

Viewpoint: CRISPR-edited tomatoes illustrate our newfound power to ‘transform our food’

LIKE ANY SELF-RESPECTING farmer, Zachary Lippman was grumbling about the weather. Stout, with close-cropped hair and beard, Lippman was standing in a greenhouse in the middle of Long Island, surrounded by a profusion of rambunctiously bushy plants. “Don’t get me started,” he said, referring to the late and inclement spring.

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ALTHOUGH HE WORKED on a farm as a teenager and has a romantic attachment to the soil, Lippman isn’t a farmer. He’s a plant biologist at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory in New York with an expertise in genetics and development. And these greenhouse plants aren’t ordinary tomatoes.

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What makes this greenhouse different—what makes it arguably an epicenter of a revolution in plant biology that may forever change not just the future of the tomato but the future of many crops—is that 90 percent of the tomato plants in the building had been genetically altered using the [wizardly new gene-editing tool](#) known as Crispr/Cas-9.

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Huge questions vex the future of food—how to feed 9 billion mouths, how to farm in an era of unprecedented climate uncertainty, how to create more resilient and nutritious foods for a public wary of the new technology. Plant scientists are already using Crispr and related technologies to reshape food crops in dramatic ways...

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In both industrial and academic labs, new editing tools are being developed that will have a profound impact on the foods all of us eat.

Read full, original article: [Crispr Can Speed Up Nature—and Change How We Grow Food](#) (Paywall after two free articles)