Podcast: Tackling ethical questions about CRISPR with GLP's groundbreaking Global Gene Editing Regulation Tracker and Index

Gene-editing technology is poised to revolutionize food production and medicine. Previously unheard of disease treatments and genetically enhanced crops and animals are beginning to hit the market, with even more in development. But these innovations can only progress as far as they're allowed by regulations enacted by governments around the world.

On this episode of Talking Biotech, The Genetic Literacy Project's Dr. Kayleen Schreiber and Jon Entine join host Kevin Folta to discuss their newly released Global Gene Editing Regulation Tracker and Index.

These groundbreaking resources offer an informative comparison among countries, showing which governments are being more or less conservative in setting up flexible regulatory structures to exploit this revolutionary technology. Why does that matter? According to Schreiber and Entine, gene editing raises a number of pressing questions regulators, scientists and consumers must answer as the technology rapidly advances:

> To what degree will nations deploy these revolutionary new tools? To what extent does gene editing pose unique hazards that require higher levels of ethical scrutiny and religious debate?
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> New regulations could help thread the needle of innovation or retard it. They could force countries to openly engage the ethical challenges posed by this emerging technology; they could add unnecessary burdens of time and money, dramatically limiting the benefits of gene editing; or they could help facilitate the cautious but deliberate adoption of countless revolutionary products and treatments.

On the second half of the show, Dr. Bernadine Strik remembers Dr. Chad Finn, who made crucial contributions to plant breeding, particularly the development of new berry varieties for America's Pacific Northwest. A dedicated servant of his community and champion of scientific research, Finn was committed to his students and the development of his colleagues. Sadly, Finn left us suddenly and unexpectedly, leaving a palpable gap in our community. Strik memorializes Dr. Finn and highlights the most important contributions from his 26-year career as a plant scientist.

https://geneticliteracyproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/227-Entine_Strik.mp3

Kayleen Schreiber, neuroscientist and science communicator, is director of the GLP's gene-editing tracker and index. Follow her on Twitter @KSPHD.

Jon Entine is the executive director of the GLP. Follow him on Twitter @jonentine

Kevin M. Folta is a professor in the Horticultural Sciences Department at the University of Florida. Follow professor Folta on Twitter @kevinfolta and email your questions to kfolta@ufl.edu

Bernadine Strik is a berry crop specialist and professor at Oregon State University. Follow her on Twitter @berriesgood4u

The Talking Biotech podcast, produced by Kevin Folta, is available for listening or subscription:

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