

Annex 1A

English translation of the focus group discussion outline: Citizen-consumers, first round

Article title: Is gene editing natural and does it matter? A qualitative analysis of citizen-consumers' and farmers' views on the use of new genomic techniques in plants

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CONCEPTS, KNOWLEDGE, ACCEPTABILITY

0)

Introductory round: Would you share your first name if you wish, and briefly tell us, do you think about food production and related questions in your daily life? If so, in what way, how do you take them into account?

1)

What do the following terms bring to your mind; what kind of thoughts, images, and feelings do they evoke:

A) plant breeding

B) genetic modification or genetic manipulation (GMO)

C) gene editing?

- Does any of these raise concerns or fears?
- Does any of these raise hopes or expectations?

2)

a) Have you heard of gene editing (or so-called new genetic methods) before? Where, what?

b) What thoughts has the method raised regarding possible benefits or drawbacks?

3)

INFO: Distribute method descriptions as text and in a table (traditional plant breeding; mutation breeding; 'genetic modification' or transgenesis; 'gene editing' or cisgenesis/new genome editing methods) About 5 minutes to review individually.

a) Initial reactions? Are these descriptions easy to understand?

b) What thoughts does each description and method evoke?

c) What positive aspects or effects could new methods have in your opinion? What negative aspects or effects could new methods have in your opinion?

4)

a) Should humans generally be allowed to influence the genome of food crops? Why/why not?

b) Does the purpose matter: e.g., appearance of tomatoes versus weather resistance?

c) What about the genome of other plants (e.g., cosmetics, ornamental plants)?

d) What should not be done in genome editing methods in your opinion and why? Where are the limits of acceptability?

5) [THIS PART WAS MOSTLY LEFT OUT FROM THE DISCUSSIONS DUE TO TIME RESTRICTIONS AND AS THESE CONCERNS WERE RAISED BY THE PARTICIPANTS THEMSELVES]

Next, I will list typical fears or concerns people have, particularly related to older genome editing methods, i.e., genetic modification (GMO). What thoughts do they evoke?

- GMO products may have harmful health effects on humans and animals.
- Genetic modification may have uncontrolled environmental impacts.
- Genetic modification (and related patent systems) increases the power of large corporations in food production. Farmers become completely dependent on company seeds.
- Concern/thought/feeling that it is wrong or at least questionable to interfere with DNA, the so-called fundamentals of life, in general.

6)

a) Do you want to know about breeding and related new (genetic) methods?

b) Is it necessary for citizens to know about these matters as consumers (food buyers) and as citizens (influencing politics)?

c) Can experts and authorities be trusted in these matters? Can or should the matter be left to them?

7)

Could you consider using food modified by gene editing yourself? (Briefly at the end; return during second discussion round)

8)

Have your views on different methods changed during the discussion, how?

9)

Have any questions arisen related to the topic, what kind? Would you like to add anything else?