

GM plant dilemmas

New potatoes

In the 1800s many of the poorest people in Britain and Ireland relied on potatoes as their staple food. When a fungal disease infected the potatoes, the crops failed and more than a million people starved to death. This is sometimes known as the Irish potato famine because people in Ireland were the most badly affected.

1

GENETIC
dilemmas



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This same disease still affects potatoes today and farmers have to spray their crops on average 15 times a year to protect them against the fungus.

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A new GM potato which is resistant to the disease has been developed by scientists.

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GM plant dilemmas

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This new GM potato is being trialled by farmers in Ireland.

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Some people want to stop this development as they say it is spoiling Ireland's reputation for local, organic food.

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