

Blight-resistant GMO potatoes reduce pesticide use 80% in Ireland field trial

The environmental impact of potato production can be reduced by 95% by using a genetically modified (GM) blight-resistant potato in combination with a novel integrated pest management strategy.

AgriLand met Dr. Ewen Mullins, the head research officer involved in the four-year GM potato environmental trial carried out at Teagasc Oak Park, to hear all about the results of the AMIGA project – which have now been published – and to understand what the trial was all about.

“Our goal in the AMIGA project wasn’t to advocate the merits of one production system over another. We wanted to look at the agronomic and environmental impact of growing this specific GM potato relative to current systems,” Ewen explained.

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“It is considered a GM potato, but really, with cisgenics all you’re doing is accelerating the breeding process, bringing in a single wild gene (here it was called VNT1).”

...

The trial allowed the cisgenic variety to be examined in Ireland for its resistance to blight strains in this country and to also investigate its environmental impact.

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“What we saw is that you can reduce the need for fungicide inputs by 80-90% by using a single source of genetic resistance, which in this case was a gene taken from a wild potato species.

Read full, original post: [Tillage focus: GM potato study – see the results here](#)