

# British Government ‘Pledges’ Cheaper, Unlabelled, Gene-edited Food. “An Agricultural Revolution” Predicated on Genetic Engineering!

By [Political Concern](#)

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[Political Concern](#)

Region: [Europe](#)

Theme: [Biotechnology and GMO](#)

*At a time when apprehensions about low-quality food entering the country post Brexit are rising, [the Times](#) reports that Michael Gove, the environment secretary has announced that “Britain will lead an agricultural revolution with the use of gene editing”.*

In July, after hearing scientific evidence that gene editing “causes many profound mutations and DNA damage”, [the European Court of Justice ruled](#) that food resulting from genome editing would be regarded as genetically modified, which is outlawed in Europe.

The Country Land and Business Association (CLA) is underwhelmed

Disregarding this science-based evidence, Gove pledged, at yesterday’s CLA meeting in Westminster, that scientists and farmers would be freed from this European court ruling. [The first report seen](#) however, makes no reference to this exciting prospect, whatsoever.

Genome editing, or genome engineering is a type of [genetic engineering](#) in which [DNA](#) is inserted, deleted, modified or replaced in a specific location in the [genome](#) (genetic material) of a living organism, unlike early [genetic engineering techniques](#) that randomly insert genetic material into a host genome.

Support from vested interests

Scientists in the industry, like the [Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council](#), funded by the government’s Department of Business believe that the technique will lead to crops and animals with higher yields, resistance to disease and the ability to cope with the effects of climate change.

Emma Hockridge, head of policy at the Soil Association, urged the government to keep the UK aligned with the European court:

“Scientific research has long shown that these new gene-editing technologies give rise to similar uncertainties and risks as GM always has. We have always been clear that these new plant breeding techniques are GMOs [genetically modified organisms] and therefore are banned in organic farming and food”.

[Bloomberg](#) reports that under the Trump administration, gene-edited foods don’t need to be labelled or regulated and that Zach Luttrell, a principal at industry consultant StraightRow

LLC, sees gene-editing as a way to continue lowering costs.

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