

Viewpoint: The world's farmers are starting a 'pro-GMO rebellion,' challenging 'dubious' and 'contradictory' regulatory regime

Farmers across the world are desperate to grow genetically modified crops (GM) in their fields. So much so that in some countries farmers have bypassed existing bans on these crops and even made harvests from them.

Why do these farmers risk being prosecuted, and what compels them to grow GM food crops? The answer is straightforward: GM crops give higher yields, are resilient to deadly plant diseases, and can withstand tough environmental conditions.

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In 2019, [1500 farmers in India](#) orchestrated a "civil-disobedience movement." They planted herbicide-tolerant cotton variety (HTBt Cotton) and disease-tolerant Brinjal (eggplant) varieties in [open defiance of the ban by the government](#). Planting illegal GM crops can result in a five-year jail term and a fine of \$1200. But it is [estimated](#) that "HTBt cotton has already been going on illegally in the country in about 30 per cent of the area."

"Increasingly, it is the farmers, who bear the daily risks of agriculture, who are now speaking up in support of technologies that could reduce their risks and improve their wellbeing... These brave farmers are demonstrating their capacity to take on the risk society is imposing on them by denying them access to new technologies, including GM crops," [writes Barun Mitra](#), Director of the Liberty Institute.

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