

## GMO crops help reduce environmental impact of farming

*[Editor's note: This is an excerpt from an extensive, open access series of reports on the safety of GMOs produced by the Flanders Institute for Biotechnology]*

This report forms a two-part series on the safety of genetically modified (GM) crops . . . In this report we discuss what impact GM crops have on the environment.

. . . [T]he statistics on the environmental impact of GM crops paint a different picture from the abundant negative reporting in the media. Overall, the cultivation of GM crops over the last 18 years has delivered substantial benefits for the environment. Insect-resistant crops have resulted in a . . . decrease in the use of insecticides. Herbicide-tolerant crops have led to reductions in fuel use and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions . . . by supporting no-till farming. Overall, GM crops have produced an environmental benefit of 37%.

The aim of this report is to call a halt to the polarized debate on the environmental impact of GM crops and to provide a nuanced response to the many concerns that exist. Crop cultivation is by definition unnatural, and produces a negative impact on the environment. Plant breeding makes it possible to develop plants that reduce this impact. The impact, whether positive or negative, depends on the crop trait and the cultivation method, but not on the breeding technology used.

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post:** [Effect of genetically modified crops on the environment](#)