

## Uganda's biosafety bill would force farmers to choose between organic and GMO corn

From a distance, Edward Nsubuga's 12-acre maize field appears to be well-kept. But the crop's tall, green stalks mask an infestation of armyworm. These stalks won't last for much longer, if the small-scale farmer does not get rid of the pests. Crop yields will be low, he says.

Nsubuga is searching for a solution to the problem. Other farmers have suggested that he replant the widely consumed crop, this time using genetically modified seeds that are pest-resistant. A bill, currently under review by Parliament, would permit the use of such seeds by maize farmers but would require them to maintain a distance of 200 meters (656 feet) between organic crops and the genetically modified maize crops.

"Two hundred meters is too big a piece of land to be wasted," he says. Nsubuga would rather deal with the infestation than divide his farmland by crop types.

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Those who refuse or fail to observe the minimum-distance requirements will be fined or imprisoned for up to five years....

While officials say the bill will allow farmers to grow both GMO crops and organic crops, Isaac Ongu, an agricultural consultant, says that more than 75 percent of the country's farmers can only choose one.

**Read full, original article:** [Organic or GMO Maize? Ugandan Bill Would Force Many Farmers to Make Fateful Choice](#)