

‘Refuge planting’: How farmers could help slow developing insect resistance to GMO Bt crops

To date ... Bt crops have been remarkably successful. However, insect pests have shown the ability to evolve resistance to Bt proteins. In order to slow down the development of Bt resistance, farmers who plant Bt crops are urged to plant a certain percentage of their fields with non-Bt crops – called refuge crops. In fact, in the case of Bt corn, farmers are *required* to plant a section of their fields with refuge crops.

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[Dominic] Reisig [an associate professor of entomology at NC State] found that approximately 40 percent of corn growers who used Bt corn would not plant refuge crops in the next growing season, while another 25 percent weren’t sure. However, a majority of growers did understand the value of refuge crops – and felt they should be planting them.

...

Reisig also found that better enforcement and peer pressure from other farmers weren’t seen as making farmers more likely to plant refuge crops. Instead, growers said that financial incentives – such as rebates on non-Bt seed – would make them more likely to plant refuge crops, as would the availability of high-yield non-Bt seed.

[Read the full study [here](#)]

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [Study IDs Ways to Encourage ‘Refuge’ Planting, Slowing Resistance to Bt Crops](#)

For more background on the Genetic Literacy Project, read [GLP on Wikipedia](#)