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## BEST-CROP

### *The Project Publishes First Policy Brief on New Genomic Techniques and EU Regulatory Challenges (Press Release)*

The European research project **BEST-CROP** has published its **first intermediate policy brief**, titled “*Unlocking the Potential of New Genomic Techniques (NGTs): Overcoming Regulatory and Intellectual Property Barriers in the EU.*” The document provides an in-depth analysis of the evolving European policy landscape surrounding New Genomic Techniques and offers preliminary recommendations to support innovation while safeguarding transparency, consumer trust, and fair access to technology.

European agriculture is currently facing growing pressure from climate change, resource constraints, and ambitious environmental targets. Farmers are expected to maintain productivity while reducing chemical inputs, emissions, and environmental impacts. In this context, **New Genomic Techniques (NGTs)** (advanced genome-editing tools that enable precise genetic improvements in crops) are increasingly recognised as a promising path to support sustainable agriculture and food security.

The newly released BEST-CROP policy brief examines the regulatory and intellectual property challenges that continue to influence the development and adoption of NGT-derived crops in Europe. While recent legislative developments, including the European Commission’s proposal for a new regulation and the provisional political agreement reached in 2025, represent an important step toward regulatory reform, significant uncertainties remain regarding implementation, stakeholder acceptance, and intellectual property frameworks.

The policy brief highlights several key messages for policymakers, including the need for **regulatory clarity, balanced intellectual property rules, improved farmer support, and stronger transparency mechanisms to build consumer trust**. It also emphasises that the deployment of NGTs should contribute directly to broader EU policy goals, including the **European Green Deal, the Farm to Fork Strategy, and the Bioeconomy Strategy**.

In addition, the document explores how innovations developed within the **BEST-CROP project**, particularly in staple crops such as barley, illustrate the potential of genome editing technologies to improve crop resilience, productivity, and sustainability while supporting Europe’s long-term food security.

The policy brief concludes with a set of preliminary recommendations aimed at fostering a more coherent and innovation-friendly regulatory framework. Among the proposed actions are the harmonisation of NGT regulations across EU Member States, improved patent transparency

and licensing mechanisms, enhanced communication with the public, and stronger advisory systems to support farmers adopting new technologies.

The publication represents an important milestone for the BEST-CROP project's policy engagement activities and contributes to the broader European discussion on how plant biotechnology can support sustainable agriculture and innovation.

The policy brief is publicly available and intended to inform policymakers, researchers, industry stakeholders, and civil society organisations engaged in the debate on the future of agricultural biotechnology in Europe.

### About BEST-CROP

BEST-CROP is a European research and innovation project funded by the **European Union under Grant Agreement No. 101082091**. The project brings together leading universities, research institutes, and industry partners to advance plant biotechnology and develop innovative crop solutions that contribute to sustainable agriculture, climate resilience, and the European bioeconomy.

Project Coordinator:

**Prof. Paolo Pesaresi**, University of Milan (UNIMI)

