



USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agriculture Information Network

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## United Kingdom

### Biotechnology

## Four year UK study finds benefits in biotech crops

### 2004

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**Report Highlights:**

On November 29, 2004, after a four year study funded by the UK Government, a new independent report was published in the UK showing that genetically modified herbicide-tolerant crops in a farming rotation offer economic benefits to farmers, with no detrimental impact on biodiversity or farming methods.

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Includes PSD Changes: No  
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On November 29, 2004, a new independent report was published in the UK showing that genetically modified herbicide-tolerant (GMHT) crops in a farming rotation offer economic benefits to farmers, with no detrimental impact on biodiversity or farming methods.

The four year Botanical and Rotational Implications of the Management of Herbicide Tolerance (BRIGHT) project, sponsored by the UK Government's Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department (SEERAD), looked at the implications of growing GMHT crops both for agriculture and the environment by simulating different rotational scenarios, at a number of sites around the UK.

The key findings from the study, which many consider to be more real world in its emphasis than the Farm Scale Evaluations (UK3030), include:

- No significant difference between biotech and non-biotech crops in terms of weed diversity
- Over a 4 year rotation, all biotech crops showed an increased weed seed bank
- Improved flexibility and options for weed control
- Equivalent or better levels of weed control in biotech crops
- No problems controlling biotech volunteers in subsequent rotation crop
- Clear economic advantages in the form of reduced weed control costs

An abstract and details of the full report are available on the website of the UK's [Home Grown Cereals Authority \(HGCA\)](#).

The publishing of the report received wide and positive but sadly short-lived coverage in the UK media, including articles in the Daily Mail and Evening Standard, both normally known for their negative stance on the technology. Examples of the media coverage can be found [here](#).