



Lessons learned from the European Commission consultations: The question of sustainability

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European Commission study on “New Genomic Techniques” (April 2021)

Planned deregulation:

- ◉ Exempting NGTs from GMO legislation 2001/18
- ◉ Only some NGTs would undergo risk assessment



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Sustainability = main argument for deregulation

- ◉ *“Plants obtained by **NGTs** have the potential to contribute to the objectives of the European Green Deal [...] for a more resilient and sustainable agri-food system.”*

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29 NOVEMBER 2021

New genomic
techniques
– the way forward for
safe and sustainable
innovation in the
agri-food sector

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Appraisal by Testbiotech:

- **Promises seem exaggerated**
While NGTs have a big potential for genetic changes, it is not easy to translate this potential into actual benefits.
- **Risks for environment & health**
currently not taken into account sufficiently.
- To be sustainable, NGT crops need to be safe **AND** bring real benefits for food systems **AT THE SAME TIME.**





How to define and measure sustainability?



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*« A purely safety-based risk assessment may not be enough to promote sustainability and contribute to the objectives of the European Green Deal and in particular the 'farm to fork' and biodiversity strategies; **benefits contributing to sustainability would also need to be evaluated, so an appropriate mechanism to accompany risk assessment may be required.** »*

- European Commission study on NGTs (2021)



How to define and measure sustainability?

6. In your view, which of the following traits are most relevant for contributing to sustainability?

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	No opinion /I do not know	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree
* Tolerance/resistance to biotic stresses (e.g. plant diseases caused by nematodes, fungi, bacteria, viruses, pests)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Tolerance/resistance to abiotic stresses (e.g. to climate change or environmental conditions in general, such as drought, heat, cold, salt)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Better use of resources (such as water, nitrogen)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Tolerance/resistance to plant protection products such as herbicides or insecticides	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Better yield or other agronomic					

Source: EU Commission public consultation on NGTs, April-July 2022



Thanks for listening!