

How safe are glyphosate residues in genetically engineered plants?

Testbiotech calls for the re-assessment of import approvals

20 March 2019 / Testbiotech is demanding a detailed re-assessment of all import approvals for genetically engineered glyphosate-resistant plants after a US federal court confirmed that glyphosate mixtures, such as Roundup, can be a contributory risk factor for cancer. The plants can be sprayed with very high dosages of glyphosate, and in the countries where they are grown, such as South America and the US, herbicide mixtures can be applied that are not approved in the EU. In 2015 and 2018, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) stated that the available data were not sufficient to draw final conclusions on the health risks of such imports. Nevertheless, the EU Commission has refused to request more data and detailed investigations.

Testbiotech has already shown that in many cases no feeding trials with these plants were performed. In other cases, plant material used in the feeding trials was sprayed with a much lower dosage of glyphosate than is used in the fields. The most recent example is a Bayer/Monsanto maize, which has an even higher resistance to glyphosate than previously developed maize plants.

The EU Commission has so far repeatedly denied requests for more detailed risk research. Moreover, in the EU project G-TwYST set up to investigate the potential health risks of genetically engineered maize NK 603, the EU Commission explicitly excluded the assessment of glyphosate residues from the study. In fact, the maize used in the feeding trials hardly had any glyphosate residues at all.

Testbiotech has repeatedly pointed out that consumption of the respective food and/or feed might impact the composition of the gut microbiome and hormones. Furthermore, there are findings from research which should to be taken seriously.

In this context, Testbiotech requests that further import authorisations are stopped and that existing EU import approvals for genetically plants with resistance to glyphosate are re-assessed. So far, the Commission has issued around 40 relevant approvals for genetically engineered plants e.g. soybean, maize, oilseed rape and sugar beet. In addition, Testbiotech has brought a case before the EU court (case C-82/17P) in an attempt to make more detailed investigations of genetically engineered plants mandatory. Unfortunately, the Attorney General stated in 2018 that the EU Court does not seem to be in a position to request further more detailed risk assessment. The final decision of the court is expected in 2019.

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Further information: [EFSA peer review regarding glyphosate co-formulant POE-tallowamine \(2015\)](#) [2]

[Testbiotech press release regarding Bayer/Monsanto maize](#) [3]

[Analysis of the outcomes of G-TwYST project](#) [4]

[Information on court case C-82/17 P](#) [5]

[Testbiotech video clip regarding herbicide residues in genetically engineered plants](#) [6]

Source URL: <https://www.testbiotech.org/en/node/2350>

Links

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

[2] <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/4303>

[3] <http://www.testbiotech.org/en/press-release/eu-commission-approves-maize-monster-import>

[4] <http://www.testbiotech.org/content/feeding-study-genetically-engineered-maize-nk603-does-not-provide-evidence-adverse-effects>

[5] <http://www.testbiotech.org/en/eucourt>

[6] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPUhwOzSbs8&feature=youtu.be>