

52% of UK consumers say farmers should have access to gene-edited crops, survey finds

The public have highlighted their worry over the fragility of the food system in the face of Covid-19, climate change and possible trade interruptions. More than two thirds (66%) of adults are worried about the impact that a second wave would have on food supplies, a new YouGov survey has shown.

Fears for the food system's resilience in the face of climate change and trade interruptions after the Brexit transition period ends are also playing on public consciousness.

The survey of over 2,100 adults was carried out on behalf of the Agricultural Biotechnology Council (ABC), which has called for farmers to have access to 'all the tools available' in order to fight the threats.

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Notably, the data suggests the public thinks more should be done to support farmers and food producers to future-proof the sector and help it remain resilient.

In particular, more than half (52%) expressed support for the use of new agricultural innovations such as new plant breeding techniques like gene editing to make crops more nutritious and resistant to pests and diseases.

Mark Buckingham, Chair of the Agricultural Biotechnology Council, said farmers faced 'serious threats' to future harvests. "These results demonstrate a clear need to provide farmers with the opportunity to access all the tools available to them," he added.

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