

Slugging it out with a new contender in the GMO debate

"I thought it might be worth meeting," [said Penn State University entomologist John Tooker], "because I read the [piece where you said GMOs](#) had decreased the amount of insecticide used." This is an important data point in the ongoing debate over the environmental effects of GMO crops. As long-time Grist readers know, I've [explored this topic in depth](#).

"Well," Tooker continued, "in 2015, we published a paper showing that they've actually driven insecticide use up."

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Tooker argues that the increase in genetically modified crops is what's really causing the use of neonics to skyrocket, to the point that just about every kernel of field corn planted in the United States is coated with this class of insecticides.

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After a little follow up, Tooker conceded that he was making a bit of leap from his 2015 paper on the increased use of neonics to placing the blame on GMOs.

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If you are worried about toxicity to humans, things are improving. But if you care about insects, the ubiquity of neonics may very well mean we're looking at an increasing threat. Measured in acres treated, it looks like we've reached an all-time high in the use of neonic seed treatments.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [Slugging it out with a new contender in the GMO debate](#)