

## Incoming Trump Administration faces key food policy challenges

Here are some stories [to track] in the coming year:

**Mind-bending agribusiness deals.** For more than a decade, the global market for seeds and pesticides was dominated by five massive companies. Very quickly after taking power, Trump's Department of Justice will be tasked with vetting two mind-bendingly complicated deals that could reduce that number to three: [German chemical giant Bayer's takeover of US seed titan Monsanto](#) and the [Dow-DuPont merger](#). If the deals pass regulatory muster here and in Europe, three behemoths—the above two combined firms, plus Syngenta ([itself recently taken over by a Chinese chemical conglomerate](#))—[would sell about 59 percent of the globe's seeds and 64 percent of its pesticides](#). Here in the United States, the concentration would be even more intense. Bayer-Monsanto alone would [own nearly 60 percent of the US cottonseed market](#); between them, Bayer-Monsanto and Dow-DuPont would sell 75 percent of the corn seeds planted by US farmers and 64 percent of soybean seeds.

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**CRISPR Unleashed....**In a momentous decision in August, the Obama US Department of Agriculture [declared it did not have the authority to regulate](#) new crops designed with the technology, opening the door to a barrage of CRISPR-derived products to enter US farm fields without oversight....This is one Obama policy that the Trump administration is unlikely to challenge.

Researchers have already used CRISPR to develop [mushrooms that don't brown as quickly when sliced](#) and tomatoes that ripen on the vine [two weeks earlier than normal](#). In September, Monsanto [signed a licensing agreement](#) with the Broad Institute—the MIT-Harvard research group that claims to have developed CRISPR—allowing the agribiz giant the right to use the technology on crops. But despite the regulatory free-for-all, recent research suggests that CRISPR [may not be quite as precise as its champions claim](#).

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post:** [The Rise of Pesticide Giants and Other Food Stories to Watch Next Year](#)