

## **Welcoming the EU's Study on New Genomic Techniques**

The European Commission has published its study on New Genomic Techniques (NGTs) during a momentous time for science. The same technology that has produced incredible genetic advances in agriculture are now supplying the world with Covid-19 vaccine. Just as with the pandemic, the report shows that genetic innovations can deliver vital solutions to global challenges in agriculture.

As the global federation representing the plant science industry, our purpose is to advance innovation in agriculture for a sustainable future. We welcome the EU Commission study on New Genomic Techniques (NGT's) as it confirms the role of innovative solutions to contribute to sustainable food systems, while delivering on the objectives of the EU Green Deal.

We also agree with the report conclusion that the current GMO legislation is not fit for purpose to regulate some NGT's; a position shared with other stakeholders, including the [seed industry](#), [academic researchers](#), and [farmers / cooperatives](#) in the EU.

### ***Meeting the challenge with innovation***

Meeting the challenges of today in growing more food within the planetary boundaries, in a warming world and with increasingly scarce resources requires *all* agricultural innovations, including NGTs. The challenge is too big to leave any sustainable tool or solution out.

The potential benefits are also too significant to ignore. Innovation in agriculture can allow farmers to maintain and increase productivity while reducing GHG emissions, enhancing biodiversity, improving food security and supporting rural livelihoods.

### **The benefits of policy clarity**

The Commission's report follows nearly a dozen other countries that have evaluated existing policy systems in the context of NGT's. The overwhelming conclusion is that NGT's can be used to develop varieties similar to those developed using other conventional breeding approaches, and that policy and regulatory approaches applied should be consistent with conventional breeding.

This policy clarity has subsequently accelerated interest in the application of NGT's across crops and characteristics, and in some regions has already had a tangible positive impact on their domestic research and development sector (e.g. South America). We believe that similar policy clarity in the EU will likewise encourage renewed investment in NGT's and, more generally, plant science

technologies in the region. Delivering truly sustainable agriculture requires broad based access to innovations like NGT's.

### **Future engagement and collaboration**

CropLife International also welcomes the planned impact assessment and public comment period. We look forward to positively contributing to this inclusive process that can help Europe to modernize its legislation and keep pace with scientific progress.

Based on this report we are optimistic that the Commission recognizes the benefits that NGT's can bring in growing more sustainable food systems – for farmers, consumers and the environment. We look forward to future public – private partnerships and collaboration among stakeholders to deliver on the promise of new genomic techniques.