

## GMOs/Gene editing

**25 May:** UKG Genetic Technology Bill introduced in UK Parliament, relaxing regulations in England for precision-bred (broadly gene-edited) plants and animals. Welcomed by research institutes and NFUS, and cautiously by Food & Drink Federation and British Retail Consortium. Opposition from GM Freeze lobby body, Friends of the Earth, and the Soil Association (quoted): 'We are deeply disappointed to see the government prioritising unpopular technologies rather than focusing on the real issues - unhealthy diets, a lack of crop diversity, farm animal overcrowding, and the steep decline in beneficial insects.' Times headline runs, 'Gene-edited foods to be sold unlabelled in supermarkets.'

**24 May:** George Eustice and Alister Jack write to FM and Ms Gougeon inviting SG to join UKG in Precision Breeding bill, publishing the letter to the media. Further media reports on the SG ban on gene editing increasing food prices and reducing food security, and on benefits for climate change and the environment. Rachael Hamilton active on social media on this topic.

**23 May:** Media reports that a tomato that boosts the body's vitamin D could be among the first gene-edited crops allowed on sale in England. George Eustice says gene edited food could be in supermarkets as early as next year.

**19 May:** Times reports UKG seeking to extend precision breeding bill to GB, but SG opposed due to EU divergence. Article quotes the James Hutton Institute at Dundee as supportive of the bill as well as NFUS and Food & Drink Federation Scotland.

**29 Apr:** EU launches consultation on the regulation of plants produced by certain new genomic techniques, closing 22 July. Commission adoption of a policy is expected in Q2 of 2023.

**20 Jan:** Defra lays an SI making R&D for gene-edited plants easier in England.

### **TOP LINES**

**The UK Government's invitation to participate in the Genetic Technologies (Precision Breeding) Bill, which was introduced to the UK Parliament last week, came without them having shared the contents of the bill with us.**

- We will therefore need to scrutinise it carefully to consider the implications for Scotland.
- This includes identifying the potential impacts of the UK Internal Market Act in this area. The Scottish Government remains wholly opposed to the imposition of that Act and will not accept any constraint on the exercise of devolved powers.

**The EU is reviewing its policy on certain new genomic techniques, and we will closely monitor how the EU progresses its roadmap for this policy initiative, including its recently launched public consultation.**

- As we have done previously, where the EU follows its scientific advice and moves to change legislative frameworks, we will consider the implications for Scotland and seek to stay closely aligned with that approach, where practicable.

## **GMOs/Gene editing**

**We remain opposed to the use of GM in farming, to protect the clean, green brand of Scotland's £15bn food and drink industry. Scotland wants to ensure that we operate to the highest environmental standards, and that we protect the strengths of Scottish agriculture and food production.**

- We are aware of the current debate around new genomic techniques and how these relate to existing GM legislation, and we note in particular the ongoing consideration of this at EU level.
- The Scottish Government's policy is to stay aligned, where practicable, with the EU, and we are closely monitoring the EU's position on this issue.

**In all its policy decisions, the Scottish Government considers the scientific evidence alongside other legitimate factors.**

- The use of genetic technologies is a complex and emotive area, with as yet limited public awareness of the issues involved.
- Defra's own consultation last year showed that most respondents supported continuing to regulate the products of gene editing as GMOs.

**We are committed to making the food that we eat more sustainable, and to cutting emissions from agriculture.**

- The Scottish Government's Vision for Agriculture was published on 2 March 2022.
- The vision outlines our aim to transform how we support farming and food production in Scotland to become a global leader in sustainable and regenerative agriculture.
- This commitment will sit at the heart of a robust and coherent framework to underpin Scotland's future agriculture support regime from 2025 onwards.

## GMOs/Gene editing

### Glossary

Genetic modification	Technically any modification to the genome (genome=all of an organism's DNA). This includes traditional mutagenesis techniques (chemical and irradiation) that have been used by plant breeders for generations. However, this term is mainly used to refer to the techniques developed in the 1980s where one or several genes <b>from a different species</b> are inserted into the genome of the host organism at a random location.
New genomic techniques	<p>This broadly refers to the techniques developed since the original EU GM legislation was made in 2001.</p> <p>Legally, GMOs and organisms derived from new genomic techniques are the same, following a court ruling in 2018 that they fall within the definition of GMOs as defined by the 2001 legislation. In practice they are different however, as new genomic techniques are more precise and can achieve results indistinguishable from changes that occur naturally, although the processes do involve the insertion and removal of foreign DNA (albeit at a precise, specific site unlike earlier techniques).</p>
Genome editing/gene editing	Gene editing is a subset of novel genomic techniques that changes DNA at a target location. Technically it can result in the insertion of genes from another species, but in the majority of cases no trace is left in the host's genome once the process is completed.
Precision breeding	This is now Defra's preferred terminology – broadly the same as new genomic techniques, 'where the resultant genetic changes could have arisen through traditional breeding processes or natural selection.'

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 26 May 2022 10:46

**To:** Minister for Environment and Land Reform <MinisterELR@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot>; Minister for Public Health, Women's Health & Sport <MinisterPHWHS@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; Director of Agriculture and Rural Economy <DirectorARE@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] McFarlane J (John) (Special Adviser) [REDACTED]

**Subject:** RE: Update on genetic technologies ahead of the IMG

Hi [REDACTED],

Thank you. Just to flag that this note has been overtaken by a submission sent up last night at 5.30pm.

Many thanks,  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] **On Behalf Of** Minister for Environment and Land Reform

**Sent:** 26 May 2022 09:58

**To:** [REDACTED]; Minister for Environment and Land Reform <[MinisterELR@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterELR@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <[CabSecRAI@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecRAI@gov.scot)>; Minister for Public Health, Women's Health & Sport <[MinisterPHWHS@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterPHWHS@gov.scot)>; [REDACTED] Director of Agriculture and Rural Economy <[DirectorARE@gov.scot](mailto:DirectorARE@gov.scot)>; [REDACTED] McFarlane J (John) (Special Adviser) [REDACTED]

**Subject:** RE: Update on genetic technologies ahead of the IMG

Hi [REDACTED],

Ms McAllan has noted and asks that next steps are considered in light of DFMs comments on yesterdays IGR meeting.

Many thanks

[REDACTED] | Private Secretary to Minister for Environment and Land Reform - Màiri McAllan

The Scottish Government | Web: [www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot) | Tel: [REDACTED] Mob:

[REDACTED] | Email: [MinisterELR@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterELR@gov.scot)

All e-mails and attachments sent by a Ministerial Private Office to any other official on behalf of a Minister relating to a decision, request or comment made by a Minister, or a note of a Ministerial meeting, must be filed appropriately by the recipient. Private Offices do not keep official records of such e-mails or attachments.

Scottish Ministers, Special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 13 May 2022 10:56

**To:** Minister for Environment and Land Reform <[MinisterELR@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterELR@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <[CabSecRAI@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecRAI@gov.scot)>; Minister for Public Health,

Women's Health & Sport <[MinisterPHWHS@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterPHWHS@gov.scot)>; [REDACTED] Director of Agriculture and Rural Economy <[DirectorARE@gov.scot](mailto:DirectorARE@gov.scot)>; [REDACTED] McFarlane J (John) (Special Adviser) [REDACTED]

**Subject:** Update on genetic technologies ahead of the IMG

Dear Ms McAllan,  
CC Mairi Gougeon and Maree Todd

The UKG announced the Genetic Technologies (Precision Breeding) Bill in the Queen's Speech on 11<sup>th</sup> May and Defra officials have confirmed to us their intention to introduce it early in the session. Defra officials have informed us that this England-only bill will now amend the definition of a GMO in England across three main regulatory areas - plants, animals, and food & feed (microbes will not be included in the scope) – to remove gene-edited organisms (now referred to as 'precision-bred').

Defra has said it will not share any legal drafts or details of their bill in advance of the Bill being introduced in the House of Commons. This includes the impact assessments, and we are therefore unsighted on whether/how they are highlighting impacts on Scotland and the other DAs and how they propose to mitigate these. However, our understanding from the conversation is that they are introducing the bill with no provisions built in to mitigate impacts, and they have said that they do not intend to label PB products as such. They acknowledge that amendments be considered during the parliamentary process depending on reaction to the Bill as introduced.

Defra officials have also indicated that they intend to discuss the Bill after it has been introduced through the Common Framework groups for Plant Varieties and Seeds, Animal Health and Welfare, and Food and Feed (the latter owned by Food Standards Scotland for Scottish interests), as the individual regulatory areas affected by the changes. This would include any mitigations, including potential exclusions to the Internal Market Act, for each individual area. They have said they would not consider a single exclusion to the Internal Market Act covering GMOs in general since this would have to be agreed outwith an existing Common Framework (although this is a legal possibility, and being considered by BEIS in another area). For the Plant Varieties & Seeds Framework, this would include discussion of the proposal we have previously been made aware of for an England-only National List specifically for PB varieties, which would need to be agreed within the Plant Varieties and Seeds Common Framework.

[REDACTED]

In conclusion, Defra appears to intend to move ahead with its plans for precision breeding in anticipation of discussing the impacts on the devolved administrations and any mitigations after the introduction of the Bill; and before discussing and agreeing their divergence within the three relevant Common Frameworks. We and the other DAs have highlighted to Defra our concerns with this approach, in particular their unwillingness to share their legislative proposals in advance, which would allow officials to properly assess and prepare for the impacts, and the lack of prior engagement through the Common Framework process. There could be wider potential wider implications for common frameworks and exclusions to the Act should Defra press ahead as set out here which we are considering in partnership with colleagues in Constitution and UK Relations.

Our understanding is that pressure for proceeding at pace with the Bill appears to be coming directly from No 10. Jo Churchill and George Eustice are both keen to meet with you and to

reschedule the delayed bilateral. There is no formal agenda item on this at the IMG on Monday 16th May but it may be raised. We have suggested the speaking points below for IMG, but you may like to discuss with SpAds prior to the meeting. We are happy to support those discussions if useful and would welcome a conversation on this area.

**What assurances can you give me that Defra's planned divergence from the other UK administrations on the GM regulatory regime will respect Scotland's devolved competencies?**

- Based on our current awareness of the broad approach your planned legislation will take, there will be a number of impacts on Scotland as a result of the Genetic Technologies (Precision Breeding) Bill, including in areas covered by Common Frameworks.
- I am very concerned that despite these likely impacts, this divergence from the current UK-wide position has not been discussed and agreed through any of the relevant Common Frameworks. Neither have my officials been provided with details of your legislative proposals, to enable them to make a proper assessment of the impacts on our devolved responsibilities for the regulation of GMOs in Scotland.

**How will you ensure that the Internal Market Act, which the Scottish Parliament did not give its consent to, does not force further unwanted changes upon Scotland?**

- I understand from my officials that the implications of the Internal Market Act are a significant consideration here, in that precision-bred products removed from the GM regulatory regime in England could then be sold without a GMO authorisation in Scotland.
- Scottish Ministers remain fundamentally opposed to the imposition of the Internal Market Act on Scotland. If this is another area where that Act means further erosion of Scotland's devolved powers, then a way must absolutely be found to prevent that.
- Given there is the possibility of forced disapplication of devolved standards through the introduction of the Bill, can you reassure me that your officials will work together with others in devolved governments in the relevant fora, including common frameworks, to explore how policy divergence can be best managed ahead of introduction?

**Your consultation document stated that you later intend to review GMO regulation more broadly. What are your further plans in this area, and to what timeframes?**

- The response says that after making regulatory changes on gene editing, you intend to review GMO regulation more broadly, including where genetic material is introduced from a different species. What is your long-term goal for GM regulation?

Best wishes,

[REDACTED] | SASA Policy and Pesticides Survey Unit | Scottish Government

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]  
SASA, ARE Directorate  
Tel: [REDACTED]

25/05/2022

Minister for Environment, Biodiversity and Land Reform

## **UK GOVERNMENT GENETIC TECHNOLOGIES (PRECISION BREEDING) BILL**

### **Purpose**

1. This submission provides you with an update on Defra's Genetic Technologies (Precision Breeding) Bill which is being introduced in the UK Parliament today, together with advice on the implications for Scotland's devolved policy responsibilities and potential approaches to respond to those.

### **Priority**

2. Routine.

### **Background**

3. The UKG has introduced the England-only Genetic Technologies (Precision Breeding) Bill in the UK Parliament today. As previously announced, the purpose of the Bill is to reduce the regulatory and financial requirements for the use of 'precision-breeding' technologies like gene editing, by removing them from the scope of regulations governing the use of Genetically Modified Organisms.
4. In previous discussions with officials from Defra and the other Devolved Administrations, Defra had outlined the aims and general scope of the Bill, but been unwilling to share draft legislation or policy instructions to enable an analysis to be undertaken of the specific impacts in areas of devolved decision-making. In the most recent meeting, Defra officials informed us that concerns and questions raised by DA officials thus far had not been taken into account in the draft Bill to be laid in the UK Parliament, and of their intention to consider any mitigations of divergence issues alongside Parliamentary consideration of the Bill, rather than in advance.
5. Scottish Ministers' position on gene editing has been to emphasise that SG's position on GMOs has not changed; that we are aware of current debate around new genomic techniques and how these relate to existing GM legislation; and that the Scottish Government's policy is to stay aligned with the EU, where practicable, and we are closely monitoring the EU's position on this issue.

### **Contents of the Bill**

6. SG officials received first sight of the draft Bill late yesterday (24 May) on a confidential basis ahead of introduction in the UK Parliament today (25 May). Fuller

analysis including legal advice will therefore be provided in due course, with the following initial summary being largely drawn from the Bill documentation.

7. The Bill removes the plants and animals produced using modern biotechnologies, and the food and feed derived from them, from Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) regulation if those organisms could have occurred naturally or been produced by traditional methods. The substantive provision in the Bill does not generally extend to Scotland. In particular the Bill includes provisions to:
  - Bring in two mandatory notification systems for precision bred organisms (PBOs), one for non-marketing purposes (research and development) and one for marketing purposes.
  - Allow for new powers to introduce on-going obligations to report information relating to the health and welfare of precision-bred vertebrate animals, and to prescribe the processes and powers the Secretary of State can use to take the necessary action in response to this post-marketing animal welfare information.
  - Create a duty on the Secretary of State to create and maintain a new public register of notified information. The register is to be kept in electronic form and accessible on gov.uk.
  - Grant powers to create a new regulatory framework for food and feed derived from PBOs, ensuring that appropriate regulation is in place before placing these products on the market. This framework will include a procedure for making precision-bred food and feed marketing authorisations including a new proportionate risk assessment. The framework will also set out the requirements to be satisfied before the Secretary of State could issue a food and feed marketing authorisation.
  - Grant powers for the Food Standards Agency (FSA) to establish, publish and update a public register for PBOs authorised for food and feed use. An entry on this register would indicate that the Secretary of State has made a determination to authorise the PBO, and products derived from it to enter the market for food and feed uses based on the recommendation of the FSA.
  - Grant powers to create an inspection and enforcement regime, including civil sanctions, in order to secure compliance with the obligations under the Bill.
8. [REDACTED]
9. [REDACTED]
10. Although the Bill will establish a public register for PBOs, there are no provisions related to labelling of PBO produce. George Eustice stated in an interview with Times Radio that: "We don't intend to label it because the thing about gene-edited food is it's simply moving a trait, for instance from one variety of wheat to another." In discussions with officials from Defra, we and the other DAs have raised labelling as a key issue in enabling effective enforcement of devolved GMO legislation and to prevent potential impacts on trade.



