

11 February 2026

Dear

ATISN 26683 Gene Editing Documentation

Information requested

Thank you for your request which I received on 9 February 2026. You asked for: All documentation held by the Welsh Government, including correspondence (internal as well), minutes/notes from meetings, briefings, policy notes, about UK / EU gene editing regulations.

You asked us to provide the above relating to the timespan January 2024 to December 2025. If this timespan exceeds permitted time for FOI responses, you asked us to reduce the period to 2025 only or for a search period that does fit in with permitted time.

Our response

From our preliminary assessment we estimate that it will cost more than the appropriate limit set out in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 to answer your request. The appropriate limit specified for central government is £600. This represents the estimated cost of it taking over 24 hours of time to determine whether we hold the information and to thereafter locate, retrieve and extract it.

In order to assess what providing you with the information that you have requested would require we have searched our records for documents created between 1 January 2024 and 31 December 2025. We searched for the terms “gene editing” and “precision breeding” because these terms have been used interchangeably to describe genetic technology which alters the DNA of living organisms using CRISPR Cas tools without introducing DNA from a different species. This initial search of our main records showed that over 1600 items are potentially within the scope of your enquiry. This does not include “correspondence” which may be held in email inboxes which have not been saved because they are not required for our official records. We have estimated that to examine each item fully to determine whether it is scope of your request and to thereafter retrieve and extract it would take 20 minutes per item. This would entail over 550 hours of work. Reducing the scope of the request to only documents created during 2025 would reduce this by around half – to over 225 hours. Although you suggest we should narrow the period of your request so that it comes within the 24-hour limit, we cannot do this because we do not have enough information about your specific interest to be able to determine what period we should choose. Consequently, we have decided not to provide you with the information you have requested.

You may wish to refine your request by being more specific about what information you particularly wish to obtain, including any dates or period relevant to the information required. Based on the information we found with an initial query; we did look at what narrower period of time would bring the amount of work within the 24-hour limit. There is some variation in the quantity of documents created on the topics you asked about over the years 2024 and 2025 but as a guide, to stay below the 24-hour limit while still considering all documents created would mean looking at a period no greater than 3 weeks, and in some busy periods less than that. To assist you in narrowing down your request I can confirm we hold a range

of reports and internal analyses on the issue of gene editing. These might be helpful to you if you were to focus your request on this type of item. It may also be helpful if you were able to tell us whether your interest is in gene editing in relation to plants or animals in agriculture or in relation to the wider environment, or the use of gene editing to create therapies in the area of human health. One category in your request which increases the volume of work is your inclusion of the term “correspondence” because this brings a lot of items where the term gene editing or precision breeding is used in passing but is not the main topic of the correspondence. If you do refine your request in these ways, this will be treated as a new request.

Next steps

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government’s handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government’s Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit,
Welsh Government,
Cathays Park,
Cardiff,
CF10 3NQ

or Email: Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner’s Office,
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire,
SK9 5AF.

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely