

GMO purple tomatoes with more antioxidants poised for spring US rollout

Genetically-modified (GM) purple tomatoes with high levels of health-giving antioxidants – developed by Norwich scientists – could be available in the USA from next spring.

Prof Cathie Martin and her team at the John Innes Centre has been researching tomatoes since 2008 as part of a long-term project to improve human health and diets.

She told members of Stalham Farmers' Club that several GM purple tomato varieties were in the final stages of lengthy and exhaustive regulatory reviews in the United States.

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Prof Martin, who recently won the international Rank Prize for Nutrition, said the purple tomatoes developed at the John Innes Centre were bred using gene technology to contain much higher levels of anthocyanins – antioxidant nutrients – which can have significant benefits in human diets.

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Prof Martin said society faced serious challenges caused by a combination of poor diet and consuming too much of the wrong type of foods – hence rising levels of obesity and diabetes.

In addition, typical consumer expenditure on food has fallen significantly in the past half century as a percentage of household spending. "We have to improve our diet," she argued.

[This is an excerpt. Read the original post here.](#)