

Insect-resistant GM eggplant could boost Philippines' crop yields 192%, reduce pesticide use 48%

Eggplant is an economically important vegetable in the Philippines, where its production accounts for nearly one-third of the total volume of the top vegetables. Eggplant farming provides many small-scale farmers their major source of employment and livelihood.

However, eggplant production in the country suffers from significant yield losses due to pests and diseases, mainly the fruit and shoot borer (FSB).

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[A] research team at the Institute of Plant Breeding at the University of the Philippines Los Baños (IPB-UPLB) developed FSB-resistant eggplant (also called Bt eggplant). Promising varieties of this Bt eggplant are currently under advanced stage of evaluation for horticultural performance and biosafety.

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Between 2006 and 2013, ISAAA commissioned baseline studies on conventional eggplant production system and *ex-ante* impact assessment studies of Bt eggplant in the Philippines Important results of the studies reveal that [i]f Bt eggplant is grown on a commercial scale in the country, it is expected to boost marketable yield by 192 percent and reduce pesticide application per hectare by 48 percent.

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