

Chinese crackdown on illegally grown GMO crops still leaves public queasy

China has spent billions on research of biotech crops, but it has not yet approved the planting of any GM varieties of staple food crops amid deep-seated consumer opposition.

It plans to introduce GM corn and soybeans within the next five years, however, a step that would lead to a huge increase in global production of genetically modified crops.

Some farmers have recently been found growing GM corn illegally, triggering a strong response from the government to shore up already low consumer trust in its ability to handle food safety issues.

Reporting of such incidents threatens to further polarize public opinion, researchers said at a seminar on Thursday, even as the ministry official defended the government's approach to "severely punish" each incident.

Media reports typically suggest that genetically modified foods are harmful, said Hu Ruifa, professor at the Beijing Institute of Technology, adding that both news publishers and local governments needed to be better educated on the science behind GM crops and foods.

"The impact on consumers is really terrible," said Hu Ruifa ... referring to media coverage of an incident in Shaanxi province.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [China seeks to soothe concerns over illegal GM crops](#)