## **Renewed invitation to join the bill**

11. A letter from George Eustice and Alister Jack formally inviting SG to join the bill was received on 24/05/2022 and published to the press at the same time, following media speculation and Defra outreach to Scottish stakeholders. Wales received a similar letter.
12. It is unusual that Defra has extended such an invitation at the point of introduction of its primary legislation, and without having shared that legislation with officials to inform advice to Ministers in advance. UK and English stakeholders have consistently said that regulatory divergence between UK administrations and from the EU is a concern.
13. There has been significant media reporting around the Bill and gene editing, which has typically been positive about gene editing technologies and their potential to help with food security, food prices, health, and sustainable food production. It has included supportive quotes from Scottish stakeholders such as NFUS and the James Hutton Institute. In tandem with the letter from UK Ministers, NFUS also wrote to Scottish Ministers urging them to join the Bill.
14. The British Retail Consortium and the Food and Drink Federation have expressed cautious support, with reservations around impacts on trade and consumer acceptance. GM Freeze lobby group has expressed concern about the techniques' safety, while Friends of the Earth and the Soil Association have expressed concern that the technology does not address the real problems caused by intensive farming.
15. [REDACTED]

## **Divergence and devolved policy considerations**

[REDACTED]

## **Options for managing divergence**

[REDACTED]

## **Conclusion**

### **16. You are invited to:**

- Note this update on the UK Government Genetic Technologies (Precision Breeding) Bill introduced in the UK Parliament today;
- Indicate your preferred approach to responding to the UK Government's correspondence inviting the Scottish Government to participate in the Bill, whether through pursuing one or more of the options highlighted above or an alternative;

OFFICIAL SENSITIVE

- Note that we will provide further advice following a detailed consideration of the Bill and in line with your feedback on this submission, including on the possibility of a Parliamentary Statement as raised at the Deputy First Minister's Inter-Governmental Relations group today.

[REDACTED]  
SASA, ARE Directorate  
Tel: [REDACTED]

25/05/2022

OFFICIAL SENSITIVE

Copy List:	For Action	For Comments	For Information		
			Portfolio Interest	Constit Interest	General Awareness
Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands			X		
Minister for Green Skills, Circular Economy and Biodiversity			X		
Minister for Public Health, Women's Health, and Sport			X		
First Minister					X
Lord Advocate					X
Solicitor General					X

DG Net Zero  
George Burgess, Director for Agriculture and Rural Economy  
Mathew Williams, Chief Scientific Advisor for the Environment, Natural Resources, and Agriculture  
[REDACTED]  
Gerry Saddler, Chief Plant Health Officer, SASA  
[REDACTED]



Mairi Gougeon MSP  
Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands  
The Scottish Government  
St Andrew's House  
Regent Road  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3DG  
By Email: CabSecRAI@gov.scot

Your ref:  
Our ref: DE/SW/1139VP  
Email:  
Direct line: 02476 858580  
Date: 24<sup>th</sup> May 2022

Dear Minister

### **Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill**

We are writing to set out the joint position of NFU England, NFU Cymru and NFU Scotland on the Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill, announced by the UK Government at the Queen's Speech.

This Bill has the potential to offer huge benefits to UK farming, the environment and the public, and these proposals will be vital in helping us achieve our climate change net zero ambition. New precision breeding tools could help in several ways, from addressing pest and disease pressures on crops and farm animals, reducing fertiliser and pesticide use, to increasing farmers' resilience in the event of extreme weather events such as flooding and drought. All of this will result in the more efficient use of resources, lower emissions and less waste, helping British farmers to lower their impact on the environment and farm in a more sustainable and environmentally friendly way.

Crucially, precision breeding technologies will also help in the development of foods with direct benefits to the public; better quality, increased nutritional value and products with a longer shelf life. Gene editing will help UK farmers produce more food, more reliably, using fewer inputs – thereby boosting our domestic food supply and improving our national food security. The UK is well placed to capitalise on the opportunities presented by this Bill, with a world-leading, innovative, and progressive scientific agricultural research industry.

We recognise that gene editing technology on its own will not be a silver bullet and if the government is to make a success of gene editing, the regulation must be fit for purpose and robust. It needs to be based on science, enable diverse and accessible innovation, empower public sector research organisations to drive development and allow investment in products for the UK market.

This legislative change will not only provide a route to market for improved crop varieties, but crucially enable the UK to keep in step with the rest of the world and allow farmers here to continue producing increasingly sustainable climate-friendly food for less.

On behalf of our members, we hope you will feel able to support these proposals.

Yours sincerely

**David Exwood**  
Vice President  
NFU

**Aled Jones**  
President  
NFU Cymru

**Martin Kennedy**  
President  
NFU Scotland

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 24 May 2022 17:03  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Precision Breeding Policy

Hi [REDACTED],

The DAs met to discuss Defra's policy on "precision breeding", the potential impact on our respective GM policy areas and to examine how to best update our Ministers. The meeting raised a significant number of issues, which would need to be resolved to enable comprehensive briefs to be prepared. In particular, it would be greatly appreciated if you could provide the following information:

1. what, exactly is Defra's proposed policy, i.e. what is your actual regulatory proposal, e.g. does it relate solely to the removal of "gene editing" (GE) from the definition of GMOs or will the term "precision breeding" encompass more than GE – note, ACRE's response to your consultation references technologies, other than GE;
2. did Defra seek ACRE advice during policy development, i.e. prior to the issue of the consultation and, if yes, can copies of any and all advices be forwarded;
3. Defra's policy appears to be deregulation, apart from the requirement to notify, however, does the ACRE response to the consultation actually support this position;
4. what impact assessments have been prepared and what exactly was covered in them, e.g. potential impact on the environment, other agricultural and/or horticultural sectors or the DAs;
5. have Defra raised, with Ministers, the possibility of an exemption to the IMA and if not, will you commit to doing so;
6. if no exemption has been sought will Defra commit to assisting the DAs with possible mitigations, given that some mitigations will require English legislation, to ensure protection of GMO policy in each respective area;
7. has Defra considered what impact transference could have on wild plant populations (including trees) – the ACRE response to the consultation indicates minimal impact on wild animal populations, but is silent on wild plant populations;
8. it would appear that the policy would be considered a plan or programme under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and, as such, has a strategic environmental assessment been carried out;
9. Defra intend to implement, in part, the policy through the establishment of an England only GE specific variety list, however this will apply to agricultural, vegetable seed and seed potatoes only – has any consideration been given to ornamentals (flowers) or trees, which may have the greatest potential to damage wild plant populations;
10. has Defra had discussions with major trading partners of the impacts and if so, can details of these conversations, or any consideration given to the trade and international implications be shared, beyond the topic of the OECD list?

You should note we have also been informed that Defra have been in contact with research institutes, in at least one of the DAs, to ask how they could be acknowledged within the Bill, even if it is exclusive to England. To be frank, we feel that this is inappropriate, particularly in the absence of any notification to the DAs that these conversations are taking place.

In addition, we would request that you forward a copy of the draft legislation as soon as possible, especially since the media is reporting the introduction of the Bill tomorrow (Wed 25<sup>th</sup>). Throughout the policy process it has been clear that Defra have not been acting as partners and we think that it is fair to say that this is negatively affecting working relationships with the DAs. We are not being kept in the “loop” and are relying on the media for information, which, to put it mildly, is less than ideal, particularly as Defra are implementing a policy which has the potential to impact the whole of the UK, despite the fact that it is an England only policy. Although there is no Common Framework for GM, this does not mean that we should not strive to work together to realise objectives, while protecting the devolved nature of the policy. Please note the DAs are committed to working with Defra, however it is fair to ask whether that commitment is basically one way?

Kindest regards

[REDACTED].

**On behalf of DAERA and the Scottish and Welsh Governments**

Environmental Farming Branch, Room 651, Dundonald House, Upper Newtownards Road, Ballymiscaw, Dundonald. BT4 3XX.

Tel: [REDACTED] Mobile: [REDACTED]



**From:** Colin Campbell [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 19 May 2022 09:45  
**To:** [REDACTED] **Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Queens speech and gene editing

Hi [REDACTED] ,  
Yes, I agree, and we remain very surprised. We did ask them who they were speaking to and they haven't responded yet. I will press them again today and give them your contact details.

Also attached is a draft of the article responding to a brief from the Daily Mail. After some more checks we will post our final version as a Hutton Blog to ensure there is an unaltered version from us but once given to them experience tells us they will tweak and headline in ways we might not be fully comfortable with.

What we are now anticipating we might get pressed on in Scotland is if it is only field trials being done in England why don't we do them in Scotland so we have direct evidence of benefits and risks in our own context to inform future decisions? It is not all about the science evidence of course so would be useful if we can discuss what the factors for and against that are and what is an appropriate way to respond.

Happy to speak on phone as always and if needed can bring in our molecular, ecology or social science experts to help.

Regards, Colin

**From** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 19 May 2022 09:23  
**To** [REDACTED] Colin Campbell [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Queens speech and gene editing

[ External email ]  
Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe

Hi Colin,

Thanks for the update.

On the Defra point, I am quite surprised – it seems an inappropriate thing to take to you/the JHI. If you could please direct them to me for these points and I will also speak to them myself.

Many thanks,  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] | SASA Policy and Pesticides Survey Unit | Scottish Government  
E: [REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 19 May 2022 08:11  
**To:** Colin Campbell [REDACTED]

**Cc:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** RE: Queens speech and gene editing

Hi Colin,

Thanks for getting in touch – I think yes, please do keep [REDACTED] in the loop and [REDACTED] too. It's interesting that there's so much press on the subject. In terms of the Defra angle I think probably [REDACTED] would be better placed to answer from the policy point of view.

Kind regards,  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Head of Strategic Research Programme | Rural and Environment Science and Analytical Services

Scottish Government | bb [REDACTED] | I am currently working from home



**From:** Colin Campbell [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 18 May 2022 17:25

**To:** [REDACTED] **Cc:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** RE: Queens speech and gene editing

Hi [REDACTED]

We are still getting a lot of press requests and have attached here the various statement we have put out so far that may appear in next day or two.

We have also been approached by the Times (Scotland), Daily Mail (Scotland) and BBC Scotland to do pieces or articles for them. We are drafting these and will share when ready.

We used to always keep [REDACTED] in the loop as he had a specific interest in this. Should we include [REDACTED] or even [REDACTED] or leave that up to you?

Defra want to talk to us again also about how Scotland (and presumably Wales) would be acknowledged within the Bill even if it is exclusive to England. Not sure we understand what they mean by this so if you can shed light on this I would be grateful. As always happy to speak on the phone [REDACTED] .

Regards, Colin

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 13 May 2022 15:59



**To:** [REDACTED] ; Colin Campbell [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Queens speech and gene editing

[ External email ]

Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe

Hi Colin,

Thank you for getting in touch. As [REDACTED] says, our position hasn't changed. It is a sensitive area and we recognise that JHI takes a different position to the Scottish Government, as is of course your right as an independent scientific institute. However it's really useful to see your contributions to articles in the press and to have a heads-up before they go to print, so please do send them on – very much appreciated.

Best wishes,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | SASA Policy and Pesticides Survey Unit | Scottish Government

E: [REDACTED]

**From** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 13 May 2022 15:48

**To:** Colin Campbell [REDACTED]

**Subject:** RE: Queens speech and gene editing

Hi Colin,

I'm not aware of our positions changing in this area, [REDACTED] will be closer to the detail of the policy here, though of course we have noted the planned shift in position by the UKGov. It's understandable that you're getting contacted about it, I'm sure giving good responses where appropriate.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Head of Strategic Research Programme | Rural and Environment Science and Analytical Services

Scottish Government | bb [REDACTED] | I am currently working from home

**RESAS**

Rural & Environmental Science  
and Analytical Services

**From:** Colin Campbell [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 13 May 2022 11:15  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Queens speech and gene editing

Dear [REDACTED]

Just a heads up following the Queens speech we are getting a lot of press requests for articles, blogs and statements on gene editing for this weekend. We do always try and respond to different requests but wont have full control of what they print. We will copy you whatever we send. Please let me know if there any sensitives or other activity we should know about.

Regards, Colin

PROFESSOR COLIN CAMPBELL BSc, PhD, FRSB, MIOd, ARAGS, FRSE  
Chief Executive Officer, James Hutton Institute  
[REDACTED]  
PERSONAL ASSISTANT [REDACTED]

The James Hutton Institute is a Scottish charitable company limited by guarantee.  
Registered in Scotland No. SC374831  
Registered Office: The James Hutton Institute, Invergowrie Dundee DD2 5DA.  
Charity No. SC041796



CC article for SDM  
190522 v2.docx

## GMOs/Gene editing

**19 May:** *Times* reports UKG seeking to extend precision breeding bill to GB, but SG opposed due to EU divergence. Article quotes the James Hutton Institute at Dundee as supportive of the bill (*"We need to develop crops quickly which can adapt and are resistant to climate change and pests and whose cultivation is more environmentally friendly"*) as well as NFUS and Food & Drink Federation Scotland.

**12 May:** National Farmers Union for Scotland renews call for access to gene editing technologies to become more sustainable.

**10 May:** UKG announces Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill in Queen's Speech to remove 'precision bred organisms' from the English GMO regulatory regime (plants and animals produced by gene editing and similar technologies where the resultant genetic changes could have arisen through traditional breeding or natural processes). There may be impacts on Scotland, including as a result of the Internal Market Act, which officials are seeking details on from Defra in order to identify ways to mitigate these.

**29 Apr:** EU launches consultation on the regulation of plants produced by certain new genomic techniques, closing 22 July. Commission adoption of a policy is expected in Q2 of 2023.

**20 Jan:** Defra lays an SI making R&D for gene-edited plants easier in England.

**29 Sept:** Defra announces intentions to lay an SI for R&D on gene edited plants and to take primary powers around gene editing in response to its consultation on genetic technologies in England, despite most respondents supporting the continued regulation of gene-edited products as GMOs.

**24 Sept:** EU announces a review of the regulation genetic techniques, stating that the GMO legislation is not fit for purpose for new genomic techniques such as gene editing, and that these could contribute to a more sustainable food system.

**NOTE:** [REDACTED]

### TOP LINES

**Scotland's policy on GMOs has not changed. We remain opposed to the use of GM in farming, to protect the clean, green brand of Scotland's £15bn food and drink industry.**

- I am aware of current debate around new genomic techniques and how these relate to existing GM legislation, and we note in particular the ongoing consideration of this at EU level. The Scottish Government's policy is to stay aligned, where practicable, with the EU, and we are closely monitoring the EU's position on this issue.

**We are exploring potential impacts of the UK Internal Market Act in this area. The Scottish Government remains wholly opposed to the imposition of the Act and will not accept any constraint on the exercise of devolved powers.**

- We will continue to engage with Defra, Wales, and Northern Ireland to ensure that devolved competence are respected.

[REDACTED]

## **GMOs/Gene editing**

**The EU is reviewing its policy on certain new genomic techniques, and we will closely monitor how the EU progresses its roadmap for this policy initiative, including its recently launched public consultation.**

- As we have done previously, where the EU follows its scientific advice and moves to change legislative frameworks, we will consider the implications for Scotland and seek to stay closely aligned with that approach, where practicable.

**In all its policy decisions, the Scottish Government considers the scientific evidence alongside other legitimate factors.**

- The use of genetic technologies is a complex and emotive area, with as yet limited public awareness of the issues involved.
- Defra's own consultation showed that most respondents supported continuing to regulate the products of gene editing as GMOs.

**We are committed to making the food that we eat more sustainable, and to cutting emissions from agriculture.**

- The Scottish Government's Vision for Agriculture was published on 2 March 2022.
- The vision outlines our aim to transform how we support farming and food production in Scotland to become a global leader in sustainable and regenerative agriculture.
- This commitment will sit at the heart of a robust and coherent framework to underpin Scotland's future agriculture support regime from 2025 onwards.

## GMOs/Gene editing

### Glossary

Genetic modification	Technically any modification to the genome (genome=all of an organism's DNA). This includes traditional mutagenesis techniques (chemical and irradiation) that have been used by plant breeders for generations. However, this term is mainly used to refer to the techniques developed in the 1980s where one or several genes <b>from a different species</b> are inserted into the genome of the host organism at a random location.
New genomic techniques	<p>This broadly refers to the techniques developed since the original EU GM legislation was made in 2001.</p> <p>Legally, GMOs and organisms derived from new genomic techniques are the same, following a court ruling in 2018 that they fall within the definition of GMOs as defined by the 2001 legislation. In practice they are different however, as new genomic techniques are more precise and can achieve results indistinguishable from changes that occur naturally, although the processes do involve the insertion and removal of foreign DNA (albeit at a precise, specific site unlike earlier techniques).</p>
Genome editing/gene editing	Gene editing is a subset of novel genomic techniques that changes DNA at a target location . Technically it can result in the insertion of genes from another species, but in the majority of cases no trace is left in the host's genome once the process is completed.
Precision breeding	This is now Defra's preferred terminology – broadly the same as novel genomic techniques, 'where the resultant genetic changes could have arisen through traditional breeding or natural processes.' However, Defra has not provided a definition as yet.

