



GM CROPS THREATEN MALAYSIAN AGRICULTURAL HERITAGE

11 Aug 2026 – The unique agricultural tradition and culture of Malaysia is critically threatened by the intentional encroachment of genetically modified (GM) crops into our food systems. The Malaysian Agroecology Society (SRI-Mas) believes that any activities, including funding research and experimenting on the use of GM technology on traditional and staple food crops, especially paddy, are similar to destroying the culture and heritage of Malaysia. Speaking against an attempt to release GM *Oryza sativa* L. variety MR219 to go on field trials in Malaysia, SRI-Mas believes such commercially driven activities undermine the integrity of Malaysian food sovereignty.

A disruptive impact of allowing any GM crops to be released or planted in Malaysia would cascade to undeniably affect the rights to seeds. SRI-Mas and other NGOs championing Community Seed Systems (CoSS) foresee that the future and livelihoods of farmers and indigenous communities, who are the custodians of seeds and agrobiodiversity, will be adversely affected by GM promotion in our food systems.

Paddy variety MR219 has been planted and adapted by many rural communities, including in Sarawak. SRI-Mas is concerned that full disclosure and transparency on GM seeds may not be communicated to farmers when the seeds are supplied in the future. SRI-Mas has noted that this pattern of non-full disclosure of intended and unintended cost-benefit has happened with other technology-based or ‘improved’ seed varieties.

Malaysia as a country that is proud of its multicultural food heritage anchored in traditions, must reject any form of genetically modified crops and food in our food systems.

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