

Gene modification does not destroy 'natural' food system, could promote organic farming

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis.

Traditional breeding changes the DNA of plants through generations of matchmaking and artificial selection in the field. Genetic engineering directly alters plant genomes in the lab, deleting or rearranging native genes, or adding genes from different species. The staunchest and most common objection to GMOs is that the kind of genetic mixing-n-matching scientists perform in labs is unnatural and therefore wrong.

Biologists now know, however, that DNA is inherently promiscuous and has traveled [between species](#) and across kingdoms since the beginning of life itself: from [bacteria to plants](#), [fungi to animals](#), reptiles to mammals. Given this context, genetic engineering is an extension of a process that DNA invented billion of years before humans evolved. What's more, it is a powerful tool that can help us farm responsibly and sustainably by minimizing damage to the environment and prioritizing the health of both people and animals — the [precise goals](#) of organic farming.

Type the terms 'GMO' and 'organic' into Google and you'll get a barrage of links framing the two as diametrically opposed. The truth is that, when well-designed and used responsibly, the products of genetic engineering are often perfectly aligned with the goals of organic farming.

the idea that GMOs are unnatural and anti-organic is the most immediate and intractable objection to them. Not only is it a major obstacle to [intelligent discussion](#) about the real risks of the technology — herbicide overuse, corporate control of the food system, the spread of GMO pollen — it also divorces GMOs from sustainable agriculture in the public's mind, when the two can and should work together.

Read full, original post: [Organic GMOs Could Be The Future of Food — If We Let Them](#)