

97% of bioengineered crops are soybean, yellow corn, cotton and canola. Can science break the 'social panic' that has limited this breakthrough technology?

As of 2019, 84 percent of all GMO crop acres were in just four western hemisphere countries (the United States, Brazil, Argentina and Canada), and 97.2 percent of the total acres were used to grow just four crops used mostly as animal feed or for industrial purposes: soybean, yellow corn, cotton and canola.

GM staple food crops such as rice, wheat and potato have scarcely been grown anywhere.

The social panic that drove this regulatory response was not supported by scientific evidence. The Royal Society of London, the British Medical Association, the French Academy of Sciences and the German Academies of Science and Humanities have all said they found no convincing evidence of any new risks to human health or to the environment from any of the GMO crops developed for commercial use.

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It seemed at first that the CRISPR crops would escape GMO-type regulations, but in 2018 advocacy groups in the EU used technical legal arguments to convince the European Court of Justice that the new crops should be regulated just as strictly as GM crops. If other governments follow this lead, the latest advance in agricultural science might be stifled as well.

Fortunately, most other countries are not following the EU's example this time, having decided that genome-edited crops with no "foreign DNA" do not need to be treated as being exceptionally risky.

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