

African scientists developing GMO sorghum with higher levels of vitamin A to tackle childhood blindness

Up to half a million children around the world are going blind every year due to a lack of Vitamin A in their diets.

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In Kenya, scientists are tackling this problem by developing biofortified sorghum, a staple crop that has been genetically modified to contain higher levels of Vitamin A. More than 300 million sub-Saharan Africans depend on sorghum as their primary calorie source. Its drought- and heat-tolerant properties mean it is a vital crop in drought-prone countries, where irrigation is not always accessible or affordable. Improving the nutritional level of staple crops can provide both food and nutritional security.



Magomere at a sorghum confined field trial site near Kiboko, Kenya.
(Photo: CropLife)

The [Africa Biofortified Sorghum](#), or ABS, project is a public-private partnership established to tackle chronic Vitamin A deficiency in children, as well as improve levels of zinc and iron. If it gets commercial approval, it will be the first-ever biotech sorghum on the market.

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“With the work that I am doing with biofortified sorghum, we are not trying to change the way people live, we are just improving the available nutrients in what they already have,” said [Dr. Titus Magomere, one of

the scientists involved in the project.]

“We hope once the product is ready, a meal of sorghum, which will be available to the local farmers, will reduce nutritional deficiencies significantly.”

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [The sorghum plant that could tackle blindness](#)