

Are politics holding back animal engineers?

When she saw the trailer for the documentary *Genetic Roulette*, Alison Van Eenennaam wanted to laugh, then cry. The film touts the risks of genetically engineered (GE) organisms, calling them “the most dangerous thing facing human beings in our generation”. For Van Eenennaam, a geneticist at the University of California, Davis, the scientifically unfounded assertions — that transgenic foods are responsible for increased incidence of autism, Alzheimer’s disease and type 2 diabetes in the United States — cannot be taken seriously. But the film reflects attitudes that have thwarted Van Eenennaam’s research into the genetic modification of animals to reduce food costs and improve quality.

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