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Sep 09, 2010

Americans cautious, but okay, with synthetic biology

09:55 AM

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Americans are cautious of the idea of creating [synthetic life](#) out of chemical building blocks in the lab, but most think it should move forward, a new poll finds.

The science of designing and constructing new biological parts, devices and systems, or even re-engineering existing life is emerging. For example, [scientists](#) at the State University of New York at Buffalo are working to produce a strain of yeast that makes gasoline.



A new poll of 1,000 U.S. adults conducted by [Hart Research Associates](#) and the [Synthetic Biology I Wilson Center](#) finds that two-thirds of Americans think that synthetic biology should move forward research to study its possible effects on humans and the environment.

A third of those surveyed think the technology should be banned until its implications and risks are understood.

More than half of Americans believe the federal government should be involved in regulating synthetic biology.

The entire field is still a little murky to most Americans. The poll found that the number of adults who support research in synthetic biology has gone from 9% to 26% in three years, but that's still a low number.

Twenty-seven percent of those polled were worried that the science could be used to make harmful weapons. Twenty percent had moral concerns. The same number worried about negative health consequences for humans. Eleven percent worried about possible damage to the environment.

Six in 10 respondents support the use of synthetic biology to produce a flu vaccine. But three quarters were concerned about its use to accelerate the growth of livestock to increase food production.

The report can be found [here](#).

By Elizabeth Weise

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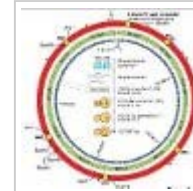


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FlaPoster (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 1d 12h ago

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++++++

I'll comment on you first. What if you have a child 10 years down the road. (granted you still could) And he extremely rare disorder or cancer or something and the only way they can save your son or daughter is wi in this field? Are you honestly just going to let an innocent child? Step down off your high horse.

++++++

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theccur (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 1d 4h ago

Trust me, the chinese will NOT hesitate to explore ANY technology that will give them an economic (or m
=====

And you, its spelled CHINESE. You talk about the chinEEse not hesitating blah blah blah. Go back to gra start stammering some blather about China trying to get the tactical/economic advantage over American.

=====

Chances are they've already beat us and we don't even know it yet. They already have more people and t

growing. But still. We need to stop worrying about tactical this economy that and trying talking to people w
frankly i'm sick or walking to the grocery store and just hearing tons of negative stuff.
/Rant Over\

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