

## Viewpoint: Anti-biotech farmers and green politicians decry EU relaxation of genetic engineering rules — ‘Specter of patentable supercrops from corporate giants looms over Europe’

The specter of patentable supercrops is looming over Europe’s agricultural landscape, raising concerns about a handful of corporate giants dominating the food chain.

A new generation of gene-edited seeds created by technologies such as CRISPR-Cas9, dubbed new genomic techniques, has been [marketed as a solution](#) to mitigate the impact of the climate crisis on agriculture — such as drought, pests and other extreme conditions.

The draft EU [rules](#) that would launch them to market [passed a tight plenary vote](#) in the European Parliament on [January 31], while negotiations are deadlocked between national governments in the Council.

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At the heart of the controversy is whether patents on these new supercrops will promote innovation and help farmers, or instead pave the way for a few multibillion-dollar corporations to extend their dominance over the food chain.

If patented, the technology “would be reserved for very lucky few ... meaning the big operators with the big financial muscles,” Jesper Carlsson, an adviser to Swedish lawmaker Jessica Pölfjard of the European People’s Party, who’s leading the file in the Parliament, told POLITICO.

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The European Parliament along with many national capitals agree they don’t want to facilitate corporate capture of the food sector — and are pushing to prevent it.

European lawmakers backed an amendment to outlaw patenting the new technologies — but this would still need to be agreed with the Council and the Commission during interinstitutional negotiations.

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