

European anti-GMO activists: 'Gene-editing must be regulated as GMOs'

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. . . [T]he European Commission is considering whether the gene-editing of plants and animals, for example in agriculture, [falls outside the scope of EU regulations](#) governing genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

In other words, whether the products of gene-editing should be labelled and regulated as GMOs, or allowed to enter the food chain untested and unlabelled. . .

The question being debated in the EU at the moment is whether small 'edits', i.e. changes, insertions or deletions, of segments of DNA without the insertion of new genes are also to be considered as producing a GMO, or fall outside the scope of European law.

At the core of this debate is the question of what is the distinction between conventional breeding that involves mating and GMOs. In both the EU law ([Directive 2001/18](#)) . . . and the UN agreement on GMOs — [the Cartagena Protocol](#), . . — GMOs involve novel arrangements of genetic material that do not occur naturally, and alterations to genetic material being made directly without mating. . .

So in fact — despite the abstruse legal arguments deployed by GM advocates — the law is perfectly clear on the issue. According to the both the EU and Cartagena definitions, gene-editing produces GMOs.

Therefore to remove or exempt gene-editing from regulation, as GM advocates wish, the EU would need to amend the existing Directive. If it tried to interpret the Directive as GM advocates wish, the decision would surely be challenged in the European Court, for example by one of the [many EU countries opposed to the use of GMOs in farming](#) — where in our opinion it should struck down.

Read full, original post: [GM 2.0? 'Gene-editing' produces GMOs that must be regulated as GMOs](#)