



PRESS RELEASE

Since the development of CRISPR-based genome editing technology in 2012, many countries (Australia, USA, Japan, Canada, Brazil, Argentina, China etc.) have not only mitigated the regulations for NGT, but in many cases have exempted from regulation NGT products obtained without the addition of foreign DNA to the species.

In these countries, agriculture can count on new varieties created to provide locally adapted solutions to cope not only with meteorological changes (episodes of drought, heavy rainfall) but also with changes in ecosystems (diseases, pests) linked to climate change. Food, which is now largely globalized, is being enriched with new products, particularly nutraceuticals: Red Sicilian High Gaba Tomato commercialized in Japan is an example. All agri-food biotechnology research is warmly encouraged.

For these reasons, the European Union cannot miss this historic opportunity to develop biotechnologies based on genome editing by adopting inappropriate regulation rules and must overhaul its agricultural biotechnology regulations.

More than 5 years ago in autumn 2018, the SAM (Scientific Advice Mechanism) to the European Commission, had clearly indicated that Directive 2001/18 was inadequate and that it was necessary that the characteristics of the final genomic edited product be assessed, not on the basis of the method of production but on the properties of the product.

Because Genome Editing, and particularly CRISPR technology, has revolutionized plant breeding approaches and has immense benefits as a response to the European Agricultural Challenges and in full agreement with the objectives of the Green Deal for Europe, the European Union must look with confidence to an agricultural future based on biotechnological innovations.

Therefore, UEAA recommends the adoption of relevant regulatory rules on Gene Editing that reinforce an EU agriculture more productive, environmentally friendly and economically competitive in a globalized world.