

Brexit could free UK farmers from Europe's stringent GMO regulations

Like most United Kingdom citizens, English farmer Andrew Osmond lives with a certain sense of uncertainty brought on by Brexit.

The decision of UK voters to withdraw from the European Union may provide an unexpected opportunity. While the UK has no formal ban on cultivating genetically modified organisms (GMOs), its place in the [EU] has meant that UK farmers have had to accept Europe's stridently anti-GMO position if they wanted to sell to their nearest neighbors.

With Brexit, farmers like Osmond may be able to employ the types of GM seeds that their American counterparts have been using successfully for years.

"One of the things we've missed out on in the UK is the whole GMO revolution," Osmond recently told the Alliance for Science "... but Brexit gives us an opportunity to move away from the precautionary principle and toward a more evidence-based science."

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"CRISPR/Cas9 is coming and there's a gold rush in labs around the world to enhance this technology. I think that as long as it's explained carefully to farmers, they will be open to gene editing because it is a continuation of the plant breeding that we've been using for hundreds of years," Osmond said.

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Osmond blames resistance to GMOs and gene editing in part on what he calls "a food paranoia" that is a result of Western wealth and privilege.

Read full, original article: [Brexit could spell exit from stringent anti-GMO rules](#)