

## Viewpoint: Modern 'post-truth' politics ignores sustainability benefits of GMOs and pesticides

As Africa shows, locust plagues can be devastating for food security, and climate science enables us to detect that certain pests will come from distant places to our shores sooner than later, making insecticides necessary. In order to avoid fungus and deadly mycotoxins, we use fungicides.

Politically, these chemical crop protection tools are not popular, as increasing amounts of environmentalists push politicians to ban them.

Unfortunately, whether or not these chemicals have been shown to be safe by national and international food safety authorities matters – in the context of modern post-truth politics – very little.

What does seem to matter is that modern crop protection tools are labelled as being unsustainable .... If anything, sustainability should be based on modern and innovative agriculture that caters to the need of the environment, food safety, food security, and competitive prices for consumers. Those tools are available to us today.

Through genetic engineering, scientists have found a way to reduce the use of traditional crop protection products, while increasing crop yield. Yet once again, a political suspicion towards agro-tech innovation bars the way forward, in this case through the 2001 [European] GMO directive, which practically bans all genetic engineering for the purpose of crops.

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