

Viewpoint: Monsanto doesn't control Mexican farmers' seed choices — activist groups do

For the last 25 years I've listened to the tired argument that Monsanto controls farmer seed choice. Over and over again. Even since the hated seed company has ceased to exist, I still hear the same boring trope.

This is the position of activist groups and their parrots, and others that never actually tried to tell a farmer what they would be allowed to grow on their space.

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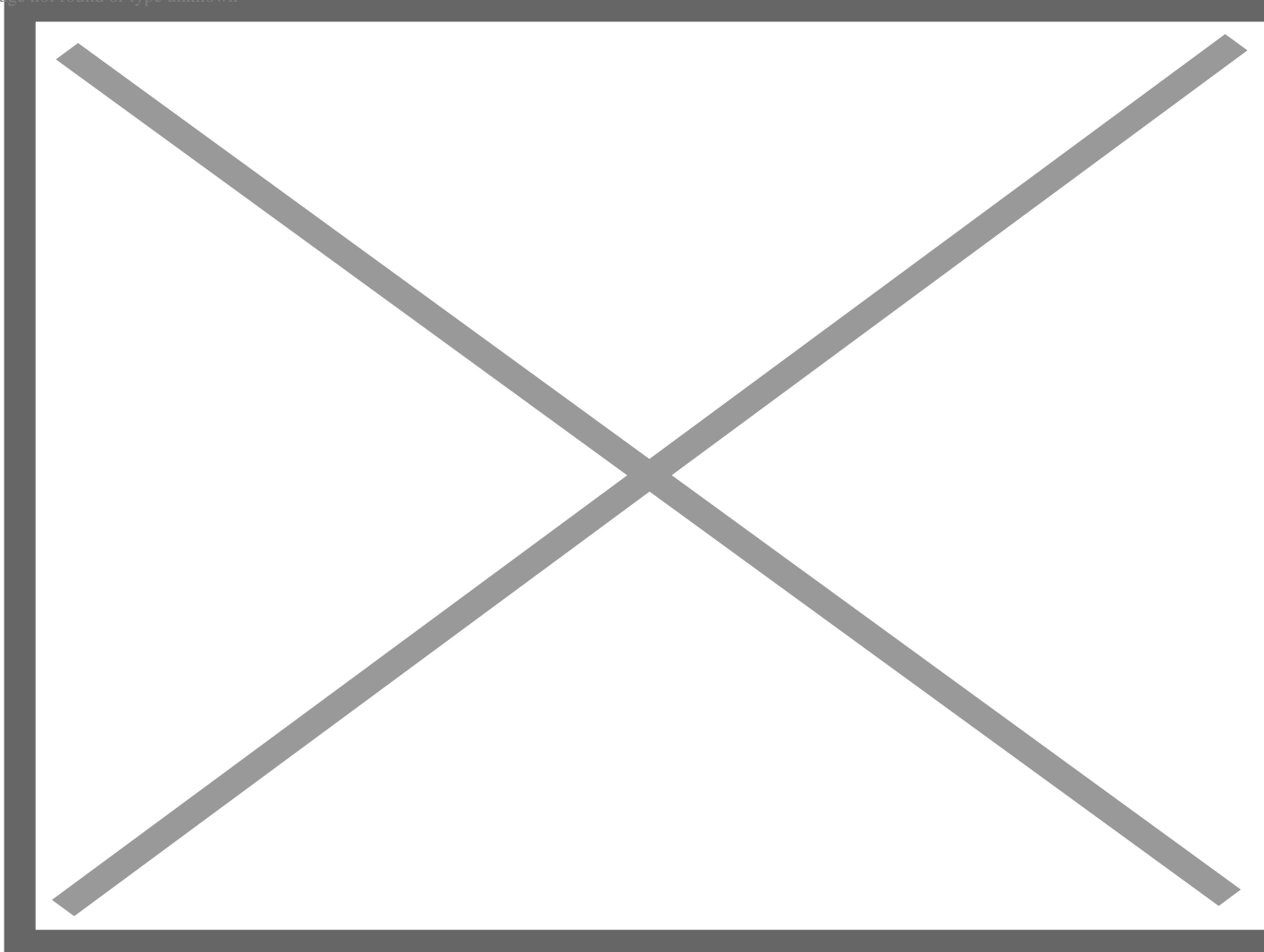
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Farmers choose what is best for their land, their schedule, their budget, input availability, and dozens of other factors. Cotton, corn, soybean canola and sugarbeet growers oftentimes choose genetically engineered seeds containing the traits that serve their production system and support their bottom line.

Farmers control farmer seed choice.

Unless you are a corn farmer in Mexico that wishes to use traited seeds.

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Anti-biotech activists feel that Mexican farmers should have the unrestricted freedom to choose any maize varieties they wish to plant — from the list of activist-approved varieties.

[Activist groups have decided](#) that Mexican farmers should not have access to the elite corn technology, lines that contain engineered traits to aid in limiting weed pressure and cutting insecticide sprays. Despite farmer demand, activists have now pressured the government into not allowing these resources to be utilized.

They claim that it is to protect native genetics near corn's center of diversification, but that's just not true.

Farmers *will be allowed* to use hybrid corn without the GE traits. Those lines are just as likely to outcross with indigenous resources as any GE crop. If you want to preserve indigenous maize genetics, you need to have special programs to do that, and [such programs are in place](#).

This is nothing more than activist groups using pressure to limit the acreage of genetically engineered

crops. If that means forcing farmers to choose non-GE hybrids, increasing insecticide use, and returning to aggressive top-soil-sacrificing techniques to manage weeds, that's where they'll be.

I don't ever want to hear any activists whine about companies limiting seed sovereignty.

They are the ones restricting farmer choice to use proven, safe, and efficient genetics to suit the needs of their farms.

[Read the original post here.](#)