

CRISPR won't be creating an 'allergy-free' peanut anytime soon

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

Peanut allergies are one of the more frightening food allergies to have, because the body's response can be both deadly and entirely unpredictable. . . .The list of what my daughter can't eat is a long one.

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. . . .[A piece at Fast Company](#) about the "CRISPR revolution" informs me that CRISPR will revolutionize our food system, and that includes removing allergens from peanuts. According to Business Insider, scientists could create "[an allergy-free version of the popular snack food](#)." . . . .

It sounds so simple—remove a few genes and kids like my daughter will be able to safely eat peanut butter—but it turns out that creating an allergy-free peanut is anything but a foregone conclusion. There are significant science and market-based challenges to creating a hypoallergenic peanut and CRISPR. . . .won't be revolutionizing the peanut market with an "allergy-free" product anytime soon.

"I would never say 'allergy-free'," says Peggy Ozias-Akins, a plant geneticist at the University of Georgia who works with CRISPR and other biotech tools to reduce peanut allergenicity. . . . The peanut is . . .up of many allergenic proteins, and each of those proteins contains multiple genes. You'd need to remove all of the allergenic genes in order to call a peanut "allergy-free" and that's a significant challenge, even with a tool as powerful as CRISPR. . . .

Even if scientists could remove every last allergenic gene with CRISPR, it's unlikely anyone would want to eat what's left. Some of those allergenic genes are significant sources of protein. . . .Ozias-Akins adds, "you might be dramatically changing the nutritional value, flavor and processing properties."

**Read full, original post:** [Allergy-Free Peanuts? Not So Fast](#)