

## Viewpoint: USDA GMO labeling proposal could make things more confusing

On its surface, the rule is intended to reduce the consumer confusion that abounds when it comes to GMOs. But guess what? As currently written, it may actually make things worse.

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The National Bioengineered Food Disclosure Standard, as the proposed rule is known, aims to fundamentally shift the way American food is labelled—starting with the very language we use to talk about GMOs. The standard would omit the commonly used phrases “genetically modified” or “genetically engineered” in favor of a less familiar one: “bioengineered food,” or BE for short.

GMO and BE aren’t synonymous. BE will only refer to those foods that have been created by splicing foreign genes from one species into another, a process known as transgenesis. Some critics say that, in the era of gene-editing tools like CRISPR, that definition is too limiting. Activist groups like the Non-GMO Project consider foods that have been gene-edited in any way, with or without transplanted genes, to be genetically modified. In other words, current GMO-free certifications cover more ground than the narrowly defined BE label that’s been proposed.

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The proposed rule also contains a provision that GMO critics have called a cop-out: The option to label BE ingredients via scannable QR code, among other options.

**Read full, original post:** [GMOs are dead, according to the U.S. government. Long live “bioengineered”](#)