

'Green farms' out-perform 'Gene farms'

Francis Moore Lappé, author of Diet for a Small Planet and founder of Food First and the Small Planet Institute, is frustrated that the mainstream media continue to beat the drum for pesticides and genetic engineering as the solutions to world hunger. Lappe lambastes the media for ignoring the findings of 400 world experts whose April 2008 United Nations' "Agricultural Assessment" concluded that chemical-free agriculture offers a better path to sustainable farming. PANNA Scientist Marcia Ishii-Eiteman was among the lead authors of the United Nations' report. "On every continent," Lappé writes, "one can find empowered rural communities developing GM-free, agro-ecological farming systems. They're succeeding. The largest overview study, looking at farmers transitioning to sustainable practices in 57 countries, involving almost 13 million small farmers on almost 100 million acres, found after four years that average yields were up 79 percent." In India's Andhra Pradesh, "the pesticide capital of the world," insects have become resistant to Monsanto insecticides and GM-cotton. The London Guardian reports nearly 2,000 villages in Andhra Pradesh have adopted Non-Pesticide Management practices, having discovered that NPM "is clearly more profitable, not because yields are higher but because expenditure is so much lower."

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