

Using GM crops to safely feed more people is a 'no brainer,' plant scientist says

Whether drought, disease, or simply increasing the efficiency of crops, [Borlaug Institute director Elsa] Murano and her colleagues work every day to find new ways to feed the world through [genetic] modifications.

"There are so many chronic diseases, whether it's diabetes, cancer, whatever, food can help mitigate or even prevent depending on the diet that you have," Murano says.

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Murano says GMOs are useful and safe for the producer and consumer.

"Every scientific study that has been done has shown genetically modified foods are as safe as traditional foods. They are digested the same way, they have the same nutritional advantages."

Genetic modification doesn't just produce more nutritional foods, it helps naturally fight off disease without chemical pesticides.

"We helped develop a variety of coffee resistant to this fungus, and we introduced it into Central America," Murano says. "We shot video last summer of a big harvest; these farmers finally getting their coffee harvested and several of them said 'I don't have to leave now.' That's huge!"

The Borlaug Institute says science, including the use of genetic modification, will help lead people out of hunger and poverty.

"If science can help us produce foods that are safe in a different way than maybe we're used to and it saves peoples' lives, it's a no brainer."

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