

## ‘Do they have an advantage for society and the planet?’: European scientists debate whether the EU should allow CRISPR crops

In June this year, the European Commission will issue new advice on the authorization of the use of CRISPR-Cas, a technique for genetic modification (GMO), in crop breeding. In 2018, the EU voted against authorization of use. Resource examines the opportunities and bottlenecks for CRISPR-Cas in crop breeding with four WUR experts.

John van der Oost, professor of microbiology and CRISPR-Cas pioneer says, ‘The fact that CRISPR-Cas techniques are at least as safe as older techniques has now been widely accepted by researchers. Mutagenesis, alteration of the DNA by radiation or chemicals, produces many more unwanted changes in the DNA than CRISPR-Cas. And the EU simply allows that.’

Follow the latest news and policy debates on sustainable agriculture, biomedicine, and other ‘disruptive’ innovations. Subscribe to our newsletter.

[SIGN UP](#)

“We must use the technology for good, for example in Norway it has been decided that small DNA adjustments are acceptable, provided they have an advantage for society and the planet. I think that’s worth a try.”

...

“I hope that the authorization of CRISPR-Cas will now be relaxed, it is about time. I am cautiously optimistic. Anyway, I was also optimistic in 2018 and it turned out not to work out as I expected and hoped.”

**[Editor’s note: This article has been translated from German and edited for clarity]**

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