

## Testbiotech files complaint about GRACE project

Ombudsman asked to investigate maladministration at the EU Commission  
Thursday, 12 March 2015

Testbiotech has filed a complaint to the European Ombudsman against the EU Commission. It has submitted evidence of incorrect or inadequate statements regarding the declaration of interests of experts involved in the so-called GRACE project. The GRACE project was initiated to investigate methods for the risk assessment of genetically engineered plants. However, a recent GRACE publication on a feeding trial with rats makes no mention of relevant data indicating health impacts. This is one of the underlying signs that industrial nepotism appears to be prevalent within the GRACE project even though it is publicly funded.

The results from GRACE may be crucial for setting future standards of EU risk assessment for genetically engineered plants in general. That is why Testbiotech has called upon the EU Commission to take action to ensure the highest standards in the scientific quality of the project. However, the EU Commission which is responsible for the project, has so far not taken any action.

“We believe that the interests of EU civil society are being doubly undermined. Firstly, it is consumers who will carry the risks associated with genetically engineered plants. And secondly, tax payers’ money is being misappropriated in order to conduct risk research that is heavily influenced by industry. The way in which the EU Commission is dealing with this project is likely to damage overall trust in publicly funded risk research,” says Christoph Then for Testbiotech.

The function of the EU Ombudsman, currently led by Emily O'Reilly, allows EU citizens or institutions to appeal the Ombudsman to investigate EU institutions on the grounds of maladministration. If the complaint is accepted, the Ombudsman will run an investigation and publish a report. In the past, Testbiotech has made complaints about conflicts of interest at the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) that were partially successful.

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### Links

[1] <mailto:info@testbiotech.org>

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[3] <http://www.testbiotech.org/en/node/1130>

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