

# GM (Genetically Modified) Food and Science

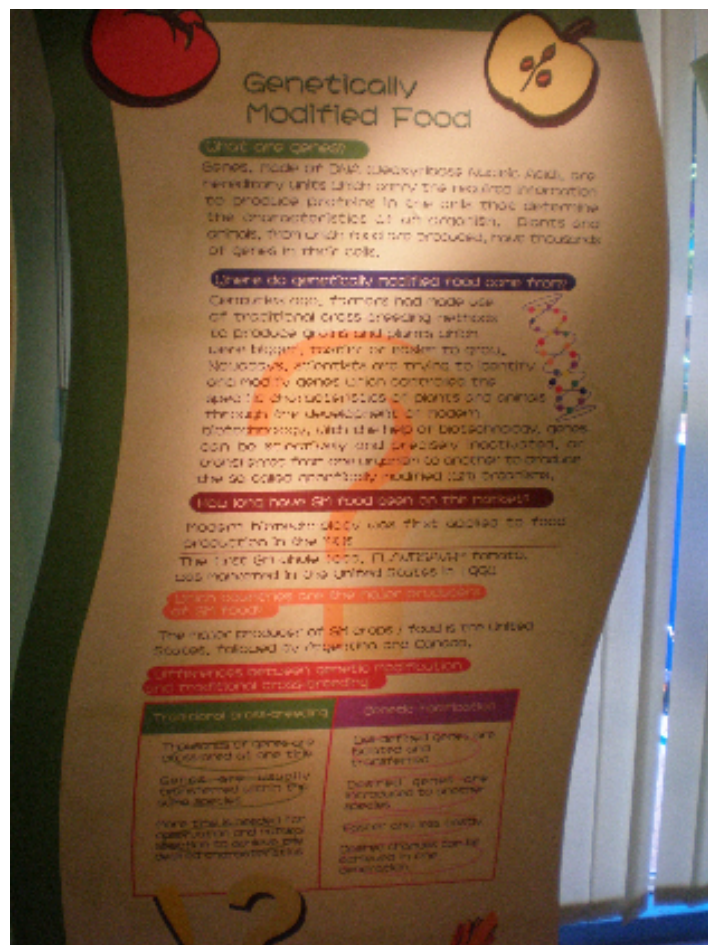
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Nowadays, GM food is commonly produced by using cross-breeding methods. The GM food, like plants and grains are bigger, tastier are easier to grow rather than the ordinary food. With the help of the biotechnology, genes can be selectively and precisely inactivated. The genes are transferred from one organism to another one to produce the GM food.

There are both advantages and disadvantages of the GM food.

For its advantages, GM food can increase the crop yield. Also, it would build up of a tolerance to adverse growing conditions like drought. Moreover, the GM food can improve the nutrient composition of crops. Nevertheless, it is resistant to crop pests and reduce the use of pesticides.

For its disadvantages, GM food would disturb the balance of the ecosystem. Also, it would develop super pests. Furthermore, some people are concerned that GM food is harmful to human beings.



## GM Food Pre-market Safety Assessment Decide

WHO and the Codex Alimentarius Commission have recommended that Member Governments set up regulatory frameworks for pre-market evaluation of GM food on a case-by-case basis. Places like Canada, member countries of the European Union, Australia, Japan, Mainland China and Taiwan have already enacted regulatory requirements for the pre-market safety assessment of GM food. To date, more than 50 kinds of GM crops have been approved worldwide.

The HKSAR Government has proposed to implement a pre-market safety assessment system for GM food. Details of the pre-market safety assessment requirement will be drawn up for public consultation in due course.



### Situation in Hong Kong

- There is no commercial production of GM crops or livestock in Hong Kong to date.
- There are biotechnological research studies conducted in universities.
- Local scientists have not yet conducted any field trials.
- Some food products on sale are known to contain GM ingredients. However, these products are proved to be safe for human consumption.
- According to the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap. 142), food intended for sale in Hong Kong, including GM ones, must be safe for human consumption.

