

GMO chestnut trees could help revitalize New York's Native American communities

The [American chestnut](#) once dominated the eastern forests of the United States. A fungal pathogen, *Cryphonectria parasitica*, was introduced to the US in the early 20th century and within a few decades, the pathogen now known as the chestnut blight killed an estimated 4 billion chestnut trees.

Over the last century, there have been a number of efforts to confer blight resistance and restore the chestnut, including hybridization and backcross breeding programs Because the goal of planting genetically engineered American chestnut (GEAC) tree would be restoration, the hope is that GE trees will breed with relic wild types, hybrids, and backcrossed individuals and would ultimately restore the chestnut to the eastern forests.

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[C]urrent field trials, and proposed early plantings are all in the heart of contemporary and traditional territories of the Six Nations of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy of Central and Upstate New York. As part of their outreach, GEAC proponents deploy narratives about its historical importance to Native American communities [T]he chestnut's disappearance coincides with major cultural disruption such that virtually no living memories of the chestnut tree survive as part of cultural practice.

Read full, original article: [An Important Community In Restoration Efforts To Protect The American Chestnut Tree](#)