

## Disease-resistant GMO cassava developed by Kenyan scientists moves closer to approval

Cassava farmers are about five years away from accessing disease-resistant genetically modified varieties, currently being tested in specific locations around the country.

Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organisation (Kalro) scientists are developing a transgenic variety that is resistant to the Cassava Mosaic Virus and the Cassava Brown Streak Disease the two diseases that have in recent years destroyed the crop causing farmers massive losses and threatening food security in rural Kenya.

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[Simon Gichuki, a senior principal research officer at Kalro] said both diseases, especially the cassava mosaic, have been destroying the crop for a very long time, making the intervention critical.

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The first phase of the project involved proving that it was possible to develop a genetically modified resistant variety.

In the second phase, the scientists focused on taking disease resistant genes and inserting them in cassava varieties of farmers' preference, without necessarily having to create a whole new variety.

The project is now in the third and final phase of seeking regulatory approval.

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The GMO cassava research is not only being conducted in Kenya but also in neighbouring Uganda, because just like Kenya, Uganda has suffered massive cassava losses caused by the two diseases.

**Read full, original post:** [Kenya inching closer to disease-free GMO cassava](#)