

Court proceedings against EU-approvals for genetically engineered plants

Testbiotech taking legal action against the EU Commission

5 November 2021 / Testbiotech wants two recent EU approvals for genetically engineered (GE) maize and soybeans to be examined by the General Court of the European Union. The cases against the EU Commission were filed in September 2021 and both cases have now been accepted by the court (T-605/21 and T-606/21). In their analysis, Testbiotech, found that the risks associated with the GE plants produced by Bayer had not undergone detailed assessment as foreseen in EU regulation.

The court cases concern maize (MON 87427 x MON 87460 x MON 89034 x MIR162 x NK603) and soybean (MON87751 x MON87701 x MON87708 x MON89788), both of which were produced from several crossings (therefore also called 'stacked'). As a result, the plants are resistant to herbicides such as glyphosate and, in addition, produce several insecticides.

The EU Commission approved the import of the plants and their usage for food and feed production in January 2021. The decision was taken in spite of EU Parliament resolutions against these approvals. In March 2021, Testbiotech filed a request for an internal review that was rejected by the EU Commission. It appears the Commission approached the EU approval process and mandatory risk assessment as simple formality.

A Testbiotech report published at beginning of 2021 shows how the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), which is responsible for risk assessment of GE plants, intentionally puts aside crucial issues. This careless approach exemplifies the overall decrease in general food safety standards that has been seen since the introduction of GE plants – an issue that has not been discussed by the wider public.

EU laws set high standards to safeguard both health and the environment. Testbiotech has filed the legal challenges not simply to have these specific applications reassessed, but also as a further step forward in its aim to prevent a general decrease in EU standards. It is likely that it will take one-to-two years before the court reaches decisions on the cases.

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Further information: [Reasons for requesting the revision of the approvals](#) [2]

[Testbiotech report on gaps in EU risk assessment](#) [3]

[Database with overview of EU approvals](#) [4]

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