

North American trade deal includes 'science-based' gene editing regulations

Farmers and agribusinesses welcomed the agreement on a new North American trade pact, easing fears that the Trump administration's tough negotiating strategy could deepen economic struggles in the U.S. heartland.

The agreement between the U.S. and Canada, following an updated U.S.-Mexico trade deal agreed in August, is expected to preserve tens of billions of dollars in farm goods traded annually across the countries' borders, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates.

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Beyond preserving existing food sales, the new trade pact between the U.S., Mexico and Canada includes a new "science-based" framework for food safety standards, the Farm Bureau's Mr. [David] Salmonsens said. Reviews of new genetically engineered seeds, including those created with new gene-editing technologies, would become more standardized, he said.

Some environmental activists criticized the deal for loosening oversight of genetically engineered organisms, or GMOs, and synthetic chemical pesticides

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Mexico and Canada have become critical pillars of demand and supply for the U.S. food and agriculture industry since Nafta took effect in 1994. Agricultural exports from the U.S. to Canada and Mexico have more than quadrupled in that time to \$39 billion, according to the USDA

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