

## ‘Major milestone in agriculture’: Nigeria’s just launched genetically modified cowpea could double yields and save the country millions

Nigeria has achieved what looks like a major milestone in the history of agricultural research and development with the official launch and release for commercialisation of the transgenic Pod Borer Resistant (PBR) Cowpea.

...

PBR Cowpea (beans), a genetically-modified cowpea, is the product of an international partnership under the coordination of the African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF) that included scientists from the Institute for Agricultural Research (IAR) of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

Released as SAMPEA 20-T variety in Nigeria in December 2019, the PBR Cowpea is the first transgenic food crop in Africa outside of South Africa. SAMPEA 20-T is resistant to the insect pest, Maruca Vitrata, the insect that is responsible for up to 80 per cent Cowpea yield losses.

Follow the latest news and policy debates on sustainable agriculture, biomedicine, and other ‘disruptive’ innovations. Subscribe to our newsletter.

[SIGN UP](#)

[AATF Executive Director Dr. Denis] Kyetere stated that PBR Cowpea would greatly benefit farmers and consumers in Nigeria.

“The national cowpea production will increase by 20-100% as has been recorded and witnessed by farmers during the national performance trials,’ he said, adding that the massive import of Cowpea will be reduced. ‘It is estimated that 20% of the cowpea consumed in Nigeria is imported. With PBR Cowpea, Nigeria is set to save billions [of naira] in earnings,” he said.

[Read the original post](#)