

## Talking Biotech: Is genetic engineering the best way to resuscitate the American chestnut from blight?

The American Chestnut dominated the Appalachian landscape, ranging from Georgia all the way to Maine. In the late 1800s, a pathogen imported on a tree to the Bronx Zoo spread rapidly into wild populations, destroying millions of trees, and radically changing the forest. There are natural sources of resistance to the pathogen that are being introduced to the American Chestnut with traditional breeding. Transgenic solutions have also been developed. [Jared Westbrook](#) (Ph.D. in Plant Molecular and Cellular Biology from the University of Florida) is leading breeding efforts to integrate the multiple types of resistance with the hopes of restoring this important tree in North American ecology. Hosted by University of Kentucky plant pathologist [Paul Vincelli](#).

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