

GMOs Produced through “Gene-editing”: European Commission Fails to Regulate New GMOs after Intense US Lobbying

By [Corporate Europe Observatory](#)

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The European Commission has shelved a legal opinion confirming that genetically modified organisms (GMOs) produced through gene-editing and other new techniques fall under EU GMO law, following pressure from the US government. A series of internal Commission documents obtained under freedom of information rules reveal intense lobbying by US representatives for the EU to disregard its GMO rules, which require safety testing and labelling.

[The documents show](#) that US pressure is focussed on potential barriers to trade from the application of EU GMO law. They suggest that the EU should ignore health and environmental safeguards on GMOs to pave the way for a transatlantic trade agreement. The next round of TTIP negotiations starts on 25 April 2016 in New York.

Nina Holland, researcher for Corporate Europe Observatory, says:

“The biotech industry has waged an under-the-radar campaign to get new GM products absolved from GM regulation. The TTIP negotiations are seen by industry across the board and the US government as the perfect opportunity to block EU processes that are supposed to protect public health and the environment. The regulation of new GM techniques is a case in point.”

Franziska Achterberg, EU food policy director for Greenpeace, says:

“The Commission must come out of the bushes and state clearly that gene-editing is genetic engineering. Europeans need to be reassured that the Commission will apply GMO rules to all GMOs, whatever way they’re produced. This is the only way to ensure that GMOs don’t enter the food chain untested and unlabelled.”

Dr Helen Wallace, Director of GeneWatch UK, says:

“Gene-edited crops and trees pose risks to the environment. Before they can be marketed, these risks need to be properly assessed. Farm animals, fish and insects could all be gene-edited in future. Changes to nature could be irreversible if this industry is not regulated”.

Please read the full media briefing [here](#).

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