

Will India follow the United States in embracing genetically-modified commodity crops?

As the world's second-largest producer of rice, wheat, vegetables and fruit, India is a country that no multinational corporation involved in [genetically modified](#) (GM) crops can ignore.

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So, how is it that multinational firms have failed to make a dent on any leading farm food producer and consumer in India?

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Food crops are proving particularly difficult to crack for GM companies. For a start, India's large population of vegetarians, reckoned to be 40 per cent of its 1.4 billion people, do not take kindly to the idea of engineered food in any form on the table.

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The stealthy entry of Bt cotton into India galvanised environmentalists and activists into approaching the Supreme Court in 2004 to ensure tighter regulation of all GM crops.

So far, the court, which set up its own expert committee, has not been sympathetic to pleas by government counsel that GM food crops are essential to feed India's large population.

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For now, the main stumbling block for the proponents of GM food crops is the fact that the Supreme Court's own technical expert committee has strongly recommended a complete ban on herbicide-tolerant crops in the country.

Since the government has preferred to leave the matter to the court, it is safe to say it could take years before GM food crops enter India's farm gates.

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