

Glossary: Genetically modified organism (GMO)

Statistics Explained

A **genetically modified organism** , abbreviated as **GMO** , is an organism whose genetic material (DNA) has been altered not by reproduction and/or natural recombination but by the introduction of a modified gene or a gene from another variety or species.

GMOs are important in the context of agriculture, [biodiversity](#) , environmental policies and [food](#) safety.

In 2004, after five years with no new marketing authorisations, the [European Commission](#) authorised the placing on the market of certain GMO foods or foods containing GMOs and the marketing and growing of GMO seeds. Before being placed on the market GMOs must first undergo a very strict assessment process. They are then labelled in accordance with labelling and product traceability requirements. The reference laboratory for GMO assessment is the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC). It coordinates the European network of reference laboratories for GMOs and works on detecting, identifying and quantifying the presence of GMOs in foodstuffs. The European Food Safety Authority also gives scientific opinions on GMOs.

Related concepts

- [Organic farming](#)

Source

- [European Commission](#)