

GMO Biotechnology Categorized as “Biological Weapons of Mass Destruction”, Pakistan, Russia

By [Global Research News](#)

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In July last year, Monsanto, Pioneer and Syngenta, multinational companies and a number of national firms approached Pakistan's Ministry of Food Security seeking licences to raise genetically-modified (GM) food products in Pakistan.

[Imran Ali Teepu reported for Dawn](#) that a senior federal government official, who did not wish to be named, told Dawn that “a request in this regard has been received by the Ministry of Food Security a few weeks back and is being reviewed”.

The director general of the Pakistan Environment Protection Agency, Asif Shuja, said: “Research is still continuing internationally into whether the genetically-modified products have an impact on human health. Many of the local companies want to import genetically-modified food products from China and we have not given any approval in this regard”.

Meanwhile, Dr Jawad Chishtie, a public health and environment management specialist, said: “Genetically-modified products have been rejected in Europe, and most recently in France, for damaging crops and endangering human health.” He warned that effects of the genetically-engineered organisms were not yet known but “they are suspected of causing dangerous allergies and even cancer.”

He asked the government to promote organic farming in Pakistan for which the country had a far better environment.

In May this year [Jamal Shahid reported](#) that Lahore High Court ordered the government to stop issuing licences for genetically-modified (GM) varieties of cotton or corn until a legal framework is put into place to assess new types of genetically modified organisms.

Shahid continues: “The Farmers Association of Pakistan had been complaining about the sale of poor quality Bt cotton seeds in the open market for quite some time. He quotes Chaudhry Gohar, a progressive cotton farmer from Multan, who told Dawn that the use of uncertified varieties of GM seeds increase input costs for farmers. The low levels of pest resistance in these seeds have increased insects' immunity, necessitating the use of nearly double the normal amount of pesticides. [Pakistan Agriculture Research](#) (NBC) also relaxed germination levels for crops from 75% under Seed Act, 1976 to less than 50%.

EPA DG Muhammad Khurshid observed that the authority treats GMOs ‘very seriously’: “The Foreign Office has also conveyed its concern to the Climate Change Division that the subject of GMO seeds is a matter of grave concerns for national security and trade. The Foreign Office treats GMOs as potential “biological weapons of mass destruction”, which could be

used to destroy Pakistan's major crops such as potato, wheat, rice, corn, cotton and vegetables through modified viruses, bacteria and other parasites.

Russian lawmakers also want to address GMO-related activities that may harm human health and impose criminal liability on producers, sellers and transporters of genetically modified organisms, according to Izvestia.

[Itar-Tass reports](#) that a bill to this effect was submitted to the Russian State Duma – lower parliament house; under its terms criminal responsibility would apply only to companies and government officials, but there is a move to expand liability for GMO-inflicted harm to include state and local self-government officials.

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