Blight-resistant genetically engineered potatoes that cut fungicide use approved

Three types of potatoes genetically engineered to resist the pathogen that caused the Irish potato famine are safe for the environment and safe to eat, federal officials have announced.

The approval by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration…gives Idaho-based J.R. Simplot Company permission to plant the potatoes this spring [2017] and sell them in the fall.

The company said the potatoes contain only potato genes, and that the resistance to late blight, the disease that caused the Irish potato famine, comes from an Argentine variety of potato that naturally produced a defense.

The three varieties are the Russet Burbank, Ranger Russet and Atlantic. They've previously been approved by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

All three varieties "have the same taste and texture and nutritional qualities" as conventional potatoes, said Simplot spokesman Doug Cole.

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Simplot says the genetically engineered potatoes reduce the use of fungicide by half.

The company said the potatoes will also have reduced bruising and black spots, enhanced storage capacity, and a reduced amount of a chemical created when potatoes are cooked at high temperatures that's a potential carcinogen.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: US approves 3 types of genetically engineered potatoes