

Transparency and strict rules for GMOs needed

Commission reports on GMO policy must be followed by overdue action

Brussels 28/10/2011– The reports published today evaluating the European GMO legislation, must be followed by real action: The European Commission must finally propose legislation change that solves the pressing issues caused by GMO cultivation and GMOs entering the food chains.

“The situation stands crystal clear: A broad majority of consumers demand GMO free food, producers want to continue to provide GMO free food, but the EU legislation still does not provide sufficient transparency and stringent rules to protect the EU food market from the risks and additional costs related to the infiltration of GMOs in the food chain,” criticizes Marco Schlüter, Director of IFOAM EU Group^[i]. “The Commission has unfortunately not been on the right track regarding GMO legislation, and many issues remain unsolved. 12 EU member states still do not have *any* legislation to protect GMO free farming; EU wide, legally binding co-existence **rules that provide concrete protection against contamination by GMOs throughout the GMO-free food chain** are still not in place, even though they have been highly demanded by the GMO free sector for years now!”

Consumers still do not have full transparency about what they eat. “The labelling rules for GMOs must finally be completed, and the meat, milk and eggs stemming from animals that were fed with GMO crops must be labelled accordingly,” adds Antje Kölling, policy coordinator of the IFOAM EU Group. “Moreover, the **EU Commission and member states need to tackle the question of liability**. It is unacceptable that the GMO free market has to carry the costs, while the GMO industry is allowed to externalise the real costs and burden that GMOs cause for the food chain, consumers and the environment. The prevention of GMO contamination and mitigation measures in the case of contamination, costs the conventional and organic food sector millions^[ii]. Whereas we welcome the Commission’s initiative that would allow member states to ban the cultivation of GMOs on their territory, we cannot accept this as a solution to the pressing challenges. We need rules that guarantee the maintenance of GMO free food production in all member states!”

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ⁱ The **IFOAM EU Group** represents more than 300 member organisations of IFOAM (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements) in the EU-27, the EU accession countries and EFTA. Member organisations include: consumer, farmer and processor associations; research, education and advisory organisations; certification bodies and commercial organic companies.

ⁱⁱ If GMOs are found in organic crop, the farmer loses the organic certificate and premium for this crop. The crop can often only be sold as feed consequently, also if it has been grown as food. Examples of cost calculations on farm basis can be found in: [Testimonies of contamination](#) (2009). Christoph Then, Matthias Stolze (2009): Economic impacts of labelling thresholds for the adventitious presence of genetically engineered organisms in conventional and organic seeds www.ifoam-eu.org/positions/publications/pdf/IFOAMEU_GMO-freeSeedStudy.pdf . Antje Lorch, Christoph Then (BOELW 2009): Schadensbericht Gentechnik http://www.boelw.de/uploads/media/BOELW_Schadensbericht_Gentechnik090318.pdf