

Growth in GMO seed industry will come from yield-boosting traits, expansion into wheat, rice crops

...[G]lobal planting of GM crops declined slightly in 2015, after two decades of rapid growth.... The markets for the crops that have led GM expansion so far — maize, soyabeans, cotton and canola — are largely saturated in the countries that are politically and agriculturally hospitable to GM....

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“I do think there is growth left in the GM seeds industry,” says [Allister Phillips, associate director of agrochemicals and crop biotechnology consultancy Phillips McDougall]. The first driver of expansion will be the spread of current input-based technology to regions ... where markets are not saturated, particularly in Latin America and Asia.

In the long run GM technology will expand through the introduction of “output traits” which directly enhance crops’ yields or quality.

One that is beginning to make progress in the US is Monsanto’s DroughtGard maize, which is designed to thrive in prolonged spells of dry weather. Other yield-raising characteristics nearing commercialisation are tolerances of exceptional heat and salinity.

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But the biggest boost would come from GM varieties of two of the world’s staple crops, rice and wheat, which have been genetically manipulated successfully in the laboratory but not yet commercialised.

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [Bayer-Monsanto deal is a bet on GM crop expansion](#)**