

## Can Nigeria reach food security without genetically modified crops?

For Nigeria to attain food sufficiency to feed its current population of over 212 million people and reduce its overreliance on import which worth about \$10 billion annually, it must adopt new technologies, such as agricultural biotechnology, to meet its food and agricultural needs, experts have said.

The experts are of the view that with the current state of emergency declared in the food and agricultural sector of Nigeria, the integration of biotechnology tools into the Nigerian agriculture space becomes a necessity.

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Director, Agricultural Biotechnology Department, NABDA, Dr. Rose Gidado, said Nigerian agriculture is vulnerable to climate change and its associated occurrences of higher temperatures, extended droughts, floods, and other circumstances, reducing agricultural production across the country, particularly in the northern states.

She said the use of biotechnology tools in Nigerian agriculture is now necessary due to the current state of emergency in the country's food and agricultural sector, adding that to date, no evidence of health risks has been linked to the two commercial biotech crops, Cotton and PBR Cowpea, which are already available on the market.

Biotechnology offers new tools for increasing agricultural productivity and protecting food crops from climate changes such as heat, floods, and drought," she said.

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