

# Press Release: “EU Parliament adopts legislative proposal for NGTs”

**8<sup>th</sup> February 2024**

**The consortium of the Horizon Europe project GeneBEcon welcomes the adoption of a legislative proposal for plants obtained by certain new genomic techniques (NGTs) by the EU Parliament**

Following the adoption of a legislative proposal of the European Commission for NGTs by the EU Parliament’s leading Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety on 24<sup>th</sup> January, a vote in the EU Parliament’s Plenary session took place yesterday.

With 307 votes in favour, 263 against and 41 abstaining, the EU Parliament members indicated their support for a proportionate regulatory approach on New Genomic Techniques (NGTs), taking into account the scientific progress made in recent years.

The legislative proposal acknowledges that certain NGT plants (category 1) are as safe as conventionally bred plants and will therefore only be assessed according to their equivalence with the latter. The legislation puts forward a verification process, ensuring a science-based approach, whereby competent authorities at Member State level will assess the molecular characteristics of NGT plants, to determine whether they would fall in category 1 or category 2 (i.e., NGT plants not meeting the equivalence criteria that must undergo an adapted risk assessment).

The new proposal will create an enabling regulatory environment for NGT plants allowing uptake by agri-food value chain players and consumers. Through its case examples - an NGT potato with improved starch quality and resistance to a virus, and a microalgae producing high value compounds - the GeneBEcon consortium is assessing the impact of regulatory options on the feasibility, safe use and business case for such products in the EU.

*“This proposal provides more legal predictability and an enabling framework for category 1 NGT plants, such as the ones being developed in the project. With GeneBEcon, we can contribute scientific data to the upcoming discussions, particularly for the implementation regulation, which will be developed once the final legislative text is adopted both in the EU Council and Parliament.”* says Dennis Eriksson, coordinator



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of GeneBEcon and Associate Professor at the Department of Plant Breeding, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences.

### GeneBEcon - capturing the potential of Gene editing for a sustainable BioEconomy

GeneBEcon is a Horizon Europe project that examines the innovation potential of gene editing for enabling a sustainable bioeconomy in the EU. Through the application of this technology in potato and microalgae, coupled with stakeholder and consumer engagement, GeneBEcon is assessing their expected contributions towards energy-efficient, low-input agricultural production and clean industrial processing, while at the same time considering social, economic, and regulatory implications.

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