

EU officials open to ‘science-based’ decision making on CRISPR crops, USDA’s Sonny Perdue says

When it comes to food, EU policymakers should make science-based decisions if they want to help European their farmers tackle the “legitimate concerns” over sustainability, Sonny Perdue, the US State Secretary of Agriculture, said on Monday (27 January).

Speaking to a group of journalists in Brussels, including EURACTIV.com, Perdue said EU policymakers are not naïve about the challenges in agriculture. Earlier on [Jan 27], he met with EU Agriculture Commissioner Janusz Wojciechowski, as well as EU health chief Stella Kyriakides and Trade Commissioner Phil Hogan.

Asked by EURACTIV if EU policymakers are willing to open up the discussion on biotechnology in agriculture, Perdue said:

“Any time you have people who are elected, you have to listen to public opinion but I think they also respond, understand their responsibility as leaders. We have to make policy decisions based on sound science when it comes to food. And so I think they’re willing to do that.”

...

Perdue strongly defended the use of plant breeding techniques, such as CRISPR [DNA sequencing], saying it’s a non-transgenic genic breeding technique. “It’s essentially a natural breeding technique that’s just expedited. We have a responsibility to communicate that to the public”

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