GMO Bt corn contains fewer disease-causing mycotoxins than conventional corn

Editor's Note: This blog by geneticist Anastasia Bodnar evaluate whether claims made by the biotechnology industry that GM foods are free of mycotoxins are true or not.

Producing foods free of toxins such as mycotoxins

Do GMOs live up to the promises of the biotech industry? … The claim here is that "Biotech is helping to feed the world by: Producing foods free of … toxins such as mycotoxin."

Verdict: *Promise met*.

Mycotoxins are produced by some fungi that infect plants, and when consumed they can cause a variety of health problems in humans and other animals. The plants can get infected in the field, and the fungi can multiply if storage conditions are not quite right.

In the US and most other developed countries, we've used careful farming and storage methods to greatly reduce mycotoxins in food to the point that most people have never heard of them…

…

[However] mycotoxins are very bad news in Africa, and it's a difficult problem to solve. Mycotoxin-producing fungus is worse in foods that have a lot of insect damage: the fungus enters the grain through the bites insects take. A Bt corn reduces insect damage which in turn reduces mycotoxins. A 2010 review of 23 studies of mycotoxins in corn (full text) found that 19 of these studies "came to the conclusion that Bt maize is less contaminated with mycotoxins than the conventional control variety in each case."

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: The Promise of GMOs: Mycotoxins