

GM crop creates a 'superweed'

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Cross-fertilization between genetically modified crops and wild plants -- believed nearly impossible -- has reportedly occurred in Britain.

Genes from a genetically modified crop trial transferred into local wild plants, creating an herbicide-resistant "superweed," the Guardian reported Monday.

The newspaper said the cross-fertilization between GM oilseed rape, a brassica, and a distantly related plant, charlock, had previously been discounted as virtually impossible by scientists. The "superweed" was found during a follow up to the government's three-year trials of GM crops that ended two years ago.

When scientists treated the new form of charlock with an herbicide, nothing happened. And when seeds were taken from other weeds in the oilseed rape field, researchers found two other plants -- both wild turnips -- were also herbicide resistant.

The findings were posted last week on the Web site of the Center for Ecology and Hydrology -- a British governmental research station.

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