

## Nigeria's biosafety director supports advantages of GMO crops despite criticisms

Despite the criticism that has trailed the use of Genetically Modified Organisms, GMOs, Nigeria's bio-safety chief has defended the use of such crops.

Rufus Egbegba, who heads the National Bio-safety Management Agency, NBMA, said GMOs are the same conventional crops but improved versions for the purpose of sustainability and improved yields.

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Mr. Egbegba said that cowpea and sorghum were presently being tried at the Institute of Agricultural Research in Zaria.

According to him, the cowpea is modified for insect resistance, and sorghum is modified for the availability of nutrients.

"Guinea corn naturally has iron zinc and protein, but there is a particular enzyme that makes those nutrients unavailable to humans and animals when they consume it naturally.

"But science can break down that barrier so, that is the modification that is being carried out and it is on trial in the field to make sure it is sustained because it takes a long process."

Mr. Egbegba said that there was also another product under trial called the 'newest rice' by the National Cereal Research Institute, Badeggi.

He said that the rice had been modified to use less nitrogen fertiliser, less water, and could flourish even if the soil was a little salty.

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [Nigeria bio-safety chief defends GMOs](#)**