

Securing the global food supply despite EU regulations

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Researchers at the University of Bayreuth have compiled information to help political decision-makers better understand the individual options for a new EU-wide regulation of breeding technologies. The aim is to

ensure the success of food producers in the EU on the global market. The scientists' findings have now been published in the journal [Nature Plants](#) and will be incorporated into the current debate on a draft law by the EU Commission.

In July 2023, the European Commission proposed a new regulation on plants bred using certain new genomic techniques (NGT). It is now in the legislative process and is being discussed by members of the EU Parliament and the European Council.

Prof. Dr. Kai Purnhagen, Professor of Food Law at the University of Bayreuth, and his team have analyzed the planned reforms. The researchers recommend focusing on plant traits with sustainability benefits. This is "the best way to contribute to climate protection and the transition to climate neutrality and to immediately integrate sustainability into all food-related policy areas," says Purnhagen.

To support decision-making in the legislative process, the team of authors Kai Purnhagen, Yasmin Ambrogio, Alexandra Molitorisova and Alessandro Monaco also present six regulatory options in the article "Options for the regulation of new genomic techniques for plants in the European Union."

"New genomic techniques offer great potential, but the possible risks should be managed," says Prof Purnhagen. "How exactly this should be done is still unclear. We have therefore outlined various options that should now enrich the discussion on the planned law."

The options mentioned in the article are modeled on regulations in New Zealand, South Africa, Argentina, the U.S., Japan and Canada. "We are proposing various regulatory options to regulate the new breeding technologies in such a way that the EU remains present on the [global market](#) and in research and the risks remain manageable," says

Purnhagen. For this reason, the regulations of other countries and other regulatory areas in the EU have also been used as a guide.

"However, our proposals are primarily based on [scientific findings](#). The regulatory options can be used to develop a law that secures the future food supply worldwide and ensures that the EU is not left behind by the global market in terms of food supply."

More information: Kai Purnhagen et al, Options for regulating new genomic techniques for plants in the European Union, *Nature Plants* (2023). [DOI: 10.1038/s41477-023-01570-2](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41477-023-01570-2)

Provided by Bayreuth University

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