

CRISPR-edited wine grapes could cut pesticide use in Europe, but regulatory hurdles remain

When you toast during the holidays think about [this]: grape vines occupy 3 percent of the land cultivated in Europe, but they employ as much as 65 percent of the fungicides used in agriculture.

.... If the use of the most advanced breeding technologies, such as CRISPR, were allowed, the wines we love would become resistant to [oidium and downy mildew] without losing any of their genetic identity.

[R]esearch has already yielded the first conventional fruits, with [ten varieties](#) registered in 2015 in the [Italian] National Catalog 2018 brought the first commercial harvest for three of these vines. For others, vinification is still in the pre-commercial phase.

Those who participated in the aperitif biotech organized on December 5 in Milan by Assobiotech could taste some of the vines in preview. “But soon the first four grape varieties of Pinot will also be registered, with multiple resistances,” geneticist Michele Morgante said during the tasting

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The hope of the experts, therefore, is that in [the] future regulators, producers and consumers will be convinced to explore the potential of techniques that, [according to the European Court of Justice](#), fall under the GMO directive, although they don’t involve the transfer of DNA between different species.

[Editor’s note: This article was originally published in Italian. This summary was prepared with Google Translate and edited for clarity.]

Read full, original article: [A biotech toast to the future of wine](#)