

Indonesia looks to GMOs to address inflation, though some farmers are skeptical

The government is set on boosting the development of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), despite skepticism from experts and farmers that the plan would do much to solve the country's food inflation issue.

Indonesia saw inflation jump to a seven-year high, reaching 4.94 percent year-on-year (yoy) in July, exceeding Bank Indonesia's already revised outlook of 4.6 percent.

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Coordinating Economic Minister Airlangga Hartarto said the government sought to control inflation by ensuring sufficient domestic food supplies through the use of GMOs to boost farm yields.

Airlangga estimated that the use of GM corn could double production of the crop to between 12 and 13 tons per hectare, from a previous range of between 5 and 6 tons per ha.

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Musdalifah Mahmud, undersecretary for food and agribusiness at the Office of the Coordinating Economic Minister, told *The Jakarta Post* that the government did not plan to relax the regulation on GMOs, saying the prevailing rules were sufficient to meet the country's needs.

However, Musdalifah did confirm that the government wanted to step up the use of GMOs with the existing regulation, but she did not explain further how the ministry would execute the intensification efforts.

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