

## Ugandan farmers clamor for access to GMO crops—a year after parliament passes biosafety bill

Almost a year since the passing of the Genetic Engineering Regulatory Act (GERA), [farmers](#) are still waiting on the commercialization of [biotech crops](#) in Uganda. The Act—passed by the Parliament of Uganda in November 2018—would provide a framework to regulate commercialization of [genetically engineered](#) crops in Uganda, but is yet to be assented to by the President of the country.

Hundreds of showgoers including farmers, policymakers, representatives of civil society organizations, students, and teachers, among others were sensitized on current [modern biotechnology](#) research and development at the national annual agricultural show at the Source of the Nile, Jinja. Many farmers who visited the Uganda Biosciences Information Center (UBIC) stall at the show wondered why they still could not access the various [genetically engineered crops](#) developed by the National Agricultural Research Organization.

“I heard the (GERA) law was passed last year. Why haven’t you given us the GMOs yet?” inquired Regina Ndyamuhaki, a farmer from western Uganda whose banana plantation was devastated by the banana bacterial wilt. Regina, like many other farmers at the show are not aware that the Act still awaits Presidential assent before it becomes law. To the farmers, what they want is to test these solutions to their production challenges and determine whether they will work for them.

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