

Biotech industry fears Canada's uncertain CRISPR crop rules will slow farming innovation

Canada is falling behind other jurisdictions in providing clarity on how it will regulate new crop varieties developed through gene editing techniques such as CRISPR, says CropLife Canada.

Japan's consumer affairs agency recently decided it will not require special labelling for products created through the new breeding technique because it does not require the introduction of foreign DNA.

Japan joins a growing list of countries such as the United States, Australia, Argentina and Chile that do not plan to give any extra scrutiny to new traits resulting from gene editing.

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Ian Affleck, vice-president of plant biotechnology with CropLife Canada, said crop developers and farmers are waiting for the Canadian government to provide guidance on how it will regulate what is rapidly becoming the backbone of plant breeding.

"There is a distinct need for that clarity in Canada right now so Canadian farmers don't get disadvantaged," he said.

Affleck said the government has indicated that Canada's Plant with Novel Traits (PNT) regulations need to be renewed to encourage innovation in the sector.

Read full, original article: CropLife calls for clarity on gene-editing regulations