



**CRISPRcon 2017: Science, Society and the Future of Gene Editing**  
**Hosted by University of California, Berkeley**  
**August 16-17, 2017**

The scientific community has handed the world an incredible tool: the ability to make precise changes to the DNA in living cells, which could allow us to eradicate diseases, transform the farming and agriculture industries, and enable massive leaps forward in environmental and life science. That is the promise of CRISPR and other technologies that allow scientists to make precise edits to genomes.



But the science behind CRISPR is just one piece of the puzzle. It is also essential to hear the voices of people whose lives could be impacted by this powerful technology: patients, doctors, farmers, consumers, nonprofit leaders, environmentalists, and more. These stakeholders will play a critical role in assessing the potential of CRISPR to make the transition from the lab to the outside world.

Hosted at the University of California, Berkeley, August 16-17, 2017, CRISPRcon brought together a

broad selection of diverse voices to discuss the future of this groundbreaking technology across all applications. The schedule included a diverse line-up of speakers on a broad range of issues related to science, society, and the future of gene editing.

Videos of each session, along with more information on CRISPRcon's panel topics and speakers, are available at [www.CRISPRcon.org](http://www.CRISPRcon.org):

- Taking the Debate from the Lab to the Living Room: Reflections from a CRISPR researcher on the social dimensions of the science – *Kickoff by Dr. Jennifer Doudna, UC Berkeley and Howard Hughes Medical Institute*
- Envisioning the Future: Where might CRISPR take us – and do we want to go there? – *Panel Discussion*
- CRISPR in the Public Eye: Societal perceptions of science – *Panel Discussion*
- Battle of the Bans: AI, CRISPR & Human Chips: Setting limits in a limitless future – *Keynote by Greg Simon, Biden Cancer Initiative*
- If We Edit It, Will We Eat It?: Social acceptance of CRISPR in food – *Panel Discussion*
- CRISPR in the Wild: Environmental considerations for gene editing – *Panel Discussion*
- Whether and How: Who determines the future of CRISPR? – *Panel Discussion*
- Where to from Here?: Closing reflections on CRISPR, science, and society – *Panel Discussion*



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The event also included breakout sessions on intergenerational engagement on gene-editing technologies; diversity, equity, and inclusion in the CRISPR debate; and food values. An Ideas Marketplace during a networking reception engaged participants in informal, in depth discussions on CRISPR-related topics.



Throughout CRISPRcon, speakers addressed critical societal questions for gene editing. Discussions consistently tackled a variety of themes including equity; access; ethics; implications for underserved communities; transparency; ownership; democratization of technology; governance; regulation; engagement; sustainability; optimization of risks vs. benefits; public acceptance; social license; societal perspectives of science; understanding and communication of science; and balancing precaution with action. Speakers

contextualized current conversations on CRISPR with reference to historical experiences and ethical debates on genetic technologies and other 'disruptive' technologies. They also discussed gene editing in the context of broader systemic and structural factors that influence our health systems, food systems, and ecosystems.

CRISPRcon's participants included more than 300 attendees from academia, civil society, government, industry, the media, the general public, and more. They came with backgrounds and interests in the role of gene editing in food and agriculture, medicine and health, conservation and the environment, and beyond. Audience members shared their perspectives and posed questions to panelists throughout CRISPRcon through live online polling and occasionally live Q&A. Participants shared their hopes (e.g., enhancing agriculture and food production, curing diseases and reducing suffering, and improving the environment and sustainability) as well as fears (e.g., eugenics, social and economic inequalities, misuse and unintended consequences, and misunderstanding leading to non-use). Participants also shared key takeaways from the discussions, including reflections on the variety of potential uses, the need for engagement of diverse perspectives including historically underserved communities, and the role of science, facts, values, and trust.

Through keynotes, panels, interactive discussions, and networking opportunities, CRISPRcon created a unique forum in which those with a stake in CRISPR could share their ideas, ask and answer questions, and make sure that their diverse perspectives were heard.

*Thanks to our sponsors for supporting the mission of CRISPRcon*



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