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Deregulation threatens ecology and the organic sector

Tomorrow, Members of the European Parliament will vote on the Parliament's position on the proposed legislation on new genetic engineering of plants. The agricultural industry is calling for the legislative proposal because of its alleged benefits, however, genetically modified plants are associated with a number of uncertainties and risks and could jeopardise biodiversity, our health, freedom of choice and GMO-free production and processing.

Tilly Metz MEP, Greens/EFA Group Member of the AGRI Committee, comments:

"The Commission's naive approach to new genetic engineering is irresponsible and wrongfully panders to the big agri-businesses. If this unsuitable law actually comes into force, the precautionary principle will be trampled underfoot and the organic sector will suffer.

"The alleged benefits of new genetic technologies do not justify exempting genetically modified products from existing rules on safety checks and transparency for consumers and will hinder the transition to sustainable agriculture. Even the United States has introduced labelling and traceability in the use of new genetic engineering techniques, while the EU is lagging far behind.

"The hasty pace of negotiations by the EPP negotiator is risking a fiasco in environmental policy with far-reaching consequences. No matter what happens in plenary, we call on the Member States to stand firmly against this dangerous proposal."

Background:

On 24 January, the European Parliament's Environment and Health Committee voted on its position on the proposed legislation and spoke out in favour of relaxing the regulation of new genetic engineering. Hundreds of scientists, millions of consumers, organic organisations and now more than 270 companies in the food industry, which generate 16 billion euros with GMO-free conventional food and 15.3 billion euros in the organic sector, have already addressed the European Parliament with urgent appeals and warnings.

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