**From:** [REDACTED] **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands

**Sent:** 11 May 2022 15:10

**To:** [REDACTED] Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot>; Minister for Environment and Land Reform <MinisterELR@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture <CabSecCEAC@gov.scot>; Communications Net Zero & Rural Affairs <CommunicationsNetZero&RuralAffairs@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]

**Subject:** RE: Media Enquiry: The Courier - gene editing

[REDACTED]

Ms Gougeon is content for her interests.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

Private Secretary

Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands

2N.08

St Andrews House

***All e-mails and attachments sent by a Ministerial Private Office to any other official on behalf of a Minister relating to a decision, request or comment made by a Minister, or a note of a Ministerial meeting, must be filed appropriately by the recipient. Private Offices do not keep official records of such e-mails or attachments.***

***Scottish Ministers, Special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)***

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 11 May 2022 14:45

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <[CabSecRAI@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecRAI@gov.scot)>; Minister for Environment and Land Reform <[MinisterELR@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterELR@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture <[CabSecCEAC@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecCEAC@gov.scot)>; Communications Net Zero & Rural Affairs <[CommunicationsNetZero&RuralAffairs@gov.scot](mailto:CommunicationsNetZero&RuralAffairs@gov.scot)>; [REDACTED]

**Subject:** Media Enquiry: The Courier - gene editing

**PO/ Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands**

**PO/ Minister for Environment and Land Reform**

**CC for info**

**PO/ Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture**

**As above**

The Courier have asked for our latest position on gene editing in light of the Queen's Speech yesterday which said the UK Government is to support agricultural and scientific innovation, including legislation to unlock potential of new farming technologies such as gene editing.

We've drafted the below. Comms, officials and SpAds are content. Can you advise if Ms Gougeon and Ms McAllan are content please?

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

**Proposed lines**

A Scottish Government spokesperson said:

"Scotland's policy on GMOs has not changed. We remain opposed to the use of GM in farming, to protect the clean, green brand of Scotland's £15 billion food and drink industry.

"We are aware of current debate around new genomic techniques and how these relate to existing GM legislation, and we note in particular the ongoing consideration of this at EU level. The Scottish Government's policy is to stay aligned with the EU, where practicable, and we are closely monitoring the EU's position on this issue.

"We are also exploring potential impacts of the UK Internal Market Act in this area. The Scottish Government remains wholly opposed to the imposition of the Act and will not accept any constraint on the exercise of devolved powers. We will continue to engage with Defra, Wales, and Northern Ireland to ensure that devolved competence are respected."



**From:** [Redacted] **On Behalf Of** Minister for Parliamentary Business

**Sent:** 04 May 2022 13:46

**To:** [Redacted]

**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <CabSecES@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Economy <CabSecFE@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care <CabSecHSC@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Veterans <CabSecJV@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport <CabSecNetZET@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing & Local Government <CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot>; Minister for Business, Trade, Tourism & Enterprise <MinisterBTTE@gov.scot>; Minister for Children & Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>; Minister for Community Safety <MinisterCS@gov.scot>; Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development and Minister with special responsibility for Refugees from Ukraine <MinisterCEID@gov.scot>; Minister for Drugs Policy <MinisterDP@gov.scot>; Minister for Environment and Land Reform <MinisterELR@gov.scot>; Minister for Equalities and Older People <MinisterEOP@gov.scot>; Minister for Green Skills, Circular Economy and Biodiversity <MinisterGSCEB@gov.scot>; Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training <MinisterHEFEYET@gov.scot>; Minister for Just Transition, Employment & Fair Work <MinisterJTEFW@gov.scot>; Minister for Mental Wellbeing & Social Care <MinisterMWSC@gov.scot>; Minister for Public Finance, Planning & Community Wealth <MinisterPFPCW@gov.scot>; Minister for Public Health, Women's Health & Sport <MinisterPHWHS@gov.scot>; Minister for Social Security and Local Government <MinisterSSLG@gov.scot>; Minister for Transport <MinisterFT@gov.scot>; Minister for Zero Carbon Buildings, Active Travel and Tenants' Rights <MinisterZCBATTR@gov.scot>; Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>; Solicitor to the Scottish Government <solicitor@gov.scot>; Legal Secretariat to the Lord Advocate <DLPCEALSLA@gov.scot>; [Redacted] First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery <DFMCSCR@gov.scot>; Lord Advocate <LordAdvocate@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture <CabSecCEAC@gov.scot>; Minister for Parliamentary Business <MinisterPB@gov.scot>; McFarlane J (John) (Special Adviser) <John.McFarlane@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: QUEEN'S SPEECH MAY 2022 – HANDLING ARRANGEMENTS

Adding John McFarlane.

**[Redacted]**

Private Secretary to Minister for Parliamentary Business

[Redacted] E: [MinisterPB@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterPB@gov.scot)

The Scottish Government | St Andrew's House, Regent Road, EDINBURGH EH1 3DG

*Scottish Ministers, Special Advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot).*

*All e-mails and attachments sent by a Ministerial Private Office to another official on behalf of a Minister relating to a decision, request or comment made by a Minister, or a note of a Ministerial meeting, must be filed appropriately by the primary recipient. Ministerial Private Offices do not keep official records of such e-mails or attachments.*

---

**From:** [Redacted] **On Behalf Of** Minister for Parliamentary Business

**Sent:** 04 May 2022 13:44

**To:** [Redacted]

**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <CabSecES@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Finance

and Economy <[CabSecFE@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecFE@gov.scot)>; Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care <[CabSecHSC@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecHSC@gov.scot)>; Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Veterans <[CabSecJV@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecJV@gov.scot)>; Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport <[CabSecNetZET@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecNetZET@gov.scot)>; Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <[CabSecRAI@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecRAI@gov.scot)>; Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing & Local Government <[CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot)>; Minister for Business, Trade, Tourism & Enterprise <[MinisterBTTE@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterBTTE@gov.scot)>; Minister for Children & Young People <[MinisterCYP@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterCYP@gov.scot)>; Minister for Community Safety <[MinisterCS@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterCS@gov.scot)>; Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development and Minister with special responsibility for Refugees from Ukraine <[MinisterCEID@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterCEID@gov.scot)>; Minister for Drugs Policy <[MinisterDP@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterDP@gov.scot)>; Minister for Environment and Land Reform <[MinisterELR@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterELR@gov.scot)>; Minister for Equalities and Older People <[MinisterEOP@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterEOP@gov.scot)>; Minister for Green Skills, Circular Economy and Biodiversity <[MinisterGSCEB@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterGSCEB@gov.scot)>; Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training <[MinisterHEFEYET@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterHEFEYET@gov.scot)>; Minister for Just Transition, Employment & Fair Work <[MinisterJTEFW@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterJTEFW@gov.scot)>; Minister for Mental Wellbeing & Social Care <[MinisterMWSC@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterMWSC@gov.scot)>; Minister for Public Finance, Planning & Community Wealth <[MinisterPFPCW@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterPFPCW@gov.scot)>; Minister for Public Health, Women's Health & Sport <[MinisterPHWHS@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterPHWHS@gov.scot)>; Minister for Social Security and Local Government <[MinisterSSLG@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterSSLG@gov.scot)>; Minister for Transport <[MinisterFT@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterFT@gov.scot)>; Minister for Zero Carbon Buildings, Active Travel and Tenants' Rights <[MinisterZCBATTR@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterZCBATTR@gov.scot)>; Permanent Secretary <[PermanentSecretary@gov.scot](mailto:PermanentSecretary@gov.scot)>; Solicitor to the Scottish Government <[solicitor@gov.scot](mailto:solicitor@gov.scot)>; Legal Secretariat to the Lord Advocate <[DLPCEALSLA@gov.scot](mailto:DLPCEALSLA@gov.scot)>; [Redacted] First Minister <[firstminister@gov.scot](mailto:firstminister@gov.scot)>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery <[DFMCSCR@gov.scot](mailto:DFMCSCR@gov.scot)>; Lord Advocate <[LordAdvocate@gov.scot](mailto:LordAdvocate@gov.scot)>; Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture <[CabSecCEAC@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecCEAC@gov.scot)>; Minister for Parliamentary Business <[MinisterPB@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterPB@gov.scot)>

**Subject:** RE: QUEEN'S SPEECH MAY 2022 – HANDLING ARRANGEMENTS

Thanks [Redacted] .

Mr Adam has noted for his interests and is happy to proceed with a letter to the Presiding Officer as normal

([Redacted] – it was this Minister just mentioned, nothing more recent),

Thanks,

[Redacted]

Private Secretary to Minister for Parliamentary Business

[Redacted] E: [MinisterPB@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterPB@gov.scot)

The Scottish Government | St Andrew's House, Regent Road, EDINBURGH EH1 3DG

*Scottish Ministers, Special Advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot).*

*All e-mails and attachments sent by a Ministerial Private Office to another official on behalf of a Minister relating to a decision, request or comment made by a Minister, or a note of a Ministerial meeting, must be filed appropriately by the primary recipient. Ministerial Private Offices do not keep official records of such e-mails or attachments.*

---

**From:** [Redacted]

**Sent:** 29 April 2022 14:06

**To:** First Minister <[firstminister@gov.scot](mailto:firstminister@gov.scot)>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery <[DFMCSCR@gov.scot](mailto:DFMCSCR@gov.scot)>; Lord Advocate <[LordAdvocate@gov.scot](mailto:LordAdvocate@gov.scot)>; Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture <[CabSecCEAC@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecCEAC@gov.scot)>; Minister for Parliamentary Business <[MinisterPB@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterPB@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <[CabSecES@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecES@gov.scot)>; Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Economy <[CabSecFE@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecFE@gov.scot)>; Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care <[CabSecHSC@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecHSC@gov.scot)>; Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Veterans <[CabSecJV@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecJV@gov.scot)>; Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport <[CabSecNetZET@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecNetZET@gov.scot)>; Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <[CabSecRAI@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecRAI@gov.scot)>; Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing & Local Government <[CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot)>; Minister for Business, Trade, Tourism & Enterprise <[MinisterBTTE@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterBTTE@gov.scot)>; Minister for Children & Young People <[MinisterCYP@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterCYP@gov.scot)>; Minister for Community Safety <[MinisterCS@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterCS@gov.scot)>; Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development and Minister with special responsibility for Refugees from Ukraine <[MinisterCEID@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterCEID@gov.scot)>; Minister for Drugs Policy <[MinisterDP@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterDP@gov.scot)>; Minister for Environment and Land Reform <[MinisterELR@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterELR@gov.scot)>; Minister for Equalities and Older People <[MinisterEOP@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterEOP@gov.scot)>; Minister for Green Skills, Circular Economy and Biodiversity <[MinisterGSCEB@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterGSCEB@gov.scot)>; Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training <[MinisterHEFEYET@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterHEFEYET@gov.scot)>; Minister for Just Transition, Employment & Fair Work <[MinisterJTEFW@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterJTEFW@gov.scot)>; Minister for Mental Wellbeing & Social Care <[MinisterMWSC@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterMWSC@gov.scot)>; Minister for Public Finance, Planning & Community Wealth <[MinisterPFPCW@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterPFPCW@gov.scot)>; Minister for Public Health, Women's Health & Sport <[MinisterPHWHS@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterPHWHS@gov.scot)>; Minister for Social Security and Local Government <[MinisterSSLG@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterSSLG@gov.scot)>; Minister for Transport <[MinisterFT@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterFT@gov.scot)>; Minister for Zero Carbon Buildings, Active Travel and Tenants' Rights <[MinisterZCBATTR@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterZCBATTR@gov.scot)>; Permanent Secretary <[PermanentSecretary@gov.scot](mailto:PermanentSecretary@gov.scot)>; Solicitor to the Scottish Government <[solicitor@gov.scot](mailto:solicitor@gov.scot)>; Legal Secretariat to the Lord Advocate <[DLPCEALSLA@gov.scot](mailto:DLPCEALSLA@gov.scot)>;

[Redacted]

**Subject:** QUEEN'S SPEECH MAY 2022 – HANDLING ARRANGEMENTS

To First Minister

Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery

Lord Advocate

Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture

Minister for Parliamentary Business

## QUEEN'S SPEECH MAY 2022 – HANDLING ARRANGEMENTS

Please find attached a 4 page submission with two Annexes covering handling arrangements for the forthcoming Queen's Speech.

<< File: Queen's Speech 2022 - Initial submission to Ministers about Queens Speech planning and intel.docx >>

Regards

[Redacted]

[Redacted] | Parliament and Legislation Unit, Scottish Government | 📞 [Redacted]

First Minister  
Deputy First Minister  
Lord Advocate  
Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, Europe and External Affairs  
Minister for Parliamentary Business

## **QUEEN'S SPEECH MAY 2022 – HANDLING ARRANGEMENTS**

### **Purpose**

1. To provide initial advice on handling arrangements for the forthcoming Queen's Speech.

### **Priority**

2. **Routine.** The State Opening of the UK Parliament will take place on Tuesday, 10 May 2022.

### **Background**

3. The "Most Gracious Speech", delivered on behalf of the UK Government (UKG) by HM The Queen, is the formal mechanism for announcing the main elements of the UKG legislative programme at the start of each new parliamentary session. Officials in the Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland, have advised that inter-governmental engagement around The Queen's Speech is expected to follow past precedent.

### **Timescales**

4. A likely running order for the day of the Speech, with key preparation and follow up actions, is attached at **Annex A**. In summary, if the normal processes are followed we expect events to unfold as follows:

- A courtesy copy of the text of the Speech will be delivered to First Minister's Private Office in advance of the Speech;
- The Leader of the House of Commons will invite the First Minister to have a call on the day of the Speech to outline the content of the Speech, in advance of it being delivered. If the First Minister is unable to take the call due to diary constraints the call could be taken by the Deputy First Minister. In December 2019 the call was taken by Mr Russell, Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, Europe and External Affairs so this would not be a significant change in approach;
- The Scottish Government informs the Scottish Parliament about the content of the Speech relevant to Scotland after it has been delivered; and

- The Secretary of State for Scotland is expected to table a Written Ministerial Statement the day after the Speech, setting out its application to Scotland.

## **Anticipated Content of the Queen's Speech and Legislative Consent**

[Redacted]

### **Parliamentary handling**

5. Although the content of the Speech is not subject to formal scrutiny in the Scottish Parliament, it will give rise in due course to Scottish parliamentary business in the form of Legislative Consent Memoranda and Motions. Since LCMs are in practice promoted by the Scottish Government, they effectively become part of the Scottish Government's legislative programme. The potential consequences for Scotland of aspects of UKG legislative policy may also give rise to debates in the Scottish Parliament.

6. By convention, Scottish Ministers alert the Parliament to the LCM implications of UK Government Bill proposals by means of a Government Inspired Question (GIQ) and a letter to the Presiding Officer. The information provided is an initial 'snapshot' assessment of the implications of the UKG's legislative programme at the point the Speech is delivered.

7. It is recommended that the letter from the Minister for Parliamentary is sent to the Presiding Officer on the day of the Speech as is usual practise.

### **Presentation**

8. The requirement for a news release will be kept under review should it be required. The focus of Comms activity should be on the Queen's Speech being a technocratic exercise and encouraging the UK Government to adhere to the Sewel Convention. Communications hubs across portfolio areas will be alerted to any proposed legislation which is relevant for reactive queries.

### **Internal Co-ordination**

9. The SG response will be co-ordinated by the Parliament and Legislation Unit (PLU) in conjunction with the Office of the Minister for Parliamentary Business. PLU will provide, in collaboration with CUKR and others:

- briefing for the phone call from the Leader of the House, although this will not be definitive as we may not have seen the text of the Speech on the day before the Speech;
- drafts of the Government Inspired Question and Answer; and
- draft letter from the Minister for Parliamentary Business to the Presiding Officer.

10. Practical input, some of which will be required in quick time given the current environment and need to factor in time for political decision making, will be required from:

- Relevant policy teams – to assess devolved and reserved proposals in the Speech and advise MinPB, portfolio Ministers and relevant press desks;
- Communications – to advise MinPB on media handling and co-ordinate any supplementary, policy-specific work by portfolio press desks if required; and
- Special Advisers – to provide Ministers with political advice covering both handling and the content of the Speech.

