

CRISPR revolution could level the playing field for crop biotech companies

For agriculture, [CRISPR] technology is a new way to instill crops and livestock with desirable traits — or to remove unwanted ones — more quickly than traditional breeding, and without incorporating genes from foreign organisms. Whether the CRISPR method will encounter the same social opposition as genetic engineering is unclear, as is the global regulatory outlook for farm goods produced with the technique.

...

Yield10 Bioscience, a company developing crops with CRISPR, is optimistic that gene editing will be more socially accepted than transgenic GMOs, since there's no foreign DNA inserted into the plant.

"You're just using what's available in the crop," said Olly Peoples, the company's president and CEO.

Such gene changes occur during traditional crop breeding, albeit less rapidly, he said.

The technology is also being used to improve shelf life and increase fungal resistance, Peoples said. It's likely people will prefer to eat gene-edited crops, for example, than those sprayed with fungicide.

...

Of course, some segments of the population are bound to object to gene editing, just as they continue to oppose vaccines, Peoples said.

...

Compared to transgenic GMOs, editing crop genes with CRISPR is much faster and cheaper, he said.

...

"It gives small players a fighting chance," he said.

Read full, original post: [CRISPR: The latest word in genetics](#)