

Gene editing could yield heartier, tastier berry varieties

Biting into a fresh, sweet berry might be a simple pleasure, but the berries' genomes are surprisingly complex. The strawberry genome has eight copies of its genes, compared to pea plants — and even humans — which only have two.

That complicated genetic code makes it difficult for berry breeders to develop new, tastier, healthier cultivars — or varieties — of blackberries, black raspberries and red raspberries.

However, a new partnership between food and agriculture company Pairwise, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and a number of leading universities is working to make developing those new varieties easier by sharing genetic information.

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Gene editing could make developing new plants even more efficient. [Ryan Rapp, head of discovery at Pairwise] points to flowering time, heartiness and the number of hours a berry plant needs to produce fruit as potential changes that could be made through gene editing.

Read full, original article: [Researchers Team Up To Breed A Better Berry](#)