

BASF applies for EU approval of genetically modified potato

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German chemicals giant BASF said Monday it has applied for EU approval for a genetically modified potato which is resistant to a disease that wipes out a fifth of the world's potato crops each year.

"BASF Plant Science applied today for European Union approval for Fortuna, a genetically optimised table potato," the group said in a statement.

The researchers had given Fortuna complete resistance to [late blight](#), a disease caused by a fungi-like pathogen that wipes out up 20 percent of annual harvests the world over, BASF said.

BASF Plant Science started research efforts on Fortuna in 2003, testing it in field trials for six years and subjecting it to extensive [safety assessments](#).

In the next step of the approval process, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) would assess the safety of Fortuna for humans, animals and the environment, BASF said.

Market introduction was expected for 2014/15.

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