

Chinese use CRISPR to breed hairier cashmere goats

In China, the world's top producer of cashmere, scientists have been trying to breed more productive cashmere goats. They've now used CRISPR, the genetic editing technique, to disrupt a [single gene in cashmere goats](#). The change made hair in their undercoats even longer and more numerous—but not, crucially, any thicker. The genetic tweak boosts yield by about three ounces.

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Cashmere is a luxury product, its value derived precisely from its rarity...What happens to a luxury product in the age of genetic engineering?

So I called up Karl Spilhaus, longtime president of the Boston-based trade group Cashmere and Camel Hair Manufacturers Institute. Spilhaus was circumspect. He says the industry *could* be open to hair from these genetically modified goats if the quality was there. It's just way too early to tell.

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"Genetics always goes hand-in-hand with the environment and the production system," says Scott Fahrenkrug, cofounder of the livestock genetics company [Recombinetics](#)...To win over the public to this new wave of genetic engineering enabled by CRISPR,...you need to alter it for the better.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [Would You Buy a Genetically-Engineered Cashmere Sweater?](#)