

## Anti-GMO Europe wants to fight climate change. Will it approve the eco-friendly (but GM) Impossible Burger?

Impossible Foods' efforts to enter the European market have faced a 15-month-long battle over the key ingredient that gives its burgers that meaty feel and taste, in part because it relies on genetic modification — a technology that faces public skepticism in Europe, as well as strict regulation.

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The regulatory challenge here being permission to use its soy leghemoglobin — a protein found in the root nodules of soy plants, but which hasn't received approval for human consumption in Europe. Impossible obtains its particular soy leghemoglobin by implanting soy genes into genetically-engineered yeast. Like meat, soy leghemoglobin contains the iron-rich molecule heme, which gives it a similar flavor and color.

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Impossible filed for approval of its soy leghemoglobin in October 2019, but the European Food Safety Authority says it is still waiting for follow-up information from the company before it can begin its analysis.

"For GMO assessments, we have six months to complete [them] once the risk assessment starts," said EFSA spokesperson Edward Bray. After that, "it is for the legislators to discuss and decide."

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