

Could CRISPR turn nutritious but unpopular vegetables into flavorful snacks?

You probably know that kale is packed with antioxidants and other nutrients and that you should be eating more of it. But it's also bitter and fibrous, which might make you reach for less healthy greens at the grocery store instead.

A food tech startup called Pairwise Plants wants to change that. The company, based in Durham, North Carolina, and backed by a \$125 million investment from agricultural giant Monsanto (now part of Bayer), is using the gene-editing tool [CRISPR](#) in an attempt to make nutritious but less popular fruits and vegetables like kale more appealing to the average shopper.

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CRISPR has been imagined as a way to end world hunger by producing better harvests and fortifying crops against disease and climate change. That vision hasn't yet materialized, but in the shorter term, we could see new CRISPR-edited produce varieties at the grocery store.

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Ryan Rapp, head of product discovery at Pairwise, tells *OneZero* that the company has successfully used CRISPR to take some of the pungency and heat out of mustard greens to make their raw form more pleasant. "They're pretty tasty," says Rapp. "They're not bland like iceberg lettuce or romaine"

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