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News | 04.10.2012

## **GMO contaminated honey**

### **EU Commission attempting to market-GMO contaminated honey**



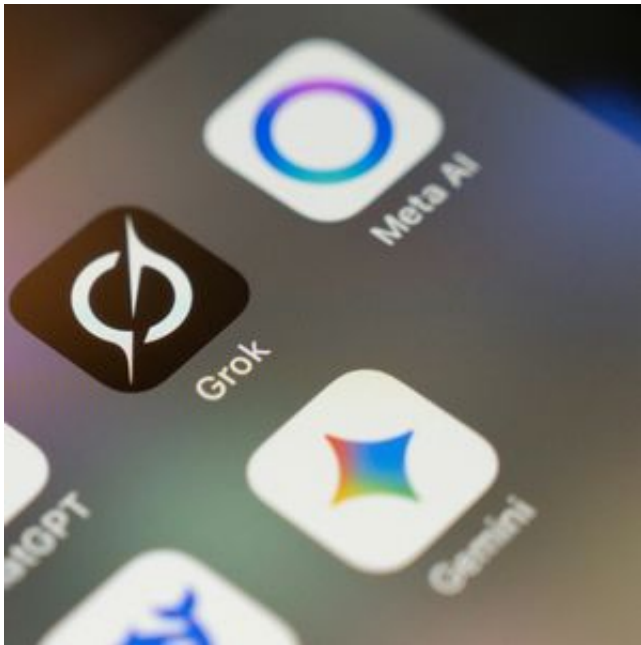
Following a [decision from the ECJ from 6th Sept](#) 2011 that honey contaminated with GMO maize MON810 could not legally be sold, and faced with legal and commercial problems related to honey from GMO growing countries (such as Spain in the EU, or imported honey from third countries such as Argentina), the EU Commission is now [proposing to amend Directive 2001/110/EC relating to Honey](#), supposedly to clarify the true nature of pollen: the proposal defines pollen as a natural constituent of honey and not as an ingredient, contrary to what the Court had decided. Even though this proposal would not change the "legal" status of GMO-contaminated honey (a GMO would have to be allowed for use in honey for GMO-contaminated honey to be marketable), it may allow putting on the market GMO-contaminated honey without any labelling or information for the consumers. Indeed, if pollen is considered as a constituent of honey, and not as an ingredient, labelling would apply only if the GMO content is more than 0.9 % of honey, instead of 0.9 % of the pollen, if pollen was an ingredient. The reason for the Commission to propose this change of the honey directive seems obvious: as one cannot control the dissemination of GMOs in other products, and specifically in pollen; as one cannot control bees; and as GMO contaminated honey, even legal, would not be bought by consumers, the solution from the Commission is simply to allow the selling GMO-contaminated honey without the consumers knowing it. The Greens/EFA group is very worried that the Commission intends to conceal the issue of GMO contamination of honey from the public, and even more so for what is considered as a "healthy" product, at a moment when the absence of health impacts of GMOs is questioned. The image of honey as a healthy and safe product will be destroyed, and the victims will be honey producers that will lose the confidence of their consumers. Faced with unavoidable contamination and new questions on health impacts of GMOs, the only sensible

way to go ahead on this issue is to immediately set a moratorium on all authorisations, for growing as well as for imports, until at least GMOs are correctly assessed and contamination can be effectively prevented, instead of being hidden under new definitions of ingredients or constituents of food products.

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