

European court recommends gene-edited crops be exempt from EU GMO laws

[Gene editing technologies](#) should be largely exempted from EU laws on GM food, although individual states can regulate them if they choose, the European court's advocate general [has said](#).

The opinion may have far-reaching consequences for new breeding techniques that can remove specific parts of a plant's genetic code and foster herbicide-resistant traits.

Hundreds of millions of dollars have been [invested in the technology](#), which could be subject to labelling, authorisation and safety checks, if the court decides it falls under the EU's [GM legislation](#) later this year.

But in a complex [preliminary opinion](#), Michal Bobek advised that "organisms obtained by mutagenesis" should not be seen as genetically modified, unless they contained recombinant nucleic acid molecules or other GM organisms.

Biotech industries argue that gene editing-type alterations could occur naturally through evolution, but critics counter that they involve genetic mutations that are lab-based and artificial by definition.

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The European commission is waiting for clarification from the courts before deciding whether new legislation – or an update of existing laws – could be needed for the new technology.

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The court was originally asked for its opinion by France in 2016 after a coalition of farmers and environmental groups had called for herbicide-tolerant crops resulting from new breeding techniques to be treated as GM products.

Read full, original post: [Gene edited crops should be exempted from GM food laws, says EU lawyer](#)