

Rice, papaya, oranges — 3 GMO versions of conventional crops tweaked for humanity's benefit

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Let's look at three examples of GM crops that were not created to increase corporate profit, but for the benefit of humanity.

1. GOLDEN RICE

The most damaging micronutrient deficiencies in the world are the consequence of low dietary intake of iron, vitamin A, iodine, and zinc. Vitamin A deficiency (VAD) is prevalent among the poor whose diets are based mainly on rice. A group of European scientists spent over a decade inserting two genes from daffodil and one gene from a bacterium into rice.... The technology was licensed ... by companies (AstraZeneca and Monsanto) for commercialization. The companies have since granted free licenses for "humanitarian" use.

2. RAINBOW PAPAYA

Commercialized in 1998, the Rainbow papaya produced immediate results. Within four years, the genetic improvement had not only stopped the rapid decline of the Hawaii papaya industry, but production actually returned to levels near where they were before the papaya ringspot virus invasion.

3. FLORIDA ORANGES

[Scientists] have discovered that a gene from spinach can make orange trees resistant to [citrus greening]. The gene that has been found to be effective exists in slightly different forms in hundreds of plants and animals, including in our own cells — it produces a protein that attacks invading bacteria. This strain is still undergoing regulatory approval.

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