

The case for Golden Rice

By ACSH Staff — May 13, 2014



Golden Rice, a genetically engineered crop enriched with beta-

carotene which the body can then convert to vitamin A, has the potential to prevent blindness in populations prone to vitamin A deficiency. The WHO estimates that about 250,000 to 500,000 vitamin A deficient children go blind each year and half of those children die within 12 months of going blind. As risk perception expert David Ropiek says, These are real deaths, real disability, real suffering, not the phantom fears.

Yet, as writer Norm Benson points out in [his piece](#) ^[1] on *Science 2.0*, and as we here at ACSH have [said before](#) ^[2], the anti-biotech crowd continues to fight against the introduction of this genetically engineered product. Instead, some people prefer to trust the ballroom-dancing teacher and Yogic flying instructor, Jeffrey Smith; Mike Adams, the self-proclaimed Health Ranger; Greenpeace; or the word of the American Medical Association, the National Academy of Sciences, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the World Health Organization or hell, you get the idea.

Benson goes on to highlight some of the ridiculously untrue facts that people believe such as, The global dissemination of genetically modified foods by Monsanto, Inc. is part of a secret program, called Agenda 21, launched by the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations to shrink the world's population. Well if genetically modified foods are meant to shrink the world's population, he asks, why has life expectancy in the U.S. increased from 76 years in 1996 to about 80 years today, when 70 percent of the food in our supermarkets contains genetically engineered ingredients?

Luckily, as Dr. Mary Mangana, a scientist who specializes in cell, molecular and developmental biology writes, the scientific community and journalists are becoming aware of the rhetorical two-steps and destructive strategies employed by organizations that are hostile to GMOs, while pretending that they cling to science.

And if you need to be further convinced about the potential of golden rice, Benson ends his piece with this fact: In the four minutes it took you to read this, two, three or four children lost their sight due to Vitamin A Deficiency, and, in the same four minutes at least one child died. Everything else is noise.

Read the full piece [here](#) [1].

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Links

[1] http://www.science20.com/timberati/blog/golden_rice_now_everything_else_is_noise-136084

[2] <http://acsh.org/2014/01/64151/>