

How biotechnology can help India's small farmers meet 'zero hunger challenge'

Biotechnology covers a range of low (biofertilizers and microbiology) to high-end technologies (genetic engineering, gene editing etc). However, when we talk about biotechnology, public perception is of genetically modified (GM) crops, but that is not the case. Probably, the scientific community needs to do a better job in educating the public that biotechnology does not mean only GM crops.

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[Biotechnologies] will play a very important role in achieving the Zero Hunger Challenge. When we talk of the Zero Hunger challenge, we just don't mean calories, but also different kinds of nutrients such as proteins, micronutrients and so on...

We are a major importer of pulse crops (major source of proteins to the Indian population) and oilseeds. As per the [Indian Council of Medical Research) for having a healthy population, India needs at least 29 million tonnes of pulses. However, currently we produce about 18-20 million tonnes and import around 4 million tones. Thus, we have a deficit of around 6-8 million tonnes. To address this gap, we will need to have better varieties and to develop it, molecular breeding and GM technologies can help.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: ['Biotechnology does not mean only GM crops'](#)