

'Media war' erupts in Ghana as GMO cowpeas set for 2018 release

The debate over whether biotechnology applications are safe in food production has intensified in Ghana as the country prepares for its first commercial release of a genetically engineered (GE) crop in 2018.

Farmer associations, civil society organizations, government and other interest groups are all stepping up the rhetoric to turn the minds and hearts of Ghanaians for or against the technology, which Ghana's Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) has insisted is harmless and a necessity to keep the country food secure. The CSIR recently published a full page opinion piece in the largest circulating national newspaper to drum home the point.

The latest such "media war" was sparked when the association of seed producing companies made a public declaration in support of the technology.

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Following Parliament's passage of the Biosafety Act 2011, the CSIR has been conducting field trials of some GMO seeds, as required by the regulatory process before they are introduced onto the market. The researchers have announced the GMO cowpea will be ready for commercialization next year following successful field trials. The trials have so far shown a drastic reduction in the use of pesticides, which the scientists say will help ensure environmental safety once farmers adopt it.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [Ghana GMO debate intensifies ahead of first biotech crop release](#)