

## Pamela Ronald profile: Organic farming and GMOs can be 'bedfellows'

Pamela Ronald is a plant pathologist and geneticist—a professor at the University of California, Davis whose lab has isolated genes from rice that can resist diseases and tolerate floods. When those genes are inserted into existing rice plants, they help farmers grow high-yield harvests in places where the crop is a vulnerable staple. Last year, four million subsistence farmers in seven countries fed millions of people by planting seeds that carry a gene Ronald and her collaborators isolated.

She's also trying to mend the perceived schism between genetic engineering and organic farming. To do so, she's promoting a form of sustainable agriculture that draws on both practices. Only by combining elements of each, she contends, will we have a chance of feeding the world's swelling population (expected to reach 9.2 billion by 2050) while also protecting the planet's natural resources and countenancing the effects of climate change.

As Ronald sees it, plant geneticists and organic farmers aren't enemies. In fact, they can be bedfellows: Her husband, Raoul Adamchak, is an organic farmer and co-author, with Ronald, of *Tomorrow's Table: Organic Farming, Genetics, and the Future of Food*. Praised by Bill Gates and Michael Pollan, their book argues for an integrated theory of agriculture in which "organic farming and genetic engineering each will play an increasingly important role," rather than being unnecessarily pitted against each other.

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [Can This Scientist Unite Genetic Engineers and Organic Farmers?](#)**