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Press release | 05.07.2011

GMO cultivation

National bans on GMO cultivation given stronger basis after EP vote

The European Parliament today voted on a new EU legislative proposal giving member states the right to decide whether to prohibit the cultivation of GMOs on their territory. The Greens were concerned with the original approach, which did not give legal certainty to member states, but believe the EP has strengthened the proposal, ensuring member states have stronger grounds to prohibit cultivation, as well as calling for strict liability rules and mandatory anti-contamination measures in all member states. After the vote, Green MEP and shadow draftsman on the file **Bart Staes** said:

"This vote would clearly strengthen the hand of member states that want to prohibit GMO cultivation under the proposed new rules, ensuring they have a stronger legal basis for banning cultivation. Clearly an EU-wide moratorium would give the greatest certainty to the member states and clear majority of citizens that are opposed to GMO cultivation. However, this vote would give greater legal certainty to countries or regions wishing to introduce bans and, as such, is a step forward. Importantly, GMO cultivation could be banned on environmental grounds - such as to protect biodiversity - or if there is a lack of adequate data on the impact of cultivating a GM crop.

"Given the very real concerns of cross-contamination of conventional crops by GM crops, including cross border contamination, we welcome the broad consensus to make anti-contamination measures mandatory. Member states that still do not have such measures in place have to adopt them. MEPs also supported a Green proposal calling on member states to establish a strict liability system to ensure the polluter pays for damages that might occur due to the cultivation or placing on the market of GMOs."

Green MEP and shadow draftsperson (rapporteur) **Margrete Auken** added:

"Concerns remain that the Commission proposed this partial renationalisation of competences on GM cultivation to try and ensure swifter and easier EU level authorisations. This would be at total odds with public will. These new rules should not be a tool for the Commission to bully EU member states into accepting authorisations for GM crops for which legitimate concerns clearly exist.

"Importantly, MEPs voted that the risk assessment at EU level must be substantially improved, e.g. by taking into account long-term environmental effects or effects on non-target organisms. It is obvious that no new GMO variety can be authorised until the risk assessment provisions are properly implemented."

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Responsible MEPs



Margrete Auken

Member



Bart Staes

Member

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