

Anti-GMO activism: Latest example of age-old resistance to innovation, says African biotech scientist

A cloud of resistance hangs over the introduction of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in Kenya....Uncertainties created by technophobes instill fear among the public and cause policy stalemate.

Yet, more than two decades of biotech crop cultivation has seen trillions of meals served with no harm. Science academies, professional associations and global science leaders have endorsed GM crops to be as safe as their conventional counterparts.

INNOVATION

But while some people hold strong moral and ethical views on GMOs based on religious and cultural beliefs, the fierce opposition can be traced to emerging organic farming businesses and environmental “preservationists.” The fear of losing prime market share to GM foods that have been proven safe, cheaper and, hence, more attractive to consumers is evident. Trade wars, lifestyle ideologies, personal biases and political undertones drive the agenda.

The hostilities to GMOs are akin to the ancient resistance to inventions that revolutionized our lives. History shows that major innovations experience three stages: Ridicule, discussion and adoption.

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