

Do we love chocolate enough to turn to GMOs?

GMOs may be able to save chocolate. The bigger question is whether we want them to.

Chocolate—the scrumptious confection of Valentine boxes and Easter baskets—is in trouble. A chocolate shortage, to the tune of one million metric tons, is predicted to hit within the next five years, the result of climate change, disease, and the demands of rapidly growing populations of chocolate lovers in China and India.

The [Nature Conservation Research Center](#) based in Ghana—the world’s second-largest producer of chocolate after the Ivory Coast—predicts glumly that within the next 20 years, chocolate will be [as rare and as expensive as caviar](#).

Chocolate comes from the seeds of the cacao tree, is a delicious and addictive treat paired with a plant that is tricky, if not downright impossible, to grow.

Cacao only grows in a belt 20 degrees north or south of the Equator, nicknamed the “20/20 zone.” Along with its geographical limitations, cacao is stunningly susceptible to disease. Cacao trees are also painfully slow growers.

Some researchers point out that creating an ideal GMO chocolate isn’t going to be easy. Chocolate is a mind-bogglingly complex food, containing some 600 different flavor components. (Even red wine boasts a mere 200.) Cobbling together the right mix of flavors—along with disease-resistance, a rapid growth rate, and high productivity—may prove to be an heroic task.

Still, given increasing world demand and the cacao tree’s environmentally dicey future, it may be our best chance to save chocolate as we all know and love it.

Read full original article: [Can GMOs Save Chocolate?](#)