

Green advocates and anti-biotechnology groups denounce European Commission-recommended proposal to relax restrictions on gene-edited crops

Organic farmers and environmental groups have denounced proposals from the European Commission to exempt some genetically engineered crops from EU legislation for genetically modified organisms (GMOs), sparking what the research sector expects will be an intense fight for science and against misinformation.

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Under the Commission proposals, the EU would come closer to the most relaxed regions for NGT regulations, said Jon Entine, the executive director of the Genetic Literacy Project, a charity in the US that tracks global gene editing regulations.

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Depending on the final authorisation rules for more complex NGT crops, the bloc's rules could remain stricter than those of Japan and Canada, he said, but added: "If that is what eventually passes, it would establish Europe as one of the more liberal regions in the world in terms of embracing gene editing."

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Organics Europe said it was "a step backward for biosafety, freedom of choice and consumers' information", even though NGT crops would not be allowed in organic production and would be listed in a database. Greenpeace said the proposal "disregards safety and consumer rights".

Some EU member state governments have also criticised the proposal. "[It] is not in line with Austrian principles of agricultural practices, counteracts it and deprives consumers of their freedom of choice," Austria's agriculture ministry said. Slovakia's agriculture ministry said it would vote against the proposal due to public opinion.

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