

Experts press UK regulators for clarity on biotech crop regulations

The John Innes Centre is today joining a call for the [UK] government to address the implications of a European Union judicial ruling that classes gene-edited crops as Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs).

An open letter, signed by leading research institutions, universities, plant breeders, crop agronomy companies and biotech multinationals, was delivered to Defra Secretary of State Michael Gove on [September 13th].

The group of 33 signatories collectively undertakes hundreds of millions of pounds of private and public-funded research and development into plant science every year, employing hundreds of scientists and crop specialists across the UK.

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“We feel there are significant questions that must be addressed urgently by government if the UK is to retain its strength in plant genetics, to use innovation to boost productivity and competitiveness, and to meet the challenges of nutritional health and environmental protection,” [the letter reads].

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Defra has since reiterated its view that “gene-edited organisms should not be regulated as GMOs if the changes to their DNA could have occurred naturally or through traditional breeding methods”.

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Professor Wendy Harwood, of the department of Crop Genetics at the John Innes Centre said: “The CJEU decision could have major negative impacts on our ability to respond rapidly to the challenges of providing sufficient, nutritious food, under increasingly challenging conditions.”

Read full, original article: [Call for clarity after EU ruling on gene-edited crops](#)