

## CRISPR crops ‘aren’t GMOs,’ France says, challenging EU’s strict gene-editing regulations

France sees crops developed using gene-editing techniques as different to genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and opposes a European Union court decision to put them under strict GMO regulations, the country’s agriculture minister said.



French Ag Minister Julien Denormandie  
Credit: Philippe Lavieille/LP

The European Court of Justice (ECJ) ruled in 2018 that mutagenesis, among so-called New Breeding Techniques (NBT) based on targeted editing of genes, fall under rules applying to GMOs that incorporate DNA from a different species.

The decision was welcomed by some environmentalists who have long opposed GMOs as a threat to ecosystems, and criticized by seed makers and scientists as penalizing Europe’s agricultural research capacity.

“NBTs are not GMOs,” Agriculture Minister Julien Denormandie said in an interview published by several farming news outlets, including *Agra Presse* on [January 15].

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“This (NBT) technology allows much quicker development of a variety that could have emerged naturally at some point, and that is a very good thing,” he said, calling for NBT not to be regulated like GMOs.

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