

GMO Bt cowpea could save Nigeria millions in crop imports annually

The [African Agricultural Technology Foundation](#) (AATF) says Nigeria can save billions of naira if it cuts down on its importation of cowpea. Dr Issoufou Abdourhamane, the Regional Head of AATF in Abuja made this known in an interview with News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) on [August 20] in Abuja.

“Nigeria is the biggest importer and producer of cowpea in Africa and the world.

“If Nigeria can cut down importation by 20 or 30 per cent, it will be saving the country, hundreds of millions of Naira annually.

“If you look at it, it is billions you are talking about,” he said. The AATF Regional Head in Abuja said the purpose for the creation of the AATF, with presence in other African countries was to intervene and ensure food sufficiency and security.

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Scientists in Africa in the late 80s found out that the limiting factor in the field was ‘maruca podborer’, insect pest of the commodity. “So since then, people have been trying to develop resistant variety cowpea, unfortunately cowpea naturally doesn’t have any resistance. “The development of biotechnology in late 80s and early 90s showed that there is a way

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