

## Why GMOs should be part of California's drought strategy

In the midst of the most severe drought ever recorded in California, Governor Jerry Brown, the master of passionate rhetoric and the Grand Gesture, has lots of ideas. Unfortunately, they don't include one of the most promising solutions to the Parched—er, Golden—State's water problems: encouraging more genetic engineering in agriculture.

The governor's grandiose plans ignore available scientific innovations that can literally address the drought at the roots. Specifically, more efficient, water-conserving policies via more genetic engineering—the cultivation of crop plants sometimes called “genetically modified organisms,” or GMOs—could be one of the most useful tools in drought relief, so why isn't there space for it in Brown's toolbox?

Using about 80% of California's water, the state's farmers grow the majority of the nation's fruits, nuts and vegetables, but as yet there have been few commercialized genetically engineered varieties of these “specialty crops.”

Astonishingly, in spite of the intensive, safe and commercially successful cultivation of genetically engineered plants for two decades, four California counties have banned their cultivation, via either ordinances or referendums. These actions in Trinity, Mendocino, Marin and Santa Cruz counties represent political leadership and voter ignorance at their absolute worst, obstructing a route to greater prosperity for farmers, greater food security for the nation—and water conservation.

Where water is unavailable for irrigation, the development of crop varieties able to grow under conditions of low moisture or temporary drought could both boost yields and lengthen the time that farmland is productive.

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [Saving California's Drought-Plagued Agriculture: More Crop For The Drop With GMOs](#)**