CRISPR gene editing yields world’s smallest tomatoes to feed astronauts

Scientists at the National University of Colombia have bred the smallest tomato in the world using DNA from a cherry tomato cultivar, edited with CRISPR.

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Dr. Martha Lucía Orozco, agronomist at the university, says the new variety is the smallest tomato plant in the world, smaller than the Micro-Tom variety reported in the scientific literature and with which the control test was done….Thanks to this finding, earlier this year the research team’s work was funded by NASA….The tomato plant aroused the space agency’s interest because it could contribute to the quality of life of astronauts in space….

This variety “blooms and produces roots like any other, but is very small in size. It also stands out for producing more seeds than cherry tomatoes,” Orozco said. “In the process, the modern gene-editing technique CRISPR was used to mutate the gene that controls the size of the plant,” she said.

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

Read full, original article: Colombia: They develop the smallest tomato in the world for space cultivation