

## Gene-edited bacon could be on your breakfast menu as early as next year

A company in the United Kingdom is editing the genes of pigs used for commercial pork production to make them resistant to a deadly virus estimated to cost global farmers \$2.7 billion a year, reports [New Scientist](#)'s Michael Le Page. If approved, the pigs could become the first genetically modified animals to be bred for widespread meat consumption.

The company, [Genus](#), hopes the U.S. Food and Drug Administration will greenlight its virus-resistant pigs by the end of this year or early in 2025. It is also seeking approval in other countries that import U.S. pork, including China, Colombia and Mexico.

The virus is called porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome (PRRS), also known as blue ear disease.

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Additionally, to earn FDA approval, Genus must show the altered gene is safe, able to be passed down stably through generations and effective at providing immunity. The agency is already several years into this process for the CRISPR-edited pigs.

Some organizations, like the National Pig Association in the U.K., are [supportive of the plan](#) to use gene-edited pigs for commercial pork production, because it could mean the animals will endure less suffering caused by the virus. Likewise, "I think by and large the farmers are quite excited to have it, because this is a fairly devastating disease," [\[Genus' global director of regulatory and external affairs Clint\] Nesbitt](#) tells *New Scientist*.

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