

Press Release: “Options for Regulating New Genomic Techniques for Plants in the European Union”

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Today the first peer-reviewed scientific article prepared by partners of the GeneBEcon consortium is published in *Nature Plants*. The article describes a range of options for regulating plants derived from New Genomic Techniques (NGTs) in the European Union (EU) and assesses their respective impacts on biosafety data requirements, the likelihood of uptake and overall socio-economic implications.

Partners from the Horizon Europe project GeneBEcon “Capturing the potential of Gene editing for a sustainable BioEconomy” and the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) and Oberfrankenstiftung (OFS) project “Regulating Food Innovation – Technical Innovation requires Regulatory Innovation” joined forces to prepare a timely article on “**Options for Regulating New Genomic Techniques for Plants in the European Union**”.

The article, published in the high-ranking journal *Nature Plants*, outlines six options for regulating plants derived from NGTs in the EU. The options go from “maintenance of the *status quo*”, to “adoption of a foreign-DNA-based model and “REACH-like legislation”, taking inspiration from other countries which have already adapted their legislation for NGTs.

A legislative proposal for regulating plants derived from certain NGTs was put forward by the EU Commission last July and is currently under discussion in the European Parliament and EU Council. By providing robust science-based assessments of the impacts that different regulatory options will have on the uptake of NGTs in the EU, the authors aim to support policymakers in making informed decisions on the new legislation. How NGTs will be regulated in the EU will ultimately determine the extent to which they will, or not, contribute to the transition towards more sustainable agricultural and bio-industrial systems.

“Our proposals are primarily based on scientific findings. The regulatory options can be used to develop a law that helps to secure the future food supply worldwide and ensures that the EU stays competitive in global markets,” says lead author Prof. Kai Purnhagen from the University of Bayreuth.

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