

## High-yield GMO wheat could help Egyptian farmers—but government still hasn't passed biotech law

Government researchers have made two advances that could increase the national production of wheat in a country that is sometimes cited as the world's largest wheat importer. One advance involves a new compound that would be used to treat wheat seeds. The other involves the genetic manipulation of the wheat seeds themselves.

...

The results of experiments with both new techniques, which were published in the journal *Gesunde Pflanzen*, detail how the researchers developed the compound and changed the genetic material of the seeds. The scientists concluded that the genetic engineering and the application of the compound, used together, can increase wheat yield by 68 percent.

...

Although their new compound won a patent, they are not yet able to produce it because it is currently illegal to manufacture genetically modified products in Egypt. Indeed, with the new research, Egyptian scientists have stepped into a global controversy about “genetically modified” foods. Egyptian law on the subject is not clear.

“To date, there is no legislative law that organizes and regulates the production, circulation and use of genetically modified organisms or the control of genetic engineering research,” said Rasha Ali, a researcher at the Department of Biochemistry for Plant Protection at the National Center for Research. “This keeps all the research in this field in drawers,” she added.

A law was drafted and proposed in 2016, but it has yet to be debated by parliament.

[Editor's note: Read the [full study](#) (behind paywall)]

**Read full, original post:** [In Egypt, Genetic Crop Modification Is On Hold](#)