

## Nigerian biotech startup introduces produce coating to combat malnutrition in Africa

Nigerian biotech startup [Coating+](#) .... has created a transparent gelatinous coating that is sprayed onto fresh fruit and vegetables to prolong their shelf life. It's made using a combination of chitosan – a sugar which can be extracted from shrimp shells – along with soy protein and micronutrients, and its preservation qualities are set to save farmers money on unsold produce. They are focusing on using the spray on fruit and vegetables that don't require peeling – such as tomatoes and grapes – so that the nutritional value of the coating is also consumed.

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Malnutrition – in particular, micronutrient deficiency and protein-energy malnutrition – is a huge issue in some parts of Africa. Thirty-five percent of children under the age of 5 are stunted, and 24% are underweight due to lack of nutrient intake in their food and drink.

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The idea of harnessing biotech to preserve fruit and [vegetables] isn't unique to Coating+, however. [Apeel](#), using a plant-based material, and [Cambridge Crops](#), basing their material on silk, are two U.S.-based startups looking to solve a similar problem. But .... neither company has current plans to take their product to Africa – and the Nigerian market is already yearning for a solution.

**Read full, original article:** [Nigerian Biotech Startup Using Shrimp Shells To Save Food Wins Top Prize](#)