

Viewpoint: Cuba needs GMOs to help combat poverty fueled by decades of communism

Cuba may be blessed with rich soil, but Communism has condemned its farmers to abject poverty. They lack the tools they need to grow what they must.

This summer, however, the Cuban government appears to have given its farmers a big boost: opening the door and allowing access to GM crops.

This could change everything about Cuban agriculture, benefiting both Cuban farmers and consumers.

On July 23, Cuba announced the establishment of a national commission on the use of GMOs, with a goal of encouraging farmers to take up a technology that they've largely resisted.

This is significant because longtime dictator Fidel Castro, who ruled the island with an iron fist until his death nearly four years ago, despised GMOs. As a committed Marxist, he associated them with the two things he hated most: the United States and capitalism. He railed against them and said that Cuban agriculture should focus on organic methods of production.

This was bad advice. There is a market for organic foods, especially in wealthy countries, but organic farming is no way to feed a nation. That's especially true in a nation with a developing economy.

Yet almost no farmers dared to question Castro. Under a Communist government, people learn to obey.

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