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Congratulations Ms Aigner!

Germany bans genetically modified maize MON810

On 14 April 2009, German Agriculture Minister Ilse Aigner (CSU) announced a ban on the cultivation of Monsanto's maize MON810 with immediate effect. She argued that "there is legitimate reason to assume that genetically modified maize line MON810 poses threats to the environment". Accordingly, Mrs Aigner decided to apply Article 23 of Directive 2001/18, which allows for national emergency measures against EU approved GM varieties. This means in practice that MON810 will not be planted in Germany this year.

Monsanto maize MON 810 is the only GM crop authorised for cultivation in the EU. The maize contains a gene which protects it against a pest, the European corn borer butterfly. Potential risks to non-target organisms have not been adequately assessed so far. Germany is the 6th EU member state to ban MON 810 (together with France, Austria, Greece, Hungary, Luxembourg; "de facto"- bans also exist in Poland and Italy). Before the decision on the ban, it had been planned to cultivate MON 810 on approximately 3600 hectares in Germany (representing 0.18% of the total maize cultivation area), mainly in the eastern part of the country.

Greens/EFA congratulate Ms Aigner on this decision, even though it came very late and was only due to the high levels of public pressure against GMOs in food production in Germany and Europe. Together with the highly engaged movement of GMO free regions, the European Greens have proved themselves to be effective in keeping European agriculture GM free. In order to protect farmers and beekeepers free from contamination, it is now crucial that all European Ministers competent for agriculture and environment continue to keep European agriculture GMO-free.

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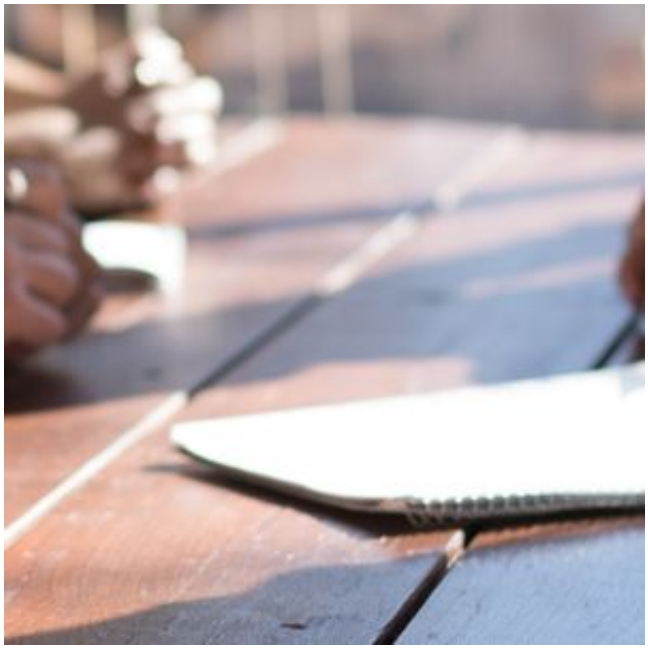
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