
Field trials of plants derived from new genetic engineering

Testbiotech publishes overview for Europe

19 May 2023 / As of today Testbiotech will be providing up-to-date information on field trials in Europe with plants derived from new genetic engineering (New GE, or new genomic techniques, NGT). The project aims to give an overview of all projects, including trials in the UK since its withdrawal from the EU.

Testbiotech research shows that more than 20 field trials with New GE plants have been authorised in the EU since 2016. In all cases to date, the plants were developed using CRISPR/Cas gene scissors. Most of the applications filed for field trials were for CRISPR potatoes and maize, but there have also been experiments with other plant species, such as poplar, tobacco or broccoli. Field trials have so far only been carried out in the UK, Spain, Sweden and Belgium.

Many field trials with New GE plants have been carried out in the UK since Brexit, as the UK government has in the meanwhile adopted a policy of deregulation for NGTs plants in 2023. This has a knock-on effect for field trials: risk assessment and transparency have been severely restricted and the number of field experiments has increased.

Field trials are experimental releases of genetically engineered organisms under controlled conditions. In the EU, such experiments must be officially applied for before releases take place and the authorities of the respective member states have to conduct a risk assessment. The applicants must comply with certain conditions and the harvest from such experiments may not be marketed commercially.

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Further information: [The project page](#) [2]

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