## Conclusion

17. You are invited:

- **Note** the overview of activity in terms of the Scottish Government response to The Queen's Speech;
- **Note** the anticipated running order and key preparation / actions (Annex A); and
- **Note** the initial assessment of the anticipated content of the UKG programme for 2022-23, including Bills likely to give rise to an LCM (Annex B)

[Redacted]  
Parliament and Legislation Unit  
29 April 2022

Copy List:	For Action	For Comments	For Information		
			Portfolio Interest	Constit Interest	General Awareness
Cabinet Secretaries					X
Ministers					X
Solicitor General					X
Permanent Secretary					X
Directors General					
Directors					
Solicitor to the Scottish Government					
LSLA					
[Redacted]					

## QUEEN'S SPEECH 2022 – DRAFT HANDLING ARRANGEMENTS

DAY	ACTIONS
<b>Mon 9 May</b>	SG receive embargoed text of the Speech  Briefing on anticipated content and individual Bills sent to Ministers
<b>TUESDAY 10 MAY – DAY OF SPEECH (timings approximate)</b>	
<b>09:30</b>	<b>Courtesy phone call from Leader of the Commons</b>
<b>11:30</b>	<b>HM The Queen delivers Speech</b>
11:35-45	<b>Additional detail on Speech content available on No. 10 website</b>
11:50	PLU alerts lead policy officials to content of Speech and further information published on No. 10 website, with request for advice on any unexpected or controversial elements.
<b>16:30</b>	<b>Letter to the Presiding Officer letter finalised, cleared by MfPB and sent.</b>
<b>Wed 11 May</b>	OSSS Written Ministerial Statement expected  Draft GIQ (question and answer) - comments from SpAds  <b>Media may follow-up detail</b> of proposals in the Speech and their relevance to Scotland (led by relevant policy area and Comms desk, consulting with PLU, CUKR, MinPB and SpAds as necessary).
<b>Thu 12/Fri 13 May</b>	GIQ question cleared and lodged by MinPB  <b>Finalised GIQ answer</b> cleared by MinPB. Answer lodged by Parly Clerk



# QUEEN'S SPEECH 2022 – INITIAL INDICATION OF ANTICIPATED BILLS AND ANALYSIS

PROSPECTIVE BILL	OVERVIEW	SG DIRECTORATE	LEAD OFFICIAL	LEGISLATIVE CONSENT REQUIRED?
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
Precision Breeding Bill	<p>The Bill is expected to remove plants and animals produced through precision breeding technologies (like gene editing) from the regulations applicable to Genetically Modified Organisms, and to introduce a notification system for research and development of precision bred plants and animals and an authorisation system for the marketing of precision bred food and feed products</p> <p>Note that final details of the Bill have not been shared.</p>	Agriculture and Rural	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]

PROSPECTIVE BILL	OVERVIEW	SG DIRECTORATE	LEAD OFFICIAL	LEGISLATIVE CONSENT REQUIRED?
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]

#### Bills that are being carried over

BILL	OVERVIEW	SG DIRECTORATE	LEAD OFFICIAL	LEGISLATIVE CONSENT REQUIRED?
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 25 May 2022 14:32  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** SLN Minutes

All,

I promised myself I'd write up the SLN minutes promptly this time, so here you are.

There was quite a lot of general discussion yesterday, and not many definite actions agreed, but I have tried to write up some actions so that things move on – please could you have a look at them and let me know if you agree. Please also send any other comments/corrections.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

**[REDACTED]**

**GM Manager - Official Seed Testing Station for Scotland**  
**SASA**

Roddinglaw Road, Edinburgh, EH12 9FJ, UK

T: + [REDACTED] W: [www.sasa.gov.uk](http://www.sasa.gov.uk)

**Science Leadership Network Meeting 17 Minutes**

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2022 11:45 – 13:15

Online Teams Meeting

**Present:** [REDACTED] Gerry Saddler, [REDACTED]

**Secretariat:** [REDACTED]

**Apologies:** [REDACTED]

Item	Description	Actions / Decisions
1.	Welcome	[REDACTED]
2.	Minutes of the 16 <sup>th</sup> SLN	[REDACTED]
3.	Chief Scientific Adviser for Scotland Update	[REDACTED]
4.	Head of Professional Development for Science Update (DK)	[REDACTED]
5.	Science & Engineering Conference (DK)	[REDACTED]
6.	Update on SCOTScience-Net	[REDACTED]
7.	AOB	GS highlighted that the UK Government will launch legislation on products of precision breeding on 25 <sup>th</sup> May. There was a brief discussion on the implications of this for Scotland, and an acknowledgement that this was an area that it would be useful to discuss further.
8.	Date of next meeting	[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 25 May 2022 12:30  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill

Hi [REDACTED] ,

Yes, exactly – any bits of transgenic material that remain will be considered OK as long as they're non-functional.

CRISPR machinery will be inserted transgenically, and will consist of some different genes coding for different parts of the machinery. What might also happen when the machinery is inserted is that other bit of (potential non-coding) DNA will get inserted too (the same could happen with genetic modification methods). These non-coding bits of DNA won't have to be removed.

[REDACTED]

**From** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 25 May 2022 12:17  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill

Hi [REDACTED] ,

Really helpful, thank you. I need to look at the detail myself and might come back with specific Qs – but in the meantime – does Section 6 essentially mean that (non-functional) transgenic material can be left in the organism? I understand that the CRISPR machinery can be transgenic but is usually extracted afterwards (sure I am showing my scientific ignorance as per usual)...

Many thanks,  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 25 May 2022 12:10  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill

[REDACTED] ,

Thanks for forwarding this on. I shall have a read... For now, I have only looked at the definitions, and send a couple of comments.

Generally, I think this is more or less what we were expecting given the definition of Qualifying Higher Plants that we've already seen, although the exemptions to the definitions will perhaps allow more organisms to be considered under these regulations.

Section (5)(b) – I am presuming that this means that any epigenetic changes will be allowed. Epigenetic modifications are changes that don't affect the gene sequence, but affect how a gene is expressed. It's not an area where I'm aware of many examples. I feel like it's an up and coming area, but currently not that well understood, so there may well be developments in this area in future.

Section (6) – “no account to be taken of genetic material which does not result in a functional protein”. I think that this means that if there are bits of DNA left in the organism that are left over after genetic modification/gene editing then it won't be considered an issue. It will get around the issue of there being bits of CRISPR machinery left after gene editing (although of course not if any entire genes are left). With traditional transgenesis/cisgenesis there will also be similar issues with bits of DNA being left over.

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 24 May 2022 18:43  
**To:** [REDACTED] >  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill

Hi [REDACTED]

See attached (finally) details of the precision breeding bill to be introduced tomorrow. Would welcome your thoughts on the definitions provided in Part 1 of the draft legislation – if at all possible tomorrow in case there is anything to be included in the submission we are putting up fairly urgently.

Many thanks,  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 24 May 2022 17:19  
**To:** [REDACTED] >  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill

As requested

[REDACTED]  
**[REDACTED]**  
[Head of Genetic Modification Reform - Defra](#)  
Mobile: [REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] **Sent:** 24 May 2022 16:51  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill

Hi [REDACTED] ,

Thanks for this. Could you also share the Explanatory Note and the impact assessments?

Many thanks,  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** 24 May 2022 16:45  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill

Both,  
As agreed a copy of the Bill.

Please treat this as in confidence until it is published tomorrow

If there are any urgent questions on the clauses do get in touch otherwise [REDACTED] will be in contact to set up a meeting to walk you through the Bill

Many thanks  
[REDACTED]

**[REDACTED]**  
[Head of Genetic Modification Reform - Defra](#)  
Mobile: [REDACTED]

-----Original Appointment-----

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 23 May 2022 16:02  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill  
**When:** 24 May 2022 16:15-16:40 (UTC+00:00) Dublin, Edinburgh, Lisbon, London.  
**Where:** Microsoft Teams Meeting

[REDACTED]

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) This email and any attachments is intended for the named recipient only. If you have received it in error you have no authority to use, disclose, store or copy any of its contents and you should destroy it and inform the sender. Whilst this email and associated attachments will have been checked for known viruses whilst within Defra systems we can accept no responsibility once it has left our systems. Communications on Defra's computer systems may be monitored and/or recorded to secure the effective operation of the system and for other lawful purposes.

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*

This e-mail (and any files or other attachments transmitted with it) is intended solely for the attention of the addressee(s). Unauthorised use, disclosure, storage, copying or distribution of any part of this e-mail is not permitted. If you are not the

intended recipient please destroy the email, remove any copies from your system and inform the sender immediately by return.

Communications with the Scottish Government may be monitored or recorded in order to secure the effective operation of the system and for other lawful purposes. The views or opinions contained within this e-mail may not necessarily reflect those of the Scottish Government.

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*

This message has been sent using TLS 1.2 Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) This email and any attachments is intended for the named recipient only. If you have received it in error you have no authority to use, disclose, store or copy any of its contents and you should destroy it and inform the sender. Whilst this email and associated attachments will have been checked for known viruses whilst within Defra systems we can accept no responsibility once it has left our systems. Communications on Defra's computer systems may be monitored and/or recorded to secure the effective operation of the system and for other lawful purposes.

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*

This e-mail (and any files or other attachments transmitted with it) is intended solely for the attention of the addressee(s). Unauthorised use, disclosure, storage, copying or distribution of any part of this e-mail is not permitted. If you are not the intended recipient please destroy the email, remove any copies from your system and inform the sender immediately by return.

Communications with the Scottish Government may be monitored or recorded in order to secure the effective operation of the system and for other lawful purposes. The views or opinions contained within this e-mail may not necessarily reflect those of the Scottish Government.

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*

This e-mail (and any files or other attachments transmitted with it) is intended solely for the attention of the addressee(s). Unauthorised use, disclosure, storage, copying or distribution of any part of this e-mail is not permitted. If you are not the intended recipient please destroy the email, remove any copies from your system and inform the sender immediately by return.

Communications with SASA (a Division of the Scottish Government Directorate for Agriculture and Rural Economy) may be monitored or recorded in order to secure the effective operation of the system and for other lawful purposes. The views or opinions contained within this e-mail may not necessarily reflect those of SASA or the Scottish Government.

This e-mail (and any files or other attachments transmitted with it) is intended solely for the attention of the addressee(s). Unauthorised use, disclosure, storage, copying or distribution of any part of this e-mail is not permitted. If you are not the intended recipient please destroy the email, remove any copies from your system and inform the sender immediately by return.

Communications with SASA (a Division of the Scottish Government Directorate for Agriculture and Rural Economy) may be monitored or recorded in order to secure the effective operation of the system and for other lawful purposes. The views or opinions contained within this e-mail may not necessarily reflect those of SASA or the Scottish Government.



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 31 May 2022 16:19  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Precision Breeding Policy

Hi,  
Tuesday would be best for [REDACTED] and I  
Thanks  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
RNRPD  
DAERA  
[REDACTED]

**From** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 31 May 2022 16:18  
**To** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Precision Breeding Policy

[REDACTED]  
Hi,

Either time for me.

BW,

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** 31 May 2022 16:16  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Precision Breeding Policy

Hi [REDACTED] ,

I could make either work but Tues at 2pm is my preference! Thanks for arranging.

Best,  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** 31 May 2022 16:12  
**To:** [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** RE: Precision Breeding Policy

Great. Are most free either 2pm on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> or 11am on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup>?

What we discuss may change depending on when we speak to Defra but as a starter for ten on discussion points:

- Reflections on Defra's answers
- Any updates to our own positions
- What next

Thanks  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** 30 May 2022 14:17  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Precision Breeding Policy

Hi [REDACTED] ,

Happy to join for a chat. [REDACTED] is not back until Mon 13<sup>th</sup> but hopefully [REDACTED] and I can cover some of her considerations between us.

Many thanks,  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** 30 May 2022 11:02  
**To** [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** RE: Precision Breeding Policy

Hi all,

Following the below from Defra, we thought it might be useful to have another DA meeting to discuss where we are on this bill re: PVS (and more broadly too). Does that sound useful to everyone? If so I'll find us a slot (welcome views on whether to speak before we meet Defra or after, and I can't remember when [REDACTED] is back). PVS folk, I'd be really interested in your thoughts on the answer to Q9.

Thanks  
[REDACTED]

[Cangen Iechyd Planhigion a Diogelu'r Amgylchedd](#) / Plant Health and Environmental Protection Branch  
[Tirweddau, Natur a Choedwigaeth](#) / Landscapes, Nature and Forestry Division  
[Newid yn yr Hinsawdd a Materion Gwledig](#) / Climate Change and Rural Affairs  
Ffôn / Tel: [REDACTED]  
E-bost / Email: [REDACTED]

[Rwy'n gweithio'n rhan-amser. Fy mhatrwm gweithio yw Dydd Llun – Dydd Iau](#) / I work part-time. My working pattern is Monday – Thursday.

**From:** [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** 27 May 2022 14:14  
**To:** [REDACTED] >  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** FW: Precision Breeding Policy

Hi [REDACTED]

Thanks for your email and for bringing together the position and concerns of the NIE, SG and WG in one place, it is helpful to understand your position and will enable us to work together more effectively over the coming weeks and months.

I have responded to your points below and would also like to flag again our offer to set up a call to go through the Bill in detail with our policy and legal colleagues. I think the week after next is best given the jubilee bank holidays so please could everyone share their availability for the Tues 7<sup>th</sup> am/pm or Weds 8<sup>th</sup> pm. If neither of those days work please let me know and we will look again.

1. what, exactly is Defra's proposed policy, i.e. what is your actual regulatory proposal, e.g. does it relate solely to the removal of "gene editing" (GE) from the definition of GMOs or will the term "precision breeding" encompass more than GE – note, ACRE's response to your consultation references technologies, other than GE; - [Bill shared 24/05](#)
2. did Defra seek ACRE advice during policy development, i.e. prior to the issue of the consultation and, if yes, can copies of any and all advices be forwarded; [Defra has previously sought advice from ACRE on the issues underlying the consultation. Published advice is here:](#)  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/239852/genomes-and-gm-regulation.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239852/genomes-and-gm-regulation.pdf)
3. Defra's policy appears to be deregulation, apart from the requirement to notify, however, does the ACRE response to the consultation actually support this position; [Yes ACRE's advice on the consultation directly supports the deregulation policy because of a robust scientific evidence base which is cited. See above for other formal ACRE advice in support of the policy](#)
4. what impact assessments have been prepared and what exactly was covered in them, e.g. potential impact on the environment, other agricultural and/or horticultural sectors or the DAs; [IA shared in this email \(please delete the previous version as it contained an annex that should not be in the public domain\), we have also considered the requirements of the S20 of the Environment Act in relation to this Bill and our SoS position is that the Bill does constitute environmental law but that it does not have the effect of reducing environmental protection provided by any existing environmental law.](#)
5. have Defra raised, with Ministers, the possibility of an exemption to the IMA and if not, will you commit to doing so; [We have discussed the implications of the UKIM Act with ministers as we developed the policy, our position is that it is for DAs to raise the potential of an exclusion formally and we will respond to any request following the appropriate procedure.](#)

6. if no exemption has been sought will Defra commit to assisting the DAs with possible mitigations, given that some mitigations will require English legislation, to ensure protection of GMO policy in each respective area; *At this point we cannot commit to any Government amendments or mitigations, but we are happy to discuss what you think is needed after we have had the chance to go through the Bill together.*
7. has Defra considered what impact transference could have on wild plant populations (including trees) – the ACRE response to the consultation indicates minimal impact on wild animal populations, but is silent on wild plant populations; This is a question about gene flow and *our position is that the genetic changes in PBOs could also have occurred naturally or through traditional processes, so the risk to human health and the environment doesn't differ because these changes were made using PB either for plants or animals. So, existing rules should apply but no additional ones associated with breeding method should be introduced.*
8. it would appear that the policy would be considered a plan or programme under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and, as such, has a strategic environmental assessment been carried out; *Our understanding of these regulations is that they apply in two ways, neither of which are applicable to the creation of new legislation -*
  1. *Environmental Impact Assessment applies to projects. It requires the assessment of the likely significant effects on the environment of certain projects that due to their nature, size or location are deemed likely to have significant effects. An EIA is the process by which information about the environmental impact of a proposed development is collected, publicised and considered in the decision making for that project.*
  2. *Strategic Environmental Assessment applies to certain plans or programmes. It requires the assessment of the likely significant effects on the environment of certain plans and programmes (broadly, but not exclusively, those that set the framework for development consent) so providing for assessment at the strategic level. SEA is similar to EIA in that it is the process by which relevant information about the likely significant environmental effects of a proposed strategic level, public plan or programme is assessed before that plan or programme is adopted, or taken into account, by the relevant decision-maker.*
9. Defra intend to implement, in part, the policy through the establishment of an England only GE specific variety list, however this will apply to agricultural, vegetable seed and seed potatoes only – has any consideration been given to ornamentals (flowers) or trees, which may have the greatest potential to damage wild plant populations; *Our position is that PB plants have the same environmental risk levels as traditionally bred plants. The reason that we have*

looked into an England only PB plant list is to ensure that these PBOs can get to market and not in relation to environmental risk assessment or potential damage to wild plant populations . The DUS and VCU tests are not conducted as part of a risk assessment of the variety but to ensure distinctiveness, uniformity and stability as well as value for cultivation, use and sustainability. As other types of plants such as ornamentals, trees, fruit and flowers are not on the list we do not need to create a new PBO list for them to get to market.

