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Press release | 14.10.2015

GMO authorisation

Syngenta GMO scandal underlines need to overhaul EU authorisation system

According to revelations published today, 6 genetically modified maize varieties that have been authorised for import into the EU carry genetic modifications that were not included in the assessment when the crops were authorised (1). The additional GM traits were only notified to the European Food Safety Authority and the EU Commission by Syngenta in July 2015 despite the varieties having been approved for import between 2008 and 2011. Commenting on the revelations and their implications for the ongoing reform of the EU's GMO authorisation process, Green food safety spokesperson **Bart Staes** said:

“This scandal reveals all that is wrong with the EU's authorisation process for GMOs. It underlines the fundamental problems with the European Food Safety Authority's risk assessment process, which is wholly reliant on information provided by the applicant corporation.

"It is now time to press reset on the EU's GMO authorisation system. Instead of the wrongheaded tinkering proposed by the Commission, we need a root and branch reform of EU GMO authorisations, as promised by Commission President Juncker. In the interim, the only responsible course of action is to introduce a moratorium on GMO approvals.

"There is something inherently wrong with a supposedly independent food safety authority relying solely on information provided by applicant biotech firms for assessing the risk of GMOs. The Commission needs to finally redress this. However, it also needs to take account of the consistent opposition of a majority of EU governments and, importantly, a clear majority of EU citizens to GMOs. This is what the Commission should be focusing on instead of proposing a system to facilitate EU GMO authorisations by allowing member states to opt out but without legal certainty for doing so. The European Parliament's environment committee voted only yesterday to reject the Commission's proposal and we would urge it to now swiftly come forward with a more credible proposal that addresses the fundamental problems with the system."

(1) The revelations were published this morning in the French newspaper Le Monde
http://www.lemonde.fr/planete/article/2015/10/14/failles-dans-l-homologation-de-six-mais-ogm-en-europe_4788853_3244.html

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Responsible MEPs



Bart Staes

Member

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