

## Public will accept CRISPR if they trust scientists who develop the technology, sociologist says

As a sociologist who studies food and agriculture, I'm frequently asked whether the public is going to accept gene-edited foods. Gene editing techniques, such as CRISPR, are being lauded as powerful new tools that can quickly, cheaply and precisely create novel agricultural and food products with a variety of beneficial traits for consumers, producers and the environment. However, these "disruptive" technologies are emerging in a context of ongoing social controversy and public debate over GMOs.

**[Editor's note: [Carmen Bain](#) is a sociologist at Iowa State University.]**

.... I don't know if the public will accept gene editing. Instead, I want to reflect on several lessons from the GMO debate that focus on building public trust rather than public acceptance.

The GMO debate taught us that public perceptions of gene editing technologies will be shaped by whether the organizations and experts involved are viewed as credible and trustworthy. Since the public cannot observe or experience gene editing directly, their understanding and perceptions of the technologies will be shaped by whether they trust those who are directly involved

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Do they appear knowledgeable about the effects of gene editing? How organizations and experts involved in gene editing communicate with the public will be fundamental to building trust.

**Read full, original article: [Will the Public Accept Gene-Edited Foods? A Social Science Perspective](#)**