

## How the European Court of Justice could open the door to gene editing and revive crop biotechnology in EU

A “landmark opinion” from the European Court of Justice on the definition of genetically modified organisms could pave the way for a revival of crop biotechnology in Europe.

According to Rothamsted Research’s senior plant geneticist, Professor Nigel Halford, the ambiguities of legislation in Europe have long caused problems for biotechnology, but this latest legal opinion – if it gets endorsed by the court’s judges – could break that deadlock.

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Due to EU regulations on genetically modified crops, only two GM crops have ever been licensed for cultivation in Europe, and one of those, the Amflora potato, was subsequently withdrawn because the company that produced and marketed it, BASF, decided to walk away from crop biotech in Europe. That leaves a single variety of insect-resistant maize, MON810, as the only GM crop available to European farmers, and that is not available everywhere because some Member States impose their own national bans.

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“This opinion could prompt a green light for crop scientists and plant breeders to start using genome editing for crop improvements in Europe. It is an extremely important assessment, and a rare bit of good news for Europe’s plant biotechnologists,” he concluded.

**Read full, original post:** [‘Mutation’ not genetic modification could revive EU bioscience](#)