

Could home-grown GMOs solve hunger in India?

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. . .To increase food production, India needs to invest in modern agricultural methods, including GM crops.

Indian researchers have shown that they have the expertise to generate GM plants. . . But almost all of this work has relied on molecular-biology research done elsewhere — India has in effect borrowed or been given the genes. This leads to complications, usually conflict over intellectual property (IP) rights.

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In response, India is turning to research based on old discoveries, including genes that are in the public domain or no longer protected by patents. The problem here is that insects have already developed resistance to the toxins produced by such genes . . .Increased use of this old technology in India can only accelerate resistance and make the situation more difficult.

India should stop trying to build the Taj Mahal with borrowed bricks. We need a concerted effort at home to discover and manipulate relevant genes in indigenous organisms and crops (such as chickpea and rice). . .

Such home-grown GM crops would also reduce reliance on transgenic technology produced by multinational companies, which is expensive and rarely optimized for the conditions of specific regions. Some GM crops designed abroad need more water than is usually available in some parts of India, for example, putting great stress on farmers.

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Mahatma Gandhi only wore clothes that he had woven himself. He gave India the slogan “from *swadeshi* to *swaraj*”, which means “be indigenous in order to self-rule”. The Indian government should take this message on board when planning future investment in biotechnology. . .

Read full, original post: [India needs home-grown GM food to stop starvation](#)