Genetically modified plant could make cheaper malaria drugs. Will anti-GMO activists oppose it?

A team of mainly Chinese researchers [recently published] “The Genome of Artemisia annua Provides Insight into the Evolution of Asteraceae Family and Artemisinin Biosynthesis.”

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Based on their genomic and transcriptomic analyses, they produced transgenic lines of A. annua producing high levels of artemisinin. While “conventional” plants produce between 0.1% and 1% artemisinin (based on dry matter) in their leaves, the researchers’ best line contains 3.2%.

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Artemisinin is a component of the most recent and currently most effective antimalarial drugs.

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This raises, once again, the question of the European – and particularly French – opposition to GMOs….

Will “NGOs” and other members of the protest and opposition to progress industry be campaigning against the cultivation of these new, very particular GMOs? Will this be “Golden Rice” all over again, with the opposition to a “Trojan horse for the pro-GMO lobby” or claims that “The rationale of the fight against [insert relevant disease] is only a marketing ploy to try to make GMOs acceptable”? Will over a hundred Nobel Prize winners (131 to date), mainly in science and medicine, have to strike up the refrain of “How many poor people in the world must die before we consider this a crime against humanity?” once more?

Editor’s note: Read the full study

Read full, original post: Genetic engineering of plants contributes to the fight against malaria