

Burkina Faso abandons insect-resistant GMO cotton, suffers lower yields

As Burkina Faso farmers predicted, their nation has lost its standing as Africa's largest producer of cotton since halting the cultivation of genetically engineered, pest-resistant Bt cotton.

Mali has now emerged as the number one producer of cotton in Africa, edging Burkina Faso out of the place it held for more than a decade, according to [a report from Radio France International](#) (RFI), the French public radio service.

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Cotton farmers in Burkina Faso had predicted a decline in production by the end of 2017 when I paid a visit to that country last September. They were concerned that the increased pest attacks that followed the decision by government and cotton companies to phase out the production of GE cotton seeds would make 2017 a bad production year.

They were right, as confirmed by figures from the [National Cotton Council of America](#). In 2017, Mali produced 1.325 million bales of cotton fiber, while Burkina Faso produced 1.300 million bales.

Kuraogo Salifu, a cotton farmer in the Pandema District, told me: "This year, we have increased the size of cotton fields all over but most of the fields are suffering from the pest pressure. The country will not achieve increased yields as expected."

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