

## With gene editing tightly regulated, little-known 1980s NASA experiments inspire new crop development in Europe

Last year's European Court of Justice ruling makes gene editing....a form of genetic engineering....This will, of course, mean it'll be subject to the laws surrounding the commercial production of GMO crops.

[O]ptions available to European food scientists are severely limited in the face of a global population boom....Industry may have to get back to basics to find feasible and legal ways of ramping up crop production.

About 10 years ago, Lee Hickey, Senior Research Fellow at the Queensland Alliance for Agriculture and Food Innovation, started looking into speed breeding to fast-track....positive traits, such as drought resistance, in crops....Hickey has been collaborating in the UK with the John Innes Centre in Norfolk to fine tune speed breeding....

Hickey was originally inspired by little-known NASA experiments in the 1980s. The agency....wanted to explore the potential of growing crops in space to reduce the reliance on food from Earth.

The result of NASA's experiments was a fast-growing "space wheat," called Apogee, that was particularly suited to the high levels of carbon dioxide found in an enclosed space station.

**Read full, original article:** [Speed breeding isn't a new concept but it could be crucial to ramping up food production in Europe in the light of recent rulings on gene editing](#)