

First GMO crop in UK? Anti-biotech activists protest Rothamsted Research's camelina field trials

Crops which have been genetically modified so they produce industrial products could be grown in Britain for the first time after scientists applied for permission to the government to start field trials.

[Rothamsted Research](#), which is based in Harpenden, Hertfordshire, wants to plant GM camelina with altered DNA so that it produces 'wax esters', a natural lubricant which can be used instead of petrochemicals to keep machinery running smoothly.

Until now the company has only planted [GM crops](#) which could be used for human consumption, such as camelina with extra Omega-3 fish oil to boost health, or [wheat](#) altered to produce higher yields.

But the company said it now planned to use camelina as a 'chassis' to make useful lipids, or fatty acids, which can provide alternatives for chemicals in a range of industrial applications.

However campaigners said the outdoor trials in Hertfordshire and Suffolk, represented an 'unacceptable risk' to 'people, wildlife and the wider environment.'

Twenty-six organisations including farmers, scientists, retailers and environmentalists have lodged a formal objection to [Defra](#), asking them to refuse permission for trial, warning that pollen or seeds could escape and lead to other plants growing wax esters, which are harmful to humans.

Read full, original post: [GM crops that produce industrial products could be grown in Britain for first time](#)