10. [REDACTED]

11. You should note we have also been informed that Defra have been in contact with research institutes, in at least one of the DAs, to ask how they could be acknowledged within the Bill, even if it is exclusive to England. To be frank, we feel that this is inappropriate, particularly in the absence of any notification to the DAs that these conversations are taking place. [No research institutes have been approached to be acknowledged in the bill.](#)

12. In addition, we would request that you forward a copy of the draft legislation as soon as possible, especially since the media is reporting the introduction of the Bill tomorrow (Wed 25<sup>th</sup>). [Sent on the 24/05](#)

13. Throughout the policy process it has been clear that Defra have not been acting as partners and we think that it is fair to say that this is negatively affecting working relationships with the DAs. We are not being kept in the "loop" and are relying on the media for information, which, to put it mildly, is less than ideal, particularly as Defra are implementing a policy which has the potential to impact the whole of the UK, despite the fact that it is an England only policy. Although there is no Common Framework for GM, this does not mean that we should not strive to work together to realise objectives, while protecting the devolved nature of the policy. Please note the DAs are committed to working with Defra, however it is fair to ask whether that commitment is basically one way? [Whilst we recognise that we have not been able to provide as much information as DA colleagues would have liked, we have striven at all times to be as open as possible and have shared information papers and held meetings with DA officials since last May. Not having a GMO framework has meant that our approach has been more informal than in other areas but it has been conducted in good faith. In addition to the PVS DA officials we have also discussed policy with the FSA Wales and FSS and Defra colleagues from the genetic resources team and transforming farm animal welfare team attended two Animal Welfare Policy Group meetings \(where officials meet to discuss issues relating to the UK-wide framework for animal health and welfare\).](#)

Best wishes

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] >

**Sent:** 24 May 2022 17:03

**To:** [REDACTED] >  
**Cc** [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** Precision Breeding Policy

Hi [REDACTED] ,

The DAs met to discuss Defra's policy on "precision breeding", the potential impact on our respective GM policy areas and to examine how to best update our Ministers. The meeting raised a significant number of issues, which would need to be resolved to enable comprehensive briefs to be prepared. In particular, it would be greatly appreciated if you could provide the following information:

1. what, exactly is Defra's proposed policy, i.e. what is your actual regulatory proposal, e.g. does it relate solely to the removal of "gene editing" (GE) from the definition of GMOs or will the term "precision breeding" encompass more than GE – note, ACRE's response to your consultation references technologies, other than GE;
2. did Defra seek ACRE advice during policy development, i.e. prior to the issue of the consultation and, if yes, can copies of any and all advices be forwarded;
3. Defra's policy appears to be deregulation, apart from the requirement to notify, however, does the ACRE response to the consultation actually support this position;
4. what impact assessments have been prepared and what exactly was covered in them, e.g. potential impact on the environment, other agricultural and/or horticultural sectors or the DAs;
5. have Defra raised, with Ministers, the possibility of an exemption to the IMA and if not, will you commit to doing so;
6. if no exemption has been sought will Defra commit to assisting the DAs with possible mitigations, given that some mitigations will require English legislation, to ensure protection of GMO policy in each respective area;
7. has Defra considered what impact transference could have on wild plant populations (including trees) – the ACRE response to the consultation indicates minimal impact on wild animal populations, but is silent on wild plant populations;
8. it would appear that the policy would be considered a plan or programme under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and, as such, has a strategic environmental assessment been carried out;
9. Defra intend to implement, in part, the policy through the establishment of an England only GE specific variety list, however this will apply to agricultural, vegetable seed and seed potatoes only – has any consideration been given to ornamentals (flowers) or trees, which may have the greatest potential to damage wild plant populations;
10. has Defra had discussions with major trading partners of the impacts and if so, can details of these conversations, or any consideration given to the trade and international implications be shared, beyond the topic of the OECD list?

You should note we have also been informed that Defra have been in contact with research institutes, in at least one of the DAs, to ask how they could be acknowledged within the Bill, even if it is exclusive to England. To be frank, we feel that this is inappropriate, particularly in the absence of any notification to the DAs that these conversations are taking place.

In addition, we would request that you forward a copy of the draft legislation as soon as possible, especially since the media is reporting the introduction of the Bill tomorrow (Wed 25<sup>th</sup>). Throughout the policy process it has been clear that Defra have not been acting as partners and we think that it is fair to say that this is negatively affecting working relationships with the DAs. We are not being kept in the "loop" and are relying on the media for information, which, to put it mildly, is less than ideal, particularly as Defra are implementing a policy which has the potential to impact the whole of the UK, despite the fact that it is an England only policy. Although there is no Common Framework for GM, this does not mean that we should not strive to work together to realise objectives, while protecting the devolved nature of the policy. Please note the DAs are committed to working with Defra, however it is fair to ask whether that commitment is basically one way?

Kindest regards

[REDACTED] .

#### **On behalf of DAERA and the Scottish and Welsh Governments**

[REDACTED]

Environmental Farming Branch, Room 651, Dundonald House, Upper Newtownards Road, Ballymiscaw, Dundonald. BT4 3XX.

[REDACTED]



This message has been sent using TLS 1.2 This message has been sent using TLS 1.2 Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) This email and any attachments is intended for the named recipient only. If you have received it in error you have no authority to use, disclose, store or copy any of its contents and you should destroy it and inform the sender. Whilst this email and associated attachments will have been checked for known viruses whilst within Defra systems we can accept no responsibility once it has left our systems. Communications on Defra's computer systems may be monitored and/or recorded to secure the effective operation of the system and for other lawful purposes.

Sganiwyd y neges hon am bob feirws hysbys wrth iddi adael Llywodraeth Cymru. Mae Llywodraeth Cymru yn cymryd o ddifrif yr angen i ddiogelu eich data. Os cysylltwch â Llywodraeth Cymru, mae ein [hysbysiad preifatrwydd](#) yn esbonio sut rydym yn defnyddio eich gwybodaeth a sut rydym yn diogelu eich preifatrwydd. Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn anfon ateb yn Gymraeg i ohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi. On leaving the Welsh Government this email was scanned for all known viruses. The Welsh Government takes the protection of your data seriously. If you contact the Welsh Government then our [Privacy Notice](#) explains how we use

your information and the ways in which we protect your privacy. We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

This e-mail (and any files or other attachments transmitted with it) is intended solely for the attention of the addressee(s). Unauthorised use, disclosure, storage, copying or distribution of any part of this e-mail is not permitted. If you are not the intended recipient please destroy the email, remove any copies from your system and inform the sender immediately by return.

Communications with the Scottish Government may be monitored or recorded in order to secure the effective operation of the system and for other lawful purposes. The views or opinions contained within this e-mail may not necessarily reflect those of the Scottish Government.

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

Sganiwyd y neges hon am bob feirws hysbys wrth iddi adael Llywodraeth Cymru. Mae Llywodraeth Cymru yn cymryd o ddifrif yr angen i ddiogelu eich data. Os cysylltwch â Llywodraeth Cymru, mae ein [hysbysiad preifatrwydd](#) yn esbonio sut rydym yn defnyddio eich gwybodaeth a sut rydym yn diogelu eich preifatrwydd. Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn anfon ateb yn Gymraeg i ohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi. On leaving the Welsh Government this email was scanned for all known viruses. The Welsh Government takes the protection of your data seriously. If you contact the Welsh Government then our [Privacy Notice](#) explains how we use your information and the ways in which we protect your privacy. We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 25 May 2022 14:12  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: England to allow gene-edited food post-Brexit

[REDACTED]  
Further to our conversation on Monday please see below.

Might be worth a steer from both parties SpAds on plans before moving any further forward.



[REDACTED]  
Head of Policy and Alignment | EU Secretariat  
European Relations Division | Directorate for External Affairs  
Scottish Government | Victoria Quay | Edinburgh | EH6 6QQ

Normal hours are flexi part-time. During school term:  
9-3 Mon & Wed, 9-5 Tue & Thu and half-day 9-12 Fri

T [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] | [www.gov.scot/eustrategy](http://www.gov.scot/eustrategy)

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 25 May 2022 07:31  
**To:** [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** FW: England to allow gene-edited food post-Brexit

[REDACTED]

**From:** POLITICO Pro Article <[no-reply@politico.eu](mailto:no-reply@politico.eu)>  
**Sent:** 24 May 2022 19:01  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** England to allow gene-edited food post-Brexit

**Pro is better in the app.**  
[Click here to download.](#)

**England to allow gene-edited food post-Brexit**  
By Cristina Gallardo · May 24, 2022, 8:00 PM · [View in your browser](#)

LONDON — The U.K. will put forward legislation allowing gene-edited food products to be sold in England — marking the biggest break with EU rules since Brexit.

The Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill, which will be introduced in the House of Commons Wednesday, will set up a new authorization process for food and animal feed products developed through gene editing, a process which allows scientists to change an organism's DNA.

These technologies entail more precise and targeted changes to DNA than traditional genetic modification techniques, but are currently regulated in the EU under the same strict laws. Researchers argue gene editing represents an acceleration of traditional breeding — in which plants and animals with desired qualities such as resistance to drought are selected in a breeding program — unlike so-called genetic modification in which genes from different organisms are introduced to a species in order to create something new.

The British government argues gene editing will allow for the development of crops more resistant to pests and diseases, therefore reducing the need for pesticides and herbicides, including controversial chemicals such as neonicotinoids. Scientists hope the techniques could produce variants that are more resilient to drought and other consequences of climate change — ultimately boosting food security and land use efficiency.

The bill, which ministers expect to come into force this year, will allow for "immediate change" to crops but not to livestock, which will have to wait until there's certainty about how animal welfare standards will be regulated, Gideon Henderson, chief scientific adviser at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) told reporters Monday.

Ministers will be able to put forward secondary legislation in the future to enable gene editing of livestock, but only for variants which could have also been produced through traditional breeding, he added.

Under the government's plan, researchers and breeders will have to notify Defra if they're developing or marketing gene-edited organisms, and the information gathered will be published on a public register.

Henderson said the new legislation will make it easier for small and medium sized businesses to exploit these techniques, arguing that the current EU rules are "arduous and involve a large amount of field trialling, a large amount of laboratory testing, which effectively prevents companies from entering the market."

The bill will not introduce a labelling system for gene-edited products. Henderson argued labelling is "scientifically not sensible" since in many cases these gene-edited organisms are identical to others bred through traditional methods.

The government is expecting the bill to survive its passage through the Commons, where the Conservatives have a majority, although it is likely to encounter criticism from opposition parties such as the Scottish National Party, who are expected to raise doubts about the environmental impact.

Some environmental groups argue gene-edited food is no different to genetically modified foods, and the government is trying to draw an artificial distinction between them.

"Gene editing is GM with better PR," said Liz O'Neill, director of the campaign group GM freeze. "There is much that can go wrong and U.K. citizens have shown time and again that they want it to be subject to proper safety checks. It's time for the government to start listening to ordinary people rather than those with a vested interest in a high-tech takeover of the food chain."

Food standards are set by the devolved administrations in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales, all of whom are expected to oppose the idea. The Scottish government, which takes a more [skeptical](#) view of the technology, has warned it remains "wholly opposed to the imposition" of this legislation and "will not accept any constraint on the exercise of devolved powers," a spokesperson said.

The Welsh government has also indicated it does not plan to revise its rules and will stick to its precautionary approach toward genetic modification.

And Northern Ireland is obliged to align with EU Single Market rules on food and feed, which includes matters related to gene-editing and GMOs, under the terms of Britain's exit from the EU.

The U.K. is facing pressure from the U.S. to open its market to gene-edited products. In 2018, the U.S. National Potato Council called for any trade deal with the U.K. to allow "imports of agriculture commodities and products that are produced using advanced agriculture technologies, including genetic modification." The American Sugar Alliance had also expressed support for the change.

Defra's chief scientific adviser pointed to polling that suggests a substantive change in public opinion on the use of gene editing, with around 57 percent of the public now saying it would be acceptable in the case of plants. The U.K. carried out a [public consultation](#) on its regulation of gene-editing technologies last year, in parallel with a [similar EU inquiry](#).

[Agriculture and Food](#) [EU-UK](#) [Health Care](#) [Trade](#) [Trade UK](#)

Agriculture Animal welfare Brexit Business and competition Climate change Companies Environment food security gene-editing Genetics Imports Level playing field Livestock Markets opinion Pesticides Produce Regulation Regulatory Research and Development Security Society and culture Sugar Technology Trade Agreements House of Lords Canada England United Kingdom United States

This email alert has been sent for your exclusive use as a POLITICO Pro subscriber. Forwarding or reproducing the article without the express, written permission of POLITICO Pro is a violation of the POLITICO Pro license agreement.

This email was sent to [REDACTED]

[Unsubscribe](#) [Update settings](#)

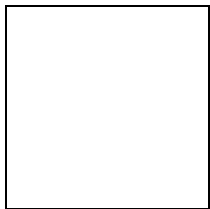
POLITICO SRL · Rue de la Loi 62 · Brussels 1040 · Belgium

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 25 May 2022 14:45  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Regulation of Genetic Technologies Policy

Hi everyone

The Bill went live today and there is a web page that holds all the public documents [Genetic Technology \(Precision Breeding\) Bill - Parliamentary Bills - UK Parliament](#). The site will be updated as the Bill progresses so you may want to bookmark it.

[REDACTED]



[Learn More](#) | [Meeting options](#)

---

This message has been sent using TLS 1.2

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) This email and any attachments is intended for the named recipient only. If you have received it in error you have no authority to use, disclose, store or copy any of its contents and you should destroy it and inform the sender. Whilst this email and associated attachments will have been checked for known viruses whilst within Defra systems we can accept no responsibility once it has left our systems. Communications on Defra's computer systems may be monitored and/or recorded to secure the effective operation of the system and for other lawful purposes.

**From:** Colin Campbell [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 19 May 2022 09:45

**To:** [REDACTED] Saddler G (SASA [REDACTED] Chief SA Environment Natural Resources and Agriculture [REDACTED]

**Cc:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** RE: Queens speech and gene editing

Hi [REDACTED] ,

Yes, I agree, and we remain very surprised. We did ask them who they were speaking to and they haven't responded yet. I will press them again today and give them your contact details.

Also attached is a draft of the article responding to a brief from the Daily Mail. After some more checks we will post our final version as a Hutton Blog to ensure there is an unaltered version from us but once given to them experience tells us they will tweak and headline in ways we might not be fully comfortable with.

What we are now anticipating we might get pressed on in Scotland is if it is only field trials being done in England why don't we do them in Scotland so we have direct evidence of benefits and risks in our own context to inform future decisions? It is not all about the science evidence of course so would be useful if we can discuss what the factors for and against that are and what is an appropriate way to respond.

Happy to speak on phone as always and if needed can bring in our molecular, ecology or social science experts to help.

Regards, Colin

**From** [REDACTED] >

**Sent:** 19 May 2022 09:23

**To** [REDACTED] ; Colin Campbell [REDACTED]

**Cc:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** RE: Queens speech and gene editing

[ External email ]

Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe

Hi Colin,

Thanks for the update.

