

## Are gene-edited crops GMOs? EU's decision will shape future of biotechnology revolution

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis.**

. . . .In a few weeks, European commission regulators are set to publish a report that will decide whether gene-edited crops should be considered to be genetically modified organisms.

If the commission report backs such a verdict, the stringent EU legislation and complex regulations that have almost completely blocked the growing of GM (genetically modified) crops in Europe would be extended to those created through [gene-editing](#) . . . .

“It would be a real step backwards,” said Professor Wendy Harwood. . . . “It would turn projects that cost a few thousand pounds into ones that would require millions of pounds of funding to fulfil the requirements of the complex EU bureaucracy that is used to regulate GM crop growing in Europe. Only big biotechnology companies would be able to afford to make gene-edited crops.”

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Scientists acknowledge that in some cases – when it is used to insert a completely new gene – gene editing could be seen as genetic modification. But in many cases it involves merely deleting a few bases of DNA from a plant's chromosome. “That type of gene editing should not be covered by GMO regulations,” said Professor Huw Jones of Aberystwyth University. . . .

The green movement is unconvinced. “The various gene-editing technologies are still GM, and we are clear they fall within the definition of GM in existing EU law,” said [Lord Melchett, policy director of the Soil Association](#) . . . .

Whatever the European commission decides will trigger considerable controversy. Most analysts expect either a company or an NGO to take legal action over the issue – which will end up being resolved at the European court of justice. . . .

**Read full, original post:** [Gene editing could create medicines and self-fertilising crops. But are we facing another GM food-style furore?](#)