bukidnon farmer said, “If we do not like poison to litter our land and prevent contamination of our vegetables, then the SC should listen to our plea.

*Bt* eggplant is not dangerous since the genetic material used is specific only to pests who die upon nibbling at the eggplant skin. Humans are safe from this.”

Talasan made the appeal on Friday’s media briefing of the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA) at a hotel in Makati City.

Talasan said the alternative should the SC not lift the writ of *kalikasan* against *Bt*eggplant is that “the 40,000 eggplant farmers would continue to apply hundreds of thousands of liters of toxic chemicals to protect their [produce] from infestation, the [consumers] would continue to eat conventional eggplant varieties that are soaked in a cocktail of chemicals that are potentially more lethal than the built-in protective armor of *Bt* eggplant.”

**Read full, original article:** [Farmers plead with SC: Junk case vs ‘Bt’ eggplant](#)