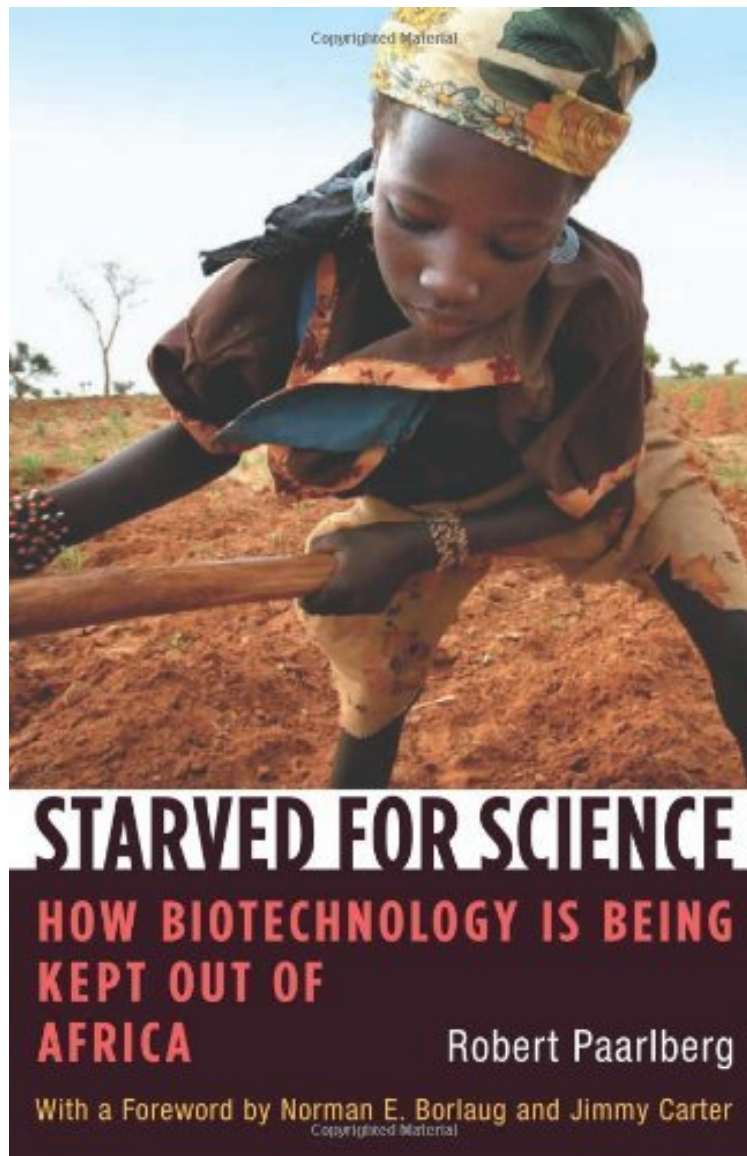


# Starved for Science: How Biotechnology Is Being Kept Out of Africa

Robert Paarlberg

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**Robert Paarlberg : Starved for Science: How Biotechnology Is Being Kept Out of Africa** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Starved for Science: How Biotechnology Is Being Kept Out of Africa:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. The new colonial dictatorship - Thanks EU and NGOsBy Ce GzzThis book completes "Let them eat precaution" (Jon Entine editor) if you are trying to understand how Europe, NGOs and exquisite trade markets are pushing Africa into a new colonial state, where they are told to reject biotechnology for agriculture (not for health or industry) and keep their 40% of producers POOR. The once bright and

enlightened European society, has rejected science a while ago and now imposes their consumer style and extreme rigid legislation about genetic modified crops. What's more ludicrous is that they never ever objected mutant crops, heavy metal pigments used in tattoos or other real threats to health (tobacco is still on high demand, same as carcinogenic contraceptives). 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. This is a fantastic book By Michael Buratovich Robert Paarlberg's *Starved for Science* is a beautifully crafted and fair exposition of the agricultural situation in Africa. His book covers a wide range of subjects including plant genetics, agricultural science, economics, politics and sociology. This is a very well researched book that is also very sympathetic to those rural Africans who split their guts every day to make a living and grow enough food to feed their families. Paarlberg begins by summarizing the Green Revolution and the numbers do not lie: many people who would have died from starvation did not because the Green Revolution increased the productivity of farms throughout Asia and other parts of the world. Farm productivity is at an all-time high, with the exception of the continent of Africa. In Africa, farm productivity has decreased in the last few decades. Paarlberg is convinced that African farmers remain unproductive because the agricultural science that made the Green Revolution possible and spurred agricultural productivity elsewhere never made it to Africa. The case Paarlberg makes is simply irrefragable; the numbers do not lie. The rest of the book examines why these advances in agricultural science have not made it to Africa. According to Paarlberg, Americans and Europeans have embraced genetic engineering when it comes to medicine because they can directly see the benefits of it. However, when it comes to agriculture, the benefits of genetic engineering are not readily and directly observable, and therefore, the public's support of genetic engineering in agriculture is low. This attitude towards genetically modified (GM) crops, which ranges from nonchalant to actively hostile has been imported to Africa by the UN Environmental Programme (UNEP), the World Bank and a whole host of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that import Western funding and European aversions to GMOs. Thus we have the curious case of wealthy, well-fed Europeans telling poor, starving Africans to stay away from chemical fertilizers and GM crops that could make them more prosperous and less dependent on foreign aid. In this the vicious cycle of dependence is maintained. Paarlberg hoped that the introduction of drought-resistant plants will turn the tide, since the poor, rural farmers will make so much noise for these GM crops, that African governments will have to change. I wish I could share his guarded optimism. I think that there are too many people too heavily invested in the present status quo for things to change very fast. With the economic problems in Europe and the US, the money tap will be shut off at some point in time. Maybe then, African governments will get serious about feeding their people without excessive amounts of foreign aid. Anyone interested in Africa or agriculture should read this book, It is clearly written and forcefully argued, and its positions are sensible and believable. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Great book. It does an excellent job of outlining ... By Brian Great book. It does an excellent job of outlining the impact that imaginary fears and false claims have had on the lives of millions of people.

Listen to a short interview with Robert Paarlberg Host: Chris Gondek | Producer: Heron Crane Heading upcountry in Africa to visit small farms is absolutely exhilarating given the dramatic beauty of big skies, red soil, and arid vistas, but eventually the two-lane tarmac narrows to rutted dirt, and the journey must continue on foot. The farmers you eventually meet are mostly women, hardworking but visibly poor. They have no improved seeds, no chemical fertilizers, no irrigation, and with their meager crops they earn less than a dollar a day. Many are malnourished. Nearly two-thirds of Africans are employed in agriculture, yet on a per-capita basis they produce roughly 20 percent less than they did in 1970. Although modern agricultural science was the key to reducing rural poverty in Asia, modern farm science?including biotechnology?has recently been kept out of Africa. In *Starved for Science* Robert Paarlberg explains why poor African farmers are denied access to productive technologies, particularly genetically engineered seeds with improved resistance to insects and drought. He traces this obstacle to the current opposition to farm science in prosperous countries. Having embraced agricultural science to become well-fed themselves, those in wealthy countries are now instructing Africans?on the most dubious grounds?not to do the same. In a book sure to generate intense debate, Paarlberg details how this cultural turn against agricultural science among affluent societies is now being exported, inappropriately, to Africa. Those who are opposed to the use of agricultural technologies are telling African farmers that, in effect, it would be just as well for them to remain poor.