



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

sante.ddg2.g.dir(2015)4315654

**SUMMARY REPORT OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON PLANTS, ANIMALS, FOOD AND FEED
HELD IN BRUSSELS ON 14 SEPTEMBER 2015
(Section Genetically Modified Food and Feed and Environmental Risk)**

CIRCABC Link: <https://circabc.europa.eu/w/browse/fea5bce1-fc95-488a-8609-033146e305fa>

A.01 Scientific opinion on application for the placing