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## CRISPR/Cas comprehensively explained

The Project Genetic Engineering and the Environment provides explanatory videos with information on CRISPR/Cas potential and risks

12 May 2021 / The *Project Genetic Engineering and the Environment* (FGU) is today releasing the first in a series of videos on CRISPR/Cas gene scissors. The basics of the technology, its possibilities and risks will be presented in four videos. Especially applications of CRISPR/Cas in plants are explained. These videos aim to promote informed dialogue in civil society on the advantages and disadvantages of the new genetic engineering processes.

The EU Commission recently published a report calling for a broad public debate on new methods of genetic engineering (i.e. genome editing). CRISPR/Cas is predominant among these. So far, however, there has been less than adequate information on the risks associated with the technology. The FGU videos are intended to fill this gap.

The first video released today, provides a detailed explanation of CRISPR/Cas. Among other things, it shows the multi-stage process necessary to introduce and activate CRISPR/Cas in plant cells. The other videos in the series will be released on the FGU website in the coming weeks and provide an overview of the technical possibilities, possible effects on the environment and CRISPR/Cas errors. The FGU will also be publishing background papers with corresponding scientific references.

The FGU has been conducting continuous 'Horizon Scanning' in the field of new biotechnologies since March 2020 and evaluates the scientific literature. The aim is to identify and analyze new technical developments, their applications in the field of biotechnology, and possible environmental impacts in the context of the precautionary principle. The FGU results have already been published several times in scientific peer-review journals. The project is funded by the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, the project coordinator is Testbiotech.

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