

The case for Golden Rice: A Science editorial

By ACSH Staff — September 19, 2013



^[1]A few weeks ago, we here at ACSH [signed a petition](#) ^[2] protesting the

destruction of test fields of golden rice in the Philippines. The editors of the journal *Science*, [published by](#) ^[3]the American Association for the Advancement of Science, write If ever there was a clear-cut cause for outrage, it is the concerted campaign by Greenpeace and other nongovernmental organizations, as well as by individuals, against Golden Rice.

Golden Rice is a strain of rice that was developed by research scientists Ingo Potrykus and Peter Beyer. It has been genetically engineered with genes that allow it to produce beta-carotene, a substance the human body can use to form vitamin A. Vitamin A deficiency, which can lead to blindness and can compromise the immune system, is the cause of 1.9 to 2.8 million deaths each year, the majority of those being children under the age of five and women. It mostly affects those living in poverty. This rice has the potential to eliminate vitamin A deficiency. Despite the fact that this rice has been ready for use by farmers since the beginning of the 21st century, fears of nonexistent hazards with no supporting evidence have delayed its use.

The AAAS editorial says, New technologies often evoke rumors of hazard. These generally fade with time when, as in this case, no real hazards emerge. But the anti-GMO fever still burns brightly, fanned by electronic gossip and well-organized fear-mongering that profits some individuals and organizations. We, and the thousands of other scientists who have signed the statement of protest, stand together in staunch opposition to the violent destruction of required tests on valuable advances such as Golden Rice that have the potential to save millions of impoverished fellow humans from needless suffering and death.

ACSH s Dr. Gil Ross says, We couldn t have said it better ourselves!

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[1] <http://acsh.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Result-of-Vit-A-lack.jpg>

[2] <http://acsh.org/2013/08/hope-for-malnourished-kids-threatened-by-anti-gmo-zealots/>

[3] <http://www.sciencemag.org/content/341/6152/1320.full>