

GMO animals face expensive regulatory hurdles before approval as food

No one eats genetically modified animals. That is to say, human beings have modified almost every domesticated foodstuff, plant, and animal through traditional breeding techniques. But start using genetic engineering technology, moving genes around or inserting one from one living thing into another, and people freak right the hell out.

That's what happened [two weeks ago](#)—France went into a panic because a lamb that was the offspring of a sheep modified to express a green fluorescent protein made it to market. In Europe, genetically modified organisms are outright banned; in the US, lots of staple crops like corn have plenty of modified genes. But animals? That's a line supermarkets haven't crossed.

They could, though. The fact is, biologists have been tinkering with animal genomes for a couple decades, working on increasing muscle mass (that's meat, after all), speeding up growth rates, and otherwise overclocking the kind of traits that the food business values.

Now, no genetically engineered animals are approved for human consumption. The Food and Drug Administration regulates them as animal drugs—that is, medicine for animals, rather than food. So they have to go through a testing process so rigorous that it's too expensive for them to be viable commercially. But they exist. And they're actually...kind of cool.

In an [article](#) published in Nature last Tuesday, Jin-Soo Kim, a molecular biologist at Seoul National University, showed off pictures of hogs with extraordinarily large backsides. Using a gene-editing technique called TALEN, the researchers induced a similar mutation in their pigs. Result: porkier Porky.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [Genetically Modified Animals Will Be on Your Plate in No Time](#)