On the Defra point, I am quite surprised – it seems an inappropriate thing to take to you/the JHI. If you could please direct them to me for these points and I will also speak to them myself.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | SASA Policy and Pesticides Survey Unit | Scottish Government

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** 19 May 2022 08:11  
**To:** Colin Campbell [REDACTED] Saddler G (SASA) [REDACTED] Chief SA Environment Natural Resources and Agriculture [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Queens speech and gene editing

Hi Colin,

Thanks for getting in touch – I think yes, please do keep [REDACTED] in the loop and [REDACTED] too. It's interesting that there's so much press on the subject. In terms of the Defra angle I think probably [REDACTED] would be better placed to answer from the policy point of view.

Kind regards,  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Head of Strategic Research Programme | Rural and Environment Science and Analytical Services  
Scottish Government | bb [REDACTED] | I am currently working from home



**From:** Colin Campbell [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 18 May 2022 17:25  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** RE: Queens speech and gene editing

[REDACTED] ,  
We are still getting a lot of press requests and have attached here the various statement we have put out so far that may appear in next day or two.

We have also been approached by the Times (Scotland), Daily Mail (Scotland) and BBC Scotland to do pieces or articles for them. We are drafting these and will share when ready.

We used to always keep [REDACTED] in the loop as he had a specific interest in this. Should we include [REDACTED] or even [REDACTED] or leave that up to you?

Defra want to talk to us again also about how Scotland (and presumably Wales) would be acknowledged within the Bill even if it is exclusive to England. Not sure we understand what they mean by this so if you can shed light on this I would be grateful. As always happy to speak on the phone [REDACTED] .

Regards, Colin

**From** [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** 13 May 2022 15:59  
**To** [REDACTED] Colin Campbell [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Queens speech and gene editing

[ External email ]

Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe

Hi Colin,

Thank you for getting in touch. As [REDACTED] says, our position hasn't changed. It is a sensitive area and we recognise that JHI takes a different position to the Scottish Government, as is of course your right as an independent scientific institute. However it's really useful to see your contributions to articles in the press and to have a heads-up before they go to print, so please do send them on – very much appreciated.

Best wishes,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | SASA Policy and Pesticides Survey Unit | Scottish Government

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** 13 May 2022 15:48  
**To:** Colin Campbell [REDACTED] >; Saddler G (SASA) [REDACTED] **Cc:** [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** RE: Queens speech and gene editing

Hi Colin,

I'm not aware of our positions changing in this area, [REDACTED] and Gerry will be closer to the detail of the policy here, though of course we have noted the planned shift in position by the UKGov. It's understandable that you're getting contacted about it, I'm sure giving good responses where appropriate.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Head of Strategic Research Programme | Rural and Environment Science and Analytical Services

Scottish Government | bb [REDACTED] | I am currently working from home



# RESAS

Rural & Environmental Science  
and Analytical Services

**From:** Colin Campbell <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** 13 May 2022 11:15  
**To:** Saddler G (SASA) [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** Queens speech and gene editing

Dear Gerry, [REDACTED]

Just a heads up following the Queens speech we are getting a lot of press requests for articles, blogs and statements on gene editing for this weekend. We do always try and respond to different requests but wont have full control of what they print. We will copy you whatever we send. Please let me know if there any sensitives or other activity we should know about.

Regards, Colin

PROFESSOR COLIN CAMPBELL BSc, PhD, FRSB, MIOd, ARAGS, FRSE  
Chief Executive Officer, James Hutton Institute  
[REDACTED]

PERSONAL ASSISTANT [REDACTED]

The James Hutton Institute is a Scottish charitable company limited by guarantee.  
Registered in Scotland No. SC374831  
Registered Office: The James Hutton Institute, Invergowrie Dundee DD2 5DA.  
Charity No. SC041796

The James Hutton Institute is a Scottish charitable company limited by guarantee.  
Registered in Scotland No. SC374831  
Registered Office: The James Hutton Institute, Invergowrie Dundee DD2 5DA.  
Charity No. SC041796

The James Hutton Institute is a Scottish charitable company limited by guarantee.  
Registered in Scotland No. SC374831  
Registered Office: The James Hutton Institute, Invergowrie Dundee DD2 5DA.  
Charity No. SC041796

## Daily Mail - Article on Precision Breeding Word count 790 (Target 800)

Last week in the Queen's speech, it was announced that the UK Government would be bringing forward a new Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding Bill). Unless you work in the agricultural sector, the significance of this may have prompted a 'so what?' moment for most readers.

However here at The James Hutton Institute, situated near Dundee; we welcomed news of this Bill. Why? Because it has the potential to make a steady food supply chain a reality in the future, critical in this crisis time of climate change, pestilence, pandemics and the rising cost of food production.

We are recognised as being world-leaders in this area of science and research; where we study land, soils, water, environment and how this impacts upon, and is affected by, people and communities. We explore different techniques to understand crop growth, and then apply this knowledge to produce new varieties of crops. Our research can be seen in action with the introduction of new types of berries and potatoes in the UK and abroad, and a current focus is to develop new varieties to cope with changing environmental and economic conditions.

We know that this research is needed now more than ever: Scotland is predicted to be getting warmer and wetter which will mean an increase in pests and diseases such as potato blight. In other countries, the climate is expected to get hotter and drier and there will be less water available for growing. To reduce our carbon footprint, we need more stringent environmental targets and to reduce our reliance on the use of fertilisers and biocides. We need to grow food closer to home more reliably and using cultivation practises that supports greater biodiversity. To gain this knowledge in time, research needs to be carried out at pace.

Farming has been crossing and selecting crops since the Stone Age. Most of our research is carried out using such conventional breeding. The problem with this is we rely on trial and error and many growing cycles over 10 to 15 years. Given the urgency of the climate crises we simply don't have the time for this.

One of the new techniques we use is 'precision breeding', also known as gene editing. This uses naturally occurring enzymes which cut specific areas of DNA and which the plants own natural enzymes then repair. In doing this, we can identify the genes which a pathogen uses to infect the plant which suppress natural defence systems and 'knock them out' and so develop plants with boosted resistance to disease. Or we can alter the chemistry to boost levels of natural health protecting chemicals in the crop such as Beta Glucan which helps digestion and protects our intestines from cancer. The changes in the genetic sequences are done in a precise way without affecting other parts of the genome so the hard-won gains achieved by conventional breeding are unaffected.

Until this announcement of the new Bill, this type of breeding modification was subject to the same regulations as techniques associated with genetic modification (GM) which use less precise techniques and insert DNA sometimes from other species.

Crops derived through precision breeding don't have any DNA from other species inserted into them and are indistinguishable from crops bred conventionally. The benefits will ultimately need to be proved scientifically and consequences assessed, and this can only be done by field trials across a variety of soils and climates to ensure a full evaluation is made. The new Bill will help do this.

Researchers and companies in England will now be able to do field trials on such precision bred crops, selecting the best ones to grow more climate positive and more economically viable varieties which is particularly valuable considering this week's warnings around food supplies.

But, the legal position in Scotland remains the same as the EU stance and precision breeding remains subject to GM regulations.

Time is not on our side, and we need our agricultural sector to be able to grow food locally, consistently against worsening weather and that has benefits to growers, all parts of the supply chain, consumers and society. For a country such as Scotland which has a reputation for high quality food and drink brands built on its natural, high-quality environment; we need to consider how conventional systems using potentially more chemical inputs will fare against similar systems from countries that are using precision breeding, and whether this impacts upon the balance of consumer perceptions when it comes to relative environmental benefits.

To do that, we need the science to provide evidence which can help people make those decisions and at the James Hutton Institute we will continue to do this.

Colin Campbell  
CEO, The James Hutton Institute

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 24 May 2022 16:13

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] Saddler G (Gerry) [REDACTED]

**Cc:** First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>; Minister for Environment and Land Reform <MinisterELR@gov.scot>; McFarlane J (John) (Special Adviser) <John.McFarlane@gov.scot>; Director of Agriculture and Rural Economy <DirectorARE@gov.scot>; Deputy Director of RPID <DDRPID@gov.scot>; Deputy Director of ISD <DDISD@gov.scot>; Deputy Director of Food & Drink <DeputyDirectorofFood&Drink@gov.scot>; Communications Net Zero & Rural Affairs <CommunicationsNetZero&RuralAffairs@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill - (Eustice/Jack - Sturgeon/Gougeon)

Hi [REDACTED] ,

Thanks for bringing this to us. We are putting up a submission on this area to Ms McAllan tomorrow which will affect our response to the letter, and will get a draft to you following that.

Just for awareness of ministers, this letter provides confirmation of media reports that the bill is to be introduced tomorrow (and that George Eustice was planning to write such a letter). This is attracting an extremely high level of media attention and BBC Scotland has been filming scientists at the James Hutton Institute explaining gene editing. The segment is expected to air tonight.

Many thanks,  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | SASA Policy and Pesticides Survey Unit | Scottish Government  
E: [REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands

**Sent:** 24 May 2022 15:07

**To:** [REDACTED] Saddler G (Gerry) [REDACTED]

**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <[CabSecRAI@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecRAI@gov.scot)>; First Minister <[firstminister@gov.scot](mailto:firstminister@gov.scot)>; Minister for Environment and Land Reform <[MinisterELR@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterELR@gov.scot)>; McFarlane J (John) (Special Adviser) <[John.McFarlane@gov.scot](mailto:John.McFarlane@gov.scot)>; Director of Agriculture and Rural Economy <[DirectorARE@gov.scot](mailto:DirectorARE@gov.scot)>; Deputy Director of RPID <[DDRPID@gov.scot](mailto:DDRPID@gov.scot)>; Deputy Director of ISD <[DDISD@gov.scot](mailto:DDISD@gov.scot)>; Deputy Director of Food & Drink <[DeputyDirectorofFood&Drink@gov.scot](mailto:DeputyDirectorofFood&Drink@gov.scot)>

**Subject:** FW: Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill - (Eustice/Jack - Sturgeon/Gougeon)

Hi All,

Please find attached a letter from George Eustice and Alister Jack addressed to FM and Ms Gougeon regarding the Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill. Grateful if this could be considered and if advice and a draft response could be provided.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED] | Deputy Private Secretary

**Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands**

: [REDACTED]

---

[REDACTED] | St. Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG

**From:** Parliament, CabinetTeam <[ParliamentandCabinetTeam@defra.gov.uk](mailto:ParliamentandCabinetTeam@defra.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 24 May 2022 14:47

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <[CabSecRAI@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecRAI@gov.scot)>; First Minister <[firstminister@gov.scot](mailto:firstminister@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** [REDACTED] >; PS/ Secretary of State <[Secretary.State@defra.gov.uk](mailto:Secretary.State@defra.gov.uk)>; [REDACTED] ; [secretaryofstate@ukgovscotland.gov.uk](mailto:secretaryofstate@ukgovscotland.gov.uk)

**Subject:** Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill - (Eustice/Jack - Sturgeon/Gougeon)

Please see attached letter from George Eustice and Alister Jack to Nicola Sturgeon and Mairi Gougeon.

Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | Parliamentary and Cabinet Business Team | Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs | Direct line: [REDACTED] | Email: [REDACTED] | Address: 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Seacole Building | 2 Marsham Street | London SW1P 4DF

**Parliamentary and Cabinet Business Team does not keep records on behalf of other Teams. Please store this information if it is important and if you think you may need it again.**

**Want to improve your Parliamentary knowledge? The new [Parliamentary Capability site](#) has lots of information on learning, events and guidance**

This message has been sent using TLS 1.2

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) This email and any attachments is intended for the named recipient only. If you have received it in error you have no authority to use, disclose, store or copy any of its contents and you should destroy it and inform the sender. Whilst this email and associated attachments will have been checked for known viruses whilst within Defra systems we can accept no responsibility once it has left our systems. Communications on Defra's computer systems may be monitored and/or recorded to secure the effective operation of the system and for other lawful purposes.

**From:** [REDACTED] **On Behalf Of** Minister for Environment and Land Reform

**Sent:** 25 May 2022 16:57

**To:** Director of Agriculture and Rural Economy <DirectorARE@gov.scot>; Burgess WG (George) [REDACTED] Saddler G (SASA) <[REDACTED]>

**Cc:** Minister for Environment and Land Reform <MinisterELR@gov.scot>; McFarlane J (John) (Special Adviser) <John.McFarlane@gov.scot>

**Subject:** Parliamentary Statement - Gene Editing

Hello,

On today's DFM IGR meeting it was noted that following the recent Bill announcement from UKG there might be scope for a Parliamentary statement.

**George** I note you were on the call and I would be grateful for your expert views /advice.

Many thanks

[REDACTED] | Private Secretary to Minister for Environment and Land Reform - Màiri McAllan

The Scottish Government | Web: [www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot) | Tel: [REDACTED] | Email: [MinisterELR@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterELR@gov.scot)

All e-mails and attachments sent by a Ministerial Private Office to any other official on behalf of a Minister relating to a decision, request or comment made by a Minister, or a note of a Ministerial meeting, must be filed appropriately by the recipient. Private Offices do not keep official records of such e-mails or attachments.

Scottish Ministers, Special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 12 May 2022 11:49

**To:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** Document with details behind Queen's speech

[Lobby Pack \(10 May 2022\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Here's where the press are getting their details on the bills alluded to in the QS! Nothing surprising but good to have it to see their new wording on things. [REDACTED] could you update the core brief now to make sure the lines accurately reflect 'precision breeding' and their new statement of intent around the bill?

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

**[REDACTED]** | SASA Policy and Pesticides Survey Unit | Scottish Government

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 18 May 2022 17:31  
**To:** Chief SA Environment Natural Resources and Agriculture <csaenra@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: Queens speech and gene editing

Hi [REDACTED] ,

See below query from Colin – would you like to be kept sighted on these things?

[REDACTED]

**From:** Colin Campbell [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 18 May 2022 17:25  
**To:** [REDACTED] Saddler G (SASA) [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Queens speech and gene editing

Hi [REDACTED] ,

We are still getting a lot of press requests and have attached here the various statement we have put out so far that may appear in next day or two.

We have also been approached by the Times (Scotland), Daily Mail (Scotland) and BBC Scotland to do pieces or articles for them. We are drafting these and will share when ready.

We used to always keep [REDACTED] in the loop as he had a specific interest in this. Should we include [REDACTED] or even [REDACTED] or leave that up to you?

Defra want to talk to us again also about how Scotland (and presumably Wales) would be acknowledged within the Bill even if it is exclusive to England. Not sure we understand what they mean by this so if you can shed light on this I would be grateful. As always happy to speak on the phone [REDACTED] .

Regards, Colin

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 13 May 2022 15:59  
**To:** [REDACTED] ; Colin Campbell [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Queens speech and gene editing

[ External email ]

Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe

Hi Colin,



Thank you for getting in touch. As [REDACTED] says, our position hasn't changed. It is a sensitive area and we recognise that JHI takes a different position to the Scottish Government, as is of course your right as an independent scientific institute. However it's really useful to see your contributions to articles in the press and to have a heads-up before they go to print, so please do send them on – very much appreciated.

Best wishes,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | SASA Policy and Pesticides Survey Unit | Scottish Government

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 13 May 2022 15:48

**To:** Colin Campbell [REDACTED] ; Saddler G (SASA) [REDACTED]

**Cc:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** RE: Queens speech and gene editing

Hi Colin,

I'm not aware of our positions changing in this area, [REDACTED] will be closer to the detail of the policy here, though of course we have noted the planned shift in position by the UKGov. It's understandable that you're getting contacted about it, I'm sure giving good responses where appropriate.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Head of Strategic Research Programme | Rural and Environment Science and Analytical Services

Scottish Government | bb [REDACTED] | I am currently working from home



**From:** Colin Campbell [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 13 May 2022 11:15

**To:** Saddler G (SASA) [REDACTED]

**Subject:** Queens speech and gene editing

Dear [REDACTED]

Just a heads up following the Queens speech we are getting a lot of press requests for articles, blogs and statements on gene editing for this weekend. We do always try and respond to different requests but won't have full control of what they print. We will copy you whatever we send. Please let me know if there are any sensitives or other activity we should know about.

Regards, Colin

PROFESSOR COLIN CAMPBELL BSc, PhD, FRSB, MIOd, ARAGS, FRSE  
Chief Executive Officer, James Hutton Institute  
Tel: [REDACTED]  
PERSONAL ASSISTANT: [REDACTED]

The James Hutton Institute is a Scottish charitable company limited by guarantee.  
Registered in Scotland No. SC374831  
Registered Office: The James Hutton Institute, Invergowrie Dundee DD2 5DA.  
Charity No. SC041796

The James Hutton Institute is a Scottish charitable company limited by guarantee.  
Registered in Scotland No. SC374831  
Registered Office: The James Hutton Institute, Invergowrie Dundee DD2 5DA.  
Charity No. SC041796

## **Various Statements from the James Hutton Institute on Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill in response to Press queries**

“We welcome the focus of the Bill, which no longer subjects crops derived through precision breeding techniques such as gene editing to current GMO regulations, since they can also be derived by traditional breeding and are thus indistinguishable from crops bred conventionally.

“Understanding how traits are controlled in crops is crucial to addressing the very real threats posed to our future food security: we need to develop crops quickly which can adapt and are resistant to climate change and pests and whose cultivation is more environmentally friendly.

“The application of precision breeding research is already happening in some countries which may result in crops which are easier to grow, more climate positive, require less use of biocides and fertiliser and potentially more economically viable. It will be up to the consumer to weigh up the merit of these different approaches and we need to do the science and provide the evidence that helps with those decisions”.

**Professor Lesley Torrance**  
**Director of Science, James Hutton Institute**

### **Director of Science at the James Hutton Institute in Dundee, Lesley Torrance, said:**

“These crops are urgently needed to address future food security, which is threatened by climate change and pests, and to help reduce the emissions of greenhouse gas from agriculture whilst maintaining crop yields.

“The James Hutton Institute uses innovative precision breeding technologies which have the potential to speed the development of new crop varieties in a more reliable way.

“We welcome both the focus of the Bill which is on the assessment of the properties of the new crop and not the process used to develop it; and the transparency of this information which will be held on a public register.”

### **Short statement**

“We welcome both the focus of Bill which is on the assessment of the properties of the new crop and not the process used to develop it; and the transparency of this information which will be held on a public register of information on precision-bred organisms.

The James Hutton Institute uses innovative precision breeding technologies which have the potential to speed the development of new crop varieties in a more reliable way. These crops are urgently needed to address future food security which is threatened by climate change and pests and is needed to help reduce the emissions of greenhouse gas from agriculture whilst maintaining crop yields.”

### **Longer statement**

“The James Hutton Institute uses innovative precision breeding technologies which have the potential to speed the development of new crop varieties in a more reliable way. These crops are

urgently needed to address future food security which is threatened by climate change and pests and is needed to help reduce the emissions of greenhouse gas from agriculture whilst maintaining crop yields.

A conclusion of the consultation into the Precision Bill was that if changes introduced by precision breeding could also be derived by traditional breeding, then they should no longer be regulated in the same way as genetically modified organisms as they do not involve introducing DNA from different species.

We welcome both this focus of Bill which is on the assessment of the properties of the new crop and not the process used to develop it; and the transparency.”

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 19 May 2022 09:27  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Gene Editing Meeting

Hi all,

Just to flag that one of our research institutes has just been in touch to say, “Defra want to talk to us again also about how Scotland (and presumably Wales) would be acknowledged within the Bill even if it is exclusive to England.” We are aware the Defra ministers have already visited Scottish institutes to discuss gene editing in general, but it seems to me very inappropriate that Defra would want to discuss the bill with them. If any of you have had similar experiences it may be worth mentioning this in our email or I could pick it up separately.

Many thanks,  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 17 May 2022 15:01  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Gene Editing Meeting

Hi folks,

In advance of tomorrow’s meeting, I thought it would be a good idea to throw out some of my thoughts on the matter, which will hopefully generate some discussion. I have also attached a copy of ACRE’s response to Defra’s consultation on their proposed policy, with comments – note that these comments were drafted after a very brief reading of the document and please bear in mind that I do not come from a GMO background, do please cut me a bit of slack. Also please forgive me if these have been covered on previous discussions.

With regards to GMO:

- what exactly is Defra’s policy, i.e. what is their actual regulatory proposal, and on what evidence is it based;
- did Defra ask ACRE for advice in advance of the consultation – would this be the normal course of action or would it be the case that GMO policy would be set and consulted upon absent ACRE advice;
- if the policy is deregulation, apart from notification, does the ACRE response support this position;
- given that the policy has been announced in the Queen’s speech, I assume that relevant impact assessments have been prepared – what are they and what would we need to see covered ([REDACTED] raised this at the last meeting);
- what possible mitigations are open to the DAs and what mitigations are open to Defra, e.g. we might be able to implement a cultivation ban on organisms that have been developed through gene editing and are included on a GE specific variety list, however this applies to agricultural, vegetable seed and seed potatoes only – what about ornamentals (flowers);
- is it actually within our gift to implement coexistence measures, given that we have no authority over cultivation in England (what or where);

- would this policy be considered a plan or programme under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and, if so, is a strategic environmental assessment required (again, this is not my area, so could be wide of the mark)?

With regards to PVS:

- is the PVS common framework the appropriate vehicle for dispute resolution, given that the policy change relates to GMO;
- given ACRE's response, in respect of wild animal populations, do we need to ensure that the change in policy will not impact on wild plant populations (including trees) throughout the UK – would it be appropriate for this to be included in any impact assessment;
- is it possible to introduce a cultivation ban and what powers do we have to do this – how would this work with ornamentals and fruit plants, etc.;
- given that we will not be required to consent to Defra's GE variety list regulations, what action can be taken, if any, to mitigate against the effect of the IMA?

Finally, would it be possible to agree on what information we require from Defra, which would allow us to put a detailed paper to our Ministers?

Regards.

[REDACTED] .

[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 20 May 2022 09:44

**To:** Minister for Environment and Land Reform <MinisterELR@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot>; Minister for Public Health, Women's Health & Sport <MinisterPHWHS@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]

**Subject:** RE: Update on genetic technologies ahead of the IMG

Hi PO,

Could I just check if Ms McAllan had any feedback on this? We are preparing a further submission so it would be good to know if there was any early view.

Thank you also to Ms Gougeon and her office for flagging George Eustice's comments on GMOs at the RAINE committee, where he said that Defra's proposals parallel the structure of the EU regime. We will consider this further with colleagues and include in the submission but the initial view is that there is a difference in the role of the EU Commission, which Defra is effectively proposing for itself.

Ministers may also wish to know that it appears Defra may have been approaching Scottish stakeholders to discuss how Scotland would be acknowledged within the England-only Precision Breeding Bill. The James Hutton Institute have come to us expressing discomfort and surprise, and will direct Defra officials to SG going forward.

Best wishes,

[REDACTED] | SASA Policy and Pesticides Survey Unit | Scottish Government

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 20 May 2022 13:08  
**To** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Contact with JHI

Hi [REDACTED],

I hope you're well?

I understand that you have been in contact with the James Hutton Institute with regards to the England-only Precision Breeding Bill. I think there may have been a little misunderstanding in the scope of the discussion but just to avoid any confusion going forward, I'm the best person to contact to discuss questions around Scotland's policy and legislation on this topic.

Many thanks,  
[REDACTED] | SASA Policy and Pesticides Survey Unit | Scottish Government  
[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 20 May 2022 15:47  
**To:** Director of Agriculture and Rural Economy <DirectorARE@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Update on genetic technologies ahead of the IMG

Hi [REDACTED] ,

Many thanks for making us aware, and for making the point about being sighted.

[REDACTED]

**From:** Director of Agriculture and Rural Economy <[DirectorARE@gov.scot](mailto:DirectorARE@gov.scot)>  
**Sent:** 20 May 2022 15:22  
**To:** [REDACTED] Minister for Environment and Land Reform <[MinisterELR@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterELR@gov.scot)>  
**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <[CabSecRAI@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecRAI@gov.scot)>; Minister for Public Health, Women's Health & Sport <[MinisterPHWHS@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterPHWHS@gov.scot)>; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Update on genetic technologies ahead of the IMG

Private Offices, [REDACTED]

To be aware that I was contacted yesterday morning by [REDACTED] , DG at Defra, to make a further attempt to persuade Scotland to get on board with Defra's bill prior to introduction. This follows the brief discussion of the Bill at the Inter-Ministerial Group on Monday attended by Ms McAllan and Ms Slater where the same "offer" had been made by Mr Eustice.

I made the point that it was hard to agree to get on board with something we had not actually seen, but that in any event the Scottish Government position on the issue was well established and unlikely to change. (I think that, if I had held out any hope that we might consider joining in with the Bill, then the text might have been shared with us).

### **W George Burgess**

Director, Agriculture & Rural Economy | Scottish Government | [REDACTED] |  
Saughton House, Broomhouse Road, Edinburgh, EH11 3XD  
20 May 2022

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 20 May 2022 09:44  
**To:** Minister for Environment and Land Reform <[MinisterELR@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterELR@gov.scot)>  
**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <[CabSecRAI@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecRAI@gov.scot)>; Minister for Public Health, Women's Health & Sport <[MinisterPHWHS@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterPHWHS@gov.scot)>; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Update on genetic technologies ahead of the IMG

Hi PO,

Could I just check if Ms McAllan had any feedback on this? We are preparing a further submission so it would be good to know if there was any early view.

Thank you also to Ms Gougeon and her office for flagging George Eustice's comments on GMOs at the RAINE committee, where he said that Defra's proposals parallel the structure of the EU regime. We will consider this further with colleagues and include in the submission but the initial view is that there is a difference in the role of the EU Commission, which Defra is effectively proposing for itself.

Ministers may also wish to know that it appears Defra may have been approaching Scottish stakeholders to discuss how Scotland would be acknowledged within the England-only Precision Breeding Bill. The James Hutton Institute have come to us expressing discomfort and surprise, and will direct Defra officials to SG going forward.

Best wishes,  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | SASA Policy and Pesticides Survey Unit | Scottish Government  
E: [REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 13 May 2022 10:56

**To:** Minister for Environment and Land Reform <[MinisterELR@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterELR@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <[CabSecRAI@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecRAI@gov.scot)>; Minister for Public Health, Women's Health & Sport <[MinisterPHWHS@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterPHWHS@gov.scot)>; [REDACTED]

**Subject:** Update on genetic technologies ahead of the IMG

Dear Ms McAllan,  
CC Mairi Gougeon and Maree Todd

The UKG announced the Genetic Technologies (Precision Breeding) Bill in the Queen's Speech on 11<sup>th</sup> May and Defra officials have confirmed to us their intention to introduce it early in the session. Defra officials have informed us that this England-only bill will now amend the definition of a GMO in England across three main regulatory areas - plants, animals, and food & feed (microbes will not be included in the scope) – to remove gene-edited organisms (now referred to as 'precision-bred').

Defra has said it will not share any legal drafts or details of their bill in advance of the Bill being introduced in the House of Commons. This includes the impact assessments, and we are therefore unsighted on whether/how they are highlighting impacts on Scotland and the other DAs and how they propose to mitigate these. However, our understanding from the conversation is that they are introducing the bill with no provisions built in to mitigate impacts, and they have said that they do not intend to label PB products as such. They acknowledge that amendments be considered during the parliamentary process depending on reaction to the Bill as introduced.

Defra officials have also indicated that they intend to discuss the Bill after it has been introduced through the Common Framework groups for Plant Varieties and Seeds, Animal Health and

Welfare, and Food and Feed (the latter owned by Food Standards Scotland for Scottish interests), as the individual regulatory areas affected by the changes. This would include any mitigations, including potential exclusions to the Internal Market Act, for each individual area. They have said they would not consider a single exclusion to the Internal Market Act covering GMOs in general since this would have to be agreed outwith an existing Common Framework (although this is a legal possibility, and being considered by BEIS in another area). For the Plant Varieties & Seeds Framework, this would include discussion of the proposal we have previously been made aware of for an England-only National List specifically for PB varieties, which would need to be agreed within the Plant Varieties and Seeds Common Framework.

[REDACTED]

In conclusion, Defra appears to intend to move ahead with its plans for precision breeding in anticipation of discussing the impacts on the devolved administrations and any mitigations after the introduction of the Bill; and before discussing and agreeing their divergence within the three relevant Common Frameworks. We and the other DAs have highlighted to Defra our concerns with this approach, in particular their unwillingness to share their legislative proposals in advance, which would allow officials to properly assess and prepare for the impacts, and the lack of prior engagement through the Common Framework process. There could be wider potential wider implications for common frameworks and exclusions to the Act should Defra press ahead as set out here which we are considering in partnership with colleagues in Constitution and UK Relations.

Our understanding is that pressure for proceeding at pace with the Bill appears to be coming directly from No 10. Jo Churchill and George Eustice are both keen to meet with you and to reschedule the delayed bilateral. There is no formal agenda item on this at the IMG on Monday 16th May but it may be raised. We have suggested the speaking points below for IMG, but you may like to discuss with SpAds prior to the meeting. We are happy to support those discussions if useful and would welcome a conversation on this area.

**What assurances can you give me that Defra's planned divergence from the other UK administrations on the GM regulatory regime will respect Scotland's devolved competencies?**

- Based on our current awareness of the broad approach your planned legislation will take, there will be a number of impacts on Scotland as a result of the Genetic Technologies (Precision Breeding) Bill, including in areas covered by Common Frameworks.
- I am very concerned that despite these likely impacts, this divergence from the current UK-wide position has not been discussed and agreed through any of the relevant Common Frameworks. Neither have my officials been provided with details of your legislative proposals, to enable them to make a proper assessment of the impacts on our devolved responsibilities for the regulation of GMOs in Scotland.

**How will you ensure that the Internal Market Act, which the Scottish Parliament did not give its consent to, does not force further unwanted changes upon Scotland?**

- I understand from my officials that the implications of the Internal Market Act are a significant consideration here, in that precision-bred products removed from the GM regulatory regime in England could then be sold without a GMO authorisation in Scotland.
- Scottish Ministers remain fundamentally opposed to the imposition of the Internal Market Act on Scotland. If this is another area where that Act means further erosion of Scotland's devolved powers, then a way must absolutely be found to prevent that.
- Given there is the possibility of forced disapplication of devolved standards through the introduction of the Bill, can you reassure me that your officials will work together with others

in devolved governments in the relevant fora, including common frameworks, to explore how policy divergence can be best managed ahead of introduction?

**Your consultation document stated that you later intend to review GMO regulation more broadly. What are your further plans in this area, and to what timeframes?**

- The response says that after making regulatory changes on gene editing, you intend to review GMO regulation more broadly, including where genetic material is introduced from a different species. What is your long-term goal for GM regulation?

Best wishes,

[REDACTED] | SASA Policy and Pesticides Survey Unit | Scottish Government

E: [REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 23 May 2022 16:00  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill

No problem. Is Teams okay?

Thanks,  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 23 May 2022 15:59  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill

Would 4:15 work?

[REDACTED]  
**[REDACTED]**  
[Head of Genetic Modification Reform - Defra](#)  
Mobile [REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 23 May 2022 15:58  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill

Hi [REDACTED] ,

Is 4pm okay for you?

Many thanks,  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 23 May 2022 15:10  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill

Hi [REDACTED] ,  
Would you be free for a call tomorrow sometime after 3pm?

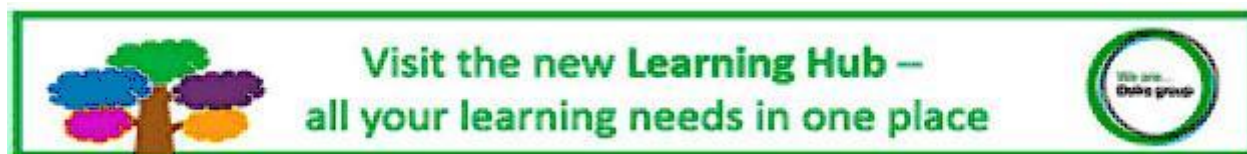
Many thanks  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Head of Genetic Modification Reform | Innovation, Productivity & Science Division | Agri-Food Chain Directorate | Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Address: [REDACTED]



[Website](#) [Twitter](#) [Facebook](#) [LinkedIn](#) [Instagram](#)

This message has been sent using TLS 1.2

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) This email and any attachments is intended for the named recipient only. If you have received it in error you have no authority to use, disclose, store or copy any of its contents and you should destroy it and inform the sender. Whilst this email and associated attachments will have been checked for known viruses whilst within Defra systems we can accept no responsibility once it has left our systems. Communications on Defra's computer systems may be monitored and/or recorded to secure the effective operation of the system and for other lawful purposes.

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*

This e-mail (and any files or other attachments transmitted with it) is intended solely for the attention of the addressee(s). Unauthorised use, disclosure, storage, copying or distribution of any part of this e-mail is not permitted. If you are not the intended recipient please destroy the email, remove any copies from your system and inform the sender immediately by return.

Communications with the Scottish Government may be monitored or recorded in order to secure the effective operation of the system and for other lawful purposes. The views or opinions contained within this e-mail may not necessarily reflect those of the Scottish Government.

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*

This message has been sent using TLS 1.2 Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) This email and any attachments is intended for the named recipient only. If you have received it in error you have no authority to use, disclose, store or copy any of its contents and you should destroy it and inform the sender. Whilst this email and associated attachments will have been checked for known viruses whilst within Defra systems we can accept no responsibility once it has left our systems. Communications on Defra's computer systems may be monitored and/or recorded to secure the effective operation of the system and for other lawful purposes.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 24 May 2022 11:12  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Meeting with [REDACTED]

Hi [REDACTED] ,

Yes likewise! Is it worth us popping in a chat, together with NI colleagues, this afternoon or tomorrow morning before the meeting, or sending round an email afterwards? It does depend a bit on the topic though – I suspect it's a courtesy call to tell us the bill is being introduced tomorrow (BBC News has picked them to it - [Gene-edited tomatoes could soon be sold in England - BBC News](#))

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 24 May 2022 11:09  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Meeting with [REDACTED]

Hi [REDACTED] ,

How are you? I thought I would give you a heads up. I have been invited to a meeting today with [REDACTED] , Head of GM Reform at defra. We are wary here that I may be being “handled” by Defra or this could be a way to divide the DAs ahead of tomorrow’s meeting. Could I ask, have you or a colleague been invited to have a one-to-one with [REDACTED] ?

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

**[REDACTED]**

Cangen Iechyd Planhigion a Diogelu'r Amgylchedd (CIPDA)/[Plant Health and Environmental Protection Branch \(PHEPB\)](#)  
Is-Adran Tir, Natur a Choedwigaeth/[Land, Nature and Forestry Division \(LNFD\)](#)  
Yr Adran Cyfoeth Naturiol/[Department for Natural Resources](#)  
Llywodraeth Cymru/[Welsh Government](#)  
[Rhodfa Padarn](#)  
[Llanbadarn Fawr](#)  
[Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 3UR](#)

Ffon/Phone/ [REDACTED]

Mobil/Mobile [REDACTED]  
Ebst/Email [REDACTED]

Stopiwch ledaeniad  
rhywogaethau goresgynnol:  
[Edrych-Golchi-Sychu](#) a [Mynd  
at Wraidd y Mater](#)

Help stop the spread of  
invasive non-native species:  
[Check-Clean-Dry](#) and [Be Plant  
Wise](#)



Sganiwyd y neges hon am bob feirws hysbys wrth iddi adael Llywodraeth Cymru. Mae Llywodraeth Cymru yn cymryd o ddifrif yr angen i ddiogelu eich data. Os cysylltwch â Llywodraeth Cymru, mae ein [hysbysiad preifatrwydd](#) yn esbonio sut rydym yn defnyddio eich gwybodaeth a sut rydym yn diogelu eich preifatrwydd. Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn anfon ateb yn Gymraeg i ohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi. On leaving the Welsh Government this email was scanned for all known viruses. The Welsh Government takes the protection of your data seriously. If you contact the Welsh Government then our [Privacy Notice](#) explains how we use your information and the ways in which we protect your privacy. We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 24 May 2022 18:43  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill

Hi [REDACTED] ,

See attached (finally) details of the precision breeding bill to be introduced tomorrow. Would welcome your thoughts on the definitions provided in Part 1 of the draft legislation – if at all possible tomorrow in case there is anything to be included in the submission we are putting up fairly urgently.

Many thanks,  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 24 May 2022 17:19  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill

As requested

[REDACTED]

**[REDACTED]**  
Head of Genetic Modification Reform - Defra  
Mobile: [REDACTED]

**From** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 24 May 2022 16:51  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill

Hi [REDACTED] ,

Thanks for this. Could you also share the Explanatory Note and the impact assessments?

Many thanks,  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 24 May 2022 16:45  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill

Both,  
As agreed a copy of the Bill.

Please treat this as in confidence until it is published tomorrow

If there are any urgent questions on the clauses do get in touch otherwise [REDACTED] will be in contact to set up a meeting to walk you through the Bill

Many thanks  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[Head of Genetic Modification Reform - Defra](#)  
Mobile: [REDACTED]

-----Original Appointment-----

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 23 May 2022 16:02  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill  
**When:** 24 May 2022 16:15-16:40 (UTC+00:00) Dublin, Edinburgh, Lisbon, London.  
**Where:** Microsoft Teams Meeting

---

[REDACTED] [Learn More](#) | [Meeting options](#)

---

This message has been sent using TLS 1.2

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) This email and any attachments is intended for the named recipient only. If you have received it in error you have no authority to use, disclose, store or copy any of its contents and you should destroy it and inform the sender. Whilst this email and associated attachments will have been checked for known viruses whilst within Defra systems we can accept no responsibility once it has left our systems. Communications on Defra's computer systems may be monitored and/or recorded to secure the effective operation of the system and for other lawful purposes.

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

This e-mail (and any files or other attachments transmitted with it) is intended solely for the attention of the addressee(s). Unauthorised use, disclosure, storage, copying or distribution of any part of this e-mail is not permitted. If you are not the intended recipient please destroy the email, remove any copies from your system and inform the sender immediately by return.

Communications with the Scottish Government may be monitored or recorded in order to secure the effective operation of the system and for other lawful purposes. The views or opinions contained within this e-mail may not necessarily reflect those of the Scottish Government.

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

This message has been sent using TLS 1.2 Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) This email and any attachments is intended for the named recipient only. If you have received it in error you have no authority to use, disclose, store or copy any of its contents and you should destroy it and inform the sender. Whilst this email and associated attachments will have been checked for known viruses whilst within Defra systems we can accept no responsibility once it has left our systems. Communications on Defra's computer systems may be monitored and/or recorded to secure the effective operation of the system and for other lawful purposes.

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 25 May 2022 10:44

**To:** [REDACTED]

**Cc:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** RE: Engagement with UK Government - Frameworks - Engagement Report - PVS

Hi [REDACTED] ,

I think I CCed you into the draft submission on GMOs which covers options around the CFs. This is currently undergoing substantial revision due to the UK's introduction of the Precision Breeding Bill today and their invitation to SG to join, published to the media yesterday – however still welcome input from yourself if you have time to look at it before we put this up today.

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 25 May 2022 11:47

**To:** [REDACTED]

**Cc:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** UKG Genetic Technologies (Precision Breeding) Bill introduced today

Hi [REDACTED]

See at the links below details of the UKG Precision Breeding Bill which is being introduced to Parliament today. These were shared in confidence last night although we expect them to be published today. The Bill only extends to England although they have yesterday sent an 11<sup>th</sup>-hour invitation to DAs to join – [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | SASA Policy and Pesticides Survey Unit | Scottish Government  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 25 May 2022 17:30  
**To:** Director of Agriculture and Rural Economy <[DirectorARE@gov.scot](mailto:DirectorARE@gov.scot)>  
**Subject:** RE: Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill

Thanks George – added and sent!

**From:** Director of Agriculture and Rural Economy <[DirectorARE@gov.scot](mailto:DirectorARE@gov.scot)>  
**Sent:** 25 May 2022 17:24  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc** [REDACTED] Saddler G (SASA) [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill

[REDACTED]

Thanks. I think just a little note at the end of the submissions acknowledging that the possibility of a Parliamentary statement was raised at the DFM's IGR Group today and that we can advise more fully on that (as part of the fuller advice mentioned in your last bullet point). You might also suggest a meeting with Ms McAllan to talk this through.

George

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 25 May 2022 17:16  
**To:** Director of Agriculture and Rural Economy <[DirectorARE@gov.scot](mailto:DirectorARE@gov.scot)>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] Saddler G (SASA) [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill

Hi George,

Just picking this up with some preliminary answers while [REDACTED] is in a call. We are just about to put up this submission this minute – I'll hold if you have comments just now: [REDACTED]

On animals, Defra included it last minute and they certainly are in the bill.

[REDACTED]

**From:** Director of Agriculture and Rural Economy <[DirectorARE@gov.scot](mailto:DirectorARE@gov.scot)>  
**Sent:** 25 May 2022 17:00  
**To:** Saddler G (Gerry) [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill

[REDACTED]

Are you providing further advice to Ministers now that we have seen the GE Bill?

[REDACTED]

**W George Burgess**

Director, Agriculture & Rural Economy | [REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 25 May 2022 17:58

**To:** Minister for Environment and Land Reform <MinisterELR@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot>; Minister for Green Skills, Circular Economy and Biodiversity <MinisterGSCEB@gov.scot>; Minister for Public Health, Women's Health & Sport <MinisterPHWHS@gov.scot>; First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>; Lord Advocate <LordAdvocate@gov.scot>; Solicitor General <SolicitorGeneral@gov.scot>; Director of Agriculture and Rural Economy <DirectorARE@gov.scot>; DG Net Zero <DGNetZero@gov.scot>; Chief SA Environment Natural Resources and Agriculture <csaenra@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]

**Subject:** RE: Submission on UKG Genetic Technologies (Precision Breeding) Bill

Hi all,

Just resending to add the Chief Scientific Advisor and FSS colleagues to the cast list.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 25 May 2022 17:30

**To:** Minister for Environment and Land Reform <[MinisterELR@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterELR@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <[CabSecRAI@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecRAI@gov.scot)>; Minister for Green Skills, Circular Economy and Biodiversity <[MinisterGSCEB@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterGSCEB@gov.scot)>; Minister for Public Health, Women's Health & Sport <[MinisterPHWHS@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterPHWHS@gov.scot)>; First Minister <[firstminister@gov.scot](mailto:firstminister@gov.scot)>; Lord Advocate <[LordAdvocate@gov.scot](mailto:LordAdvocate@gov.scot)>; Solicitor General <[SolicitorGeneral@gov.scot](mailto:SolicitorGeneral@gov.scot)>; Director of Agriculture and Rural Economy <[DirectorARE@gov.scot](mailto:DirectorARE@gov.scot)>; DG Net Zero <[DGNetZero@gov.scot](mailto:DGNetZero@gov.scot)>; Chief SA Environment Natural Resources and Agriculture <[csaenra@gov.scot](mailto:csaenra@gov.scot)>; [REDACTED]

**Subject:** Submission on UKG Genetic Technologies (Precision Breeding) Bill

Dear Ms McAllan,

Please find attached a submission on the Genetic Technologies (Precision Breeding) Bill introduced in the UK Parliament today. We would welcome a meeting to discuss.

Best wishes,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | SASA Policy and Pesticides Survey Unit | Scottish Government

[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 26 May 2022 16:34  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: COMMISSION - SOPB MAY - COP (6th)

Hi [REDACTED],

Welcome your views on this – although alternatively you may wish to push back on me until Monday afternoon, and I'll revisit before then, since I think I have expressed some frustration and it could probably do with winding back...

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** 24 May 2022 08:51  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** COMMISSION - SOPB MAY - COP (6th)

Morning all,

Putting this commission out slightly earlier than normal due to the public holidays this week and next.

Ahead of the next EFRA SOPB on 9<sup>th</sup> June, this is the usual standard commission for your input to the DD briefing pack. I would be grateful if we could get all returns by no later than **COP on Monday 6 May**, if possible.

As usual, I would be grateful if individuals could look to limit their lines to take contributions to a max of 4-5 bullets, including relevant points/questions for DDs to make. Please note that the bullets should be tailored to DDs and therefore be focused on what we want to ask/unlock/make happen, rather than 'getting stuff on record'. Usual annotated agenda template below for your input. Where possible I've lifted from existing briefing that I have been sighted on, but I'm conscious this will need to be updated following recent discussions (i.e. IMG).

Click on the link to open 'FSR - Defra and DAs - SOPB May- Annotated agenda - 240522' – [REDACTED]

In the meantime, I have assigned suggested leads to each agenda item. If there is someone better placed, or you are unable to action this request, please let me know asap and preferably identify a colleague to progress, where possible.

#### **Agenda**

- [REDACTED]

#### **Item 3 – Gene Editing [REDACTED]**

- *Discussion on UK Gene Editing Tech Bill*
- [REDACTED]

Once again, grateful for returns no later than **COP on Monday 6 May**. If this isn't possible, do let me know asap.

Thanks in anticipation,

[REDACTED]

Environment, Food, Rural Affairs and Future Policy  
Future Standards and Relations Hub  
Scottish Government, St Andrew's House

[REDACTED]

I am currently working from home. The best way to contact me is via email or MS Teams.

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 26 May 2022 11:44

**To:** Director of Agriculture and Rural Economy <DirectorARE@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Saddler G (SASA) [REDACTED]

**Subject:** RE: Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill

Hi George,

Would you be happy if I asked [REDACTED] to join us for the monthly meeting with Ms McAllan on Tuesday? Suspect that's our best chance for a discussion with her on next steps, and it would be good to involve [REDACTED] in that (though fine to cover it myself if better to limit numbers).

Ms McAllan was interviewed briefly by STV yesterday and said the following:  
TRANSCRIPT – Mairi McAllan MSP – Gene-edited crops – STV North – 25May22  
We are committed to maintaining the highest possible environmental standards in Scotland. That's exceptionally important post-Brexit. And we're committed to remaining aligned with the EU in that regard, the EU of course being a beacon of environmental progress. So, as I say, whilst our position hasn't changed, we're watching very closely the developments.

An FMQ briefing is in for today, and drafting a reply to the UKG and NFUS letters to Ministers is likely to give us our next new lines (with potential to use for a news release and/or Parliamentary Statement if so desired) – we had a useful discussion with SpAds yesterday about approach.

It may be on the agenda for the forthcoming SOPB (WG colleagues had suggested raising it), so we'll feed in briefing for you (if it's you who'd be at that?) if confirmed.

[REDACTED]

**From:** Director of Agriculture and Rural Economy <[DirectorARE@gov.scot](mailto:DirectorARE@gov.scot)>

**Sent:** 25 May 2022 17:24

**To:** [REDACTED]

**Cc:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** RE: Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill

[REDACTED]

Thanks. I think just a little note at the end of the submissions acknowledging that the possibility of a Parliamentary statement was raised at the DFM's IGR Group today and that we can advise more fully on that (as part of the fuller advice mentioned in your last bullet point). You might also suggest a meeting with Ms McAllan to talk this through.

George

[REDACTED]

**From:** Gerry Saddler [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 11 May 2022 14:21  
**To:** Colin Campbell [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Thanks + Defra

Thanks Colin, for sending this over. As you know I have to abide by SG policy on this one (~ broad aim to align with the EU as much as possible, SG's position on GE unlikely to change until concrete movement from Brussels), so happy that others are able to highlight the benefits in the interim! Gerry

**From:** Colin Campbell <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** 11 May 2022 13:50  
**To:** Gerry Saddler [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Thanks + Defra

Thanks Gerry,  
Let me know if gene editing needs any discussion. The Science Media Centre have been in touch about the Queens Speech and proposed new Bill and we will provide the text below. Lesley will be quoted.  
Regards, Colin

**Short statement**

We welcome both the focus of Bill which is on the assessment of the properties of the new crop and not the process used to develop it; and the transparency of this information which will be held on a public register of information on precision-bred organisms.

The James Hutton Institute uses innovative precision breeding technologies which have the potential to speed the development of new crop varieties in a more reliable way. These crops are urgently needed to address future food security which is threatened by climate change and pests and is needed to help reduce the emissions of greenhouse gas from agriculture whilst maintaining crop yields.

**Longer statement**

The James Hutton Institute uses innovative precision breeding technologies which have the potential to speed the development of new crop varieties in a more reliable way. These crops are urgently needed to address future food security which is threatened by climate change and pests and is needed to help reduce the emissions of greenhouse gas from agriculture whilst maintaining crop yields.

A conclusion of the consultation into the Precision Bill was that if changes introduced by precision breeding could also be derived by traditional breeding, then they should no longer be regulated in the same way as genetically modified organisms as they do not involve introducing DNA from different species.

We welcome both this focus of Bill which is on the assessment of the properties of the new crop and not the process used to develop it; and the transparency

[REDACTED]