



10 June 2022

Joint Statement on the Genetic Technologies (Precision Breeding) Bill

UK civil society urges MPs to understand the implications of deregulation and revise the bill to ensure the interests of farmers, businesses and citizens are protected

34 groups and individuals representing a broad range of food, farming, animal welfare, human health, environmental, academic, ethical and spiritual interests make the following statement:

“On Wednesday, 15 June, the bill to deregulate most genetic engineering technologies in farming and food will have its second reading in the House of Commons. This bill represents a significant change in the law and has huge implications for farming, food, animal welfare, the environment, the UK's internal market and its trading relationships with key global markets. It is clear that, in its haste to deregulate, the Government has not adequately considered these implications.

“Crucially, the bill proposes to remove all requirements of traceability, including labelling, from these technologies. If it passes in its current form, no-one—including farmers, businesses and citizens—will be able to exercise the right to choose whether or not to use, purchase or consume the products of these technologies. All surveys, polls and consultations show that people and businesses in the UK—whether or not they are supportive of agricultural genetic technologies—believe these technologies and their products should be regulated, traceable and labelled.

“Denying the right to choose undermines trust in the food system and in innovation and technology. We are concerned that too few MPs have grasped the full implications of the bill and that, as a result, it could pass into law without the full debate and major revisions it requires. We urge our parliamentarians to take steps to prevent this from happening.”

Signed by:

Beyond GM
Big Barn
Community Supported Agriculture
Compassion in World Farming
Doves Farm
English Organic Forum
ETC Group
Farmerama
Farms Not Factories
Friends of the Earth UK
Food Ethics Council
Gaia Foundation

GM Freeze
GMWatch
Green Christian
Growing Communities
Kindling Trust
Landworkers' Alliance
Nourish Scotland
Organic Arable
Organic Farmers & Growers
Pesticide Action Network UK
Professor Erik Millstone
Real Farming Trust

Real Seeds
Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
Seed Sovereignty
Seeds of Italy
Sheepdrove Trust
Slow Food in the UK
Soil Association
Unite the Union
Whole Health Agriculture
Wildlife and Countryside Link