

New EU Parliament speaks out against approvals for the import of genetically engineered plants

Resolutions on plants from Bayer, DowDuPont and Syngenta intended for food and feed

10. October 2019 / The EU Parliament has adopted three resolutions with a large majority against approvals for the import of genetically engineered maize and soybean. The resolutions were tabled by a cross party group of MEPS initiated by the Greens/EFA group. The resolutions call for higher standards in risk assessment and the strengthening of democratic decision-making. It is the first time that the new EU Parliament has dealt with this issue.

The genetically engineered plants have been made resistant to herbicides and one also produces insecticidal toxins as well. In vote taken by EU member states, only a minority was in favour of approving the plants for food and feed production. Nevertheless, the EU Commission, as usual, plans to give the green light for the approvals.

“The current risk assessment of genetically engineered plants is inadequate. For example, there was no investigation into combinatorial effects, and the plants were not tested under the agricultural conditions in which they will be grown,” says Christoph Then for Testbiotech. “Consequently, the companies have not demonstrated that the plants are safe for use in food and feed.”

It is the first time that the new EU Parliament has objected to GE import approvals. The previous Parliament adopted 36 similar resolutions without the EU Commission taking any action. “We hope the new EU Commission now will fight for substantially higher standards in the protection of health and environmental safety,” says Christoph Then.

Testbiotech has for a number of years been demanding to make more detailed investigations into genetically engineered plants mandatory by bringing cases before the EU court and petitioning the EU Commission. On 29 October, Testbiotech, together with other organisations, is holding a conference in Switzerland to present several reports on the flaws and deficits in the current risk assessment of genetically engineered plants in the EU and Switzerland. The reports are the result of a research project conducted over several years (RAGES); it involved around a dozen scientists all of whom are independent of interests in the development and application of genetically engineered organisms. The EU Commission and EFSA have been invited to participate at the conference. Testbiotech expects the outcome to make a significant contribution to improvements in the EU approval process.

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Further information: [Link to the resolutions](#) [2]

[Testbiotech assessment: Maize MZHG0JG by Syngenta](#) [3]

[Testbiotech assessment: Soy A 2704-12 by Bayer](#) [4]

[Testbiotech assessment: Maize MON 89034 x 1507 x NK603 x DAS-40278-9 by DowDuPont](#) [5]

[The program of the conference in Switzerland](#) [6]

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Links

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

[2] <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/texts->

submitted.html?tabType=motions#banner_session_live

[3] <http://www.testbiotech.org/node/2313>

[4] <http://www.testbiotech.org/content/testbiotech-comment-soybean-a2704-12-renewal>

[5] <http://www.testbiotech.org/node/2332>

[6] [http://www.testbiotech.org/sites/default/files/RAGES_ Invitation to a workshop on risk assessment of GMOs_Switzerland_4th_announcement.pdf](http://www.testbiotech.org/sites/default/files/RAGES_Invitation%20to%20a%20workshop%20on%20risk%20assessment%20of%20GMOs_Switzerland_4th_announcement.pdf)