

Mark Lynas: India's GMO mustard will bring cheaper hybrids, not increase herbicide use

In an interview with Sanjeeb Mukherjee, Mark Lynas, a reporter with the Cornell Alliance who reports on crop biotechnology around the world, defends the government's recent decision to pursue approval of [GM mustard](#).

There is an allegation that use of [GM mustard](#) would lead to increased use of herbicide... is any substance to this argument?

The trait that [GM mustard](#) has is male-sterility in order to facilitate the use of hybrids, which can increase yield via hybrid vigour. The herbicide tolerance trait was only used in development as a selectable marker for hybrids, and is not intended for use in the field...

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Do you think large-scale commercialisation of [GM mustard](#) would wipe out ... indigenous varieties...of [mustard](#) from the country?

No, because cross-pollination is not an issue. Remember: [mustard](#) self-pollinates! That is the whole point of this development, to prevent self-pollination via a male sterility trait, thereby facilitating the use of hybrids...

Many people are questioning the need for [GM mustard](#) when existing hybrid varieties give better yield. Your take.

Existing hybrid varieties are ... expensive to produce, ... [mustard](#) is self-pollinating, so it is difficult to ... cross-fertilise... in order to produce hybrid vigour. The [GM](#) version ... simplifies this process, meaning that hybrid vigour will be available to many more farmers at a better cost...

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [GM crop is as safe as any other form of breeding. It's probably safer: Mark Lynas](#)