

‘Why is the US so retrograde when it comes to biotech?’ — ‘Supertrees’ engineered to capture more carbon stir anti-GMO backlash

Capitalizing on trees’ ability to function as natural carbon capture machines, [Reddit’s former CEO is now running a company that restores forests](#) on degraded land... In the Bay Area, a company called [Living Carbon](#) is engineering trees that can capture and store more carbon than typical trees.

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The company plans to share more details about the technology later in the year, but it builds on previous research, including years of work from other scientists looking at how to enhance photosynthesis in other plants.

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[Forest biotechnology expert Steve] Strauss argues that prevailing attitudes about genetic engineering are holding back other innovations that could also be critical now, such as helping trees survive changing conditions because of the climate crisis.

“Why is the United States of America so retrograde when it comes to biotech?” he asks. “Given the challenges, we should be testing heat tolerance in trees in the ground as we get hotter and hotter. And drought tolerance. There’s all kinds of promising genes that we could be testing and essentially almost none of that’s going on.” The U.S. government should be funding this research, he says—not just Silicon Valley.

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