

Will gene editing promote 'industrial farming'? Are there sustainable alternatives?

Editor's Note: This article was written by two members of the International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems, an independent panel of transdisciplinary experts that supports, informs, and advises on international policy.

As a new year dawns, it is hard not to be dazzled by the current pace of technological change in food and agriculture. Only last month, news emerged of a [crop spray](#) with the potential to increase the starch content in wheat grains, allowing for yield gains of up to 20%. This development comes hot on the heels of major [breakthroughs in gene-editing technologies](#) – using a powerful tool known as [Crispr](#) – over the course of 2016.

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Recent crop-breeding innovations may be impressive, but they do not ... [allow us] to move away from industrial monocultures and the inevitable damage and vulnerability they bring.

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A viable alternative exists ... [through] diversifying farms and farming landscapes – replacing synthetic chemical inputs, optimising biodiversity and stimulating interactions between different species, as part of holistic and regenerative strategies to build long-term soil fertility, healthy agro-ecosystems and secure livelihoods.

Too often, these arguments are dismissed as technophobia ... [But] the growing body of evidence reviewed by the International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems (iPES-Food) shows the huge potential of these systems to succeed where industrial systems are failing – namely in reconciling concerns such as food security, environmental and livelihood resilience, nutritional adequacy and social equity.

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The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [Modern agriculture cultivates climate change – we must nurture biodiversity](#)