

## UK approves first gene-edited crop trial in Europe—for omega-3 oil boosting camelina

[Gene-edited](#) super-crops are to be sown in Britain in a European-first after scientists exploited a legal loophole.

The Government has quietly approved the farming of gene-edited (GE) Camelina oilseed crops as part of a trial to super-charge the plants to produce Omega 3 fish oils, one of the most popular food supplements.

The pilot was approved because, unlike [genetically modified \(GM\) plants](#), the Camelina oilseed crops contain no foreign DNA. Instead, they had their genetic code altered in a way that could have happened naturally.

Scientists say gene-editing can cut the time it takes to engineer new plants from decades to months. They argue embracing the new technology is vital if Britain is to benefit from GE crops and help maintain a sustainable source of fish oils in face of depleted ocean stocks

The trial starts as the European Court of Justice prepares to decide whether GE plants can be legally treated as if they were conventional crops across the EU.

Critics, however, accused Defra (Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) of pre-empting a decision by the court which could end up requiring GM-style regulation of GE crops.

**Read full, original post:** [Exclusive: Gene-edited super-crops to be grown in UK for the first time](#)