

## Market for CRISPR-edited crops will be limited by hazy global regulatory environment and societal ambivalence

New breeding techniques pioneered by genome editing have gained substantial traction within the last decade, revolutionizing the plant breeding field. Both industry and academia have been investing and working to optimize the potentials of gene editing and to bring derived crops to market. The spectrum of cutting-edge genome editing tools along with their technical differences has led to a growing international regulatory, ethical and societal divide.

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Most surveyed experts agreed that genome-edited crops—as with similar conventionally-bred counterparts—pose few risks to society (76%), the economy (71%), human health (75%) and the environment (71%).

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Despite the projected safety of non-transgenic, genome-edited crops, half of the sample asserted that the biotechnology regulatory framework in their country does not favor the use of emerging biotechnologies in crop development. This was more pronounced among European participants (25% of European experts representing 30% of the surveyed panel), who indicated EU regulations completely or moderately discourage the use of genome editing.

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With the advanced knowledge in crop genetics and the accumulated regulatory experience in plant biotechnology, these crops have the potential to deliver an increase in the number of novel traits, faster and cheaper, but only if they can get to market efficiently and quickly.

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