

Can CRISPR gene editing help address climate change while producing lower impact biofuels?

Biofuels have long been proposed as the alternative fuel source of the future. Despite these high hopes, the commercialisation of biofuel technology to date has been hindered by high production costs, low yields and competition with food crops and other uses of land. These have limited the role biofuels have been able to play in decarbonising the economy.

Despite many false starts, improvements in the identification, understanding and manipulation of key metabolic processes have now fuelled renewed optimism within the sector. It seems likely that companies will continue to focus on utilising tools such as CRISPR-Cas9 to create novel microorganism strains capable of producing biofuels on an economically viable scale.

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The UK government has [announced](#) that it expects to shortly issue a call for evidence to help inform the development of its biomass strategy, with a preliminary paper due to be published this summer.

This will be followed by the publication of a new biomass strategy paper in 2022, which is intended to detail how biofuels can be best utilised to achieve the UK's net-zero GHG target by 2050.

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