

Department of Defense Seeks Biodegradable Bullets

Calling all engineers: The Department of Defense is on the lookout for a new bullet that will sprout seeds, instead of waste, after it's shot. In a call for proposals, the DoD says that the U.S. Army uses "hundreds of thousands of training rounds" across the country and world. These rounds are left on the ground or just beneath the surface, which is an issue for a few reasons. For one, the components take hundreds of years to biodegrade. When corroded, they could pollute nearby soil and water. Additionally, civilians such as farmers and construction crews who encounter the remnants don't know if they're training or tactical rounds. To solve these problems, the DoD is looking for a bullet casing that eliminates environmental hazards. Embedded in the biodegradable composites will be bioengineered seeds from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory that don't begin to germinate until they've been in the ground for several months. The DoD wants these seeds to produce eco-friendly plants that remove soil contaminants and consume the biodegradable debris from the bullets. It's important that animals can eat the plants without getting sick.[Read More...](#)