

US biotech seed patents linked to increasing corn yields

[Mariam Barry at ENSTA ParisTech in France and colleagues] have studied the yield of hybrid corn in the U.S. since 1985 and how this correlates with trends in biotech patents that announce new varieties. The thinking is that these patents could be used as a leading indicator of food productivity. [T]he researchers say that hybrid corn yields are improving at a healthy rate. “By several different measures—from patents, field-test data and a forecasting model—we found improvement rates reasonably close and between 1.2% and 2.4% per year,” they say.

corn yield
no data found or type unknown

By contrast, the global population is growing at a rate of about 1.1 percent per year and the U.S. population is growing at about 0.8 percent per year.

So U.S. corn productivity looks set to increase and certainly match past improvements. Measured in bushels per acre, the corn productivity average in the United States more than quintupled between 1940 and 2015. Whether these gains can be translated into other parts of the world has yet to be seen.

The possibility of predicting future growth from patent data looks less promising.

[Read the full [study](#)]

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [How Biotech Patents Are Linked to U.S. Food Productivity](#)