

Wildlife refuges in Northeast now GE-free

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Conservation and food safety groups won an important [victory](#) this week as a Delaware federal court ruled against the planting of genetically engineered (GE) crops in all Northeastern wildlife refuges.

Responding to a lawsuit spearheaded by the Audubon Society, [Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility \(PEER\)](#) and the [Center for Food Safety \(CFS\)](#), the Delaware judge found that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife service had illegally allowed GE crops to be planted on refuge land without the environmental review required under federal law.

"These pesticide-resistant crops pose significant risks to the very wildlife those refuges serve to protect, including massively increasing pesticide use and creating pesticide-resistant superweeds," [said Paige Tomaselli](#), Staff Attorney with the Center for Food Safety. "This Northeast region-wide ban is an important step in the right direction, but the Fish and Wildlife Service must stop planting these crops in other regions as well."

While farming on our national refuges has been allowed for decades, many farmers have switched to GE crops in recent years as it has become increasingly difficult to buy seeds that are not genetically engineered. [The plaintiffs report](#) that GE crops are being grown on 75 national wildlife refuges throughout the U.S. A similar lawsuit in the Southeast is moving forward; we will stay tuned as efforts gain momentum to preserve national wildlife refuges from potentially harmful, pesticide-intensive GE crops.

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