

Viewpoint: Kenya's crop gene editing greenlight is a start — but anti-biotechnology regulations still abound

Last month the National Biosafety Authority (NBA) published guidelines for the regulation of genome editing technology, making Kenya the second nation in Africa after Nigeria to do so.

This is a relatively new cutting-edge technique that is applied to compliment traditional breeding techniques to find solutions to our global food security challenges that have been compounded by climate change.

Innovative plant breeding technologies, including genetic modification (GM), have contributed to higher-yielding varieties with the ability to resist pests and tolerate stresses like drought as well as improved nutrition, enabling us to increase food production without necessarily increasing land acreage.

It is estimated that the application of genome editing technologies could shorten variety development to two to three years, but also afford us the opportunity to improve existing local and regional crop varieties. Development times of 12–15 years are typical for conventional breeding techniques.

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Genome editing is yet another weapon in the biotechnology armoury that Kenya has positioned itself to utilize. What we now need is the political will to truly embrace innovation and technology to provide solutions to the food security situation and our other societal challenges.

This is an excerpt. Read the original post [here](#)