

## German Plant Breeders Association says EU should not regulate gene-edited plants as GMOs

[Editor's Note: The author, Petra Jorasch, is vice-secretary general of the German Plant Breeders' Association.]

A key issue, not only for plant breeders worldwide but also for society as a whole, is the evolving government public policies that govern plant varieties developed through the latest plant breeding methods. To ensure the use of these breeding methods is not stalled at the research and development stage, clear public policy is essential.

....

In 2007, the EU commission asked a group of experts from Member States... to evaluate a list of eight newer plant breeding methods in the context of the current EU GMO legislation.... The outcome of the evaluation has never been published officially by the EU Commission. However, the majority of the experts came to the conclusion that six of these newer breeding methods do not result in a GM plant....

Breeding Method	MS Expert Working Group Report	German Commission on Biological Safety (ZKBS) <sup>2</sup>	European Seed Association (ESA) <sup>3</sup>	EFSA <sup>4</sup> Current GM procedures for environmental safety assessment applicable and sufficient?	Detectability of Genetic Modification 1
Oligonucleotide-directed mutagenesis (ODM)	non-GM	non-GM	non-GM	similar to natural or induced mutagenesis	no
Zinc-Finger Nuclease 1/2	non-GM	non-GM	non-GM	similar to natural or induced mutagenesis	no
Zinc-Finger Nuclease 3	GM	GM	GM	yes—less off-target effects compared to transgenic plants	yes
Cisgenesis	GM	GM	GM	yes—comparable to conventional breeding	yes
Grafting of non-GM scion onto GM rootstock*	non-GM	non-GM	non-GM		no
Agroinfiltration	non-GM	non-GM	non-GM		no
RNA-dependent DNA methylation (RdDM)	non-GM	non-GM	non-GM	no alteration of genetic material	no
Reverse Breeding	non-GM	non-GM	non-GM		no

\* Evaluation of the fruits

Table 1. Comparison of the outcomes of the different expert groups on the analysis of the applicability of EU GM law (Directive 2001/18) on newer plant breeding methods.

Image from EuropeanSeed

....

Keeping in mind the global challenges associated with feeding 11 billion people in 2050, and the severe negative impact of climate change on agriculture, innovation in plant breeding is one of the key factors to overcoming these adversities.

A responsible policy should... make the tools for creating innovation in agriculture available. This can be accomplished by not regulating plants that are similar or indistinguishable from varieties produced through established breeding methods....

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [How Much Plant Breeding Innovation is Politically Intended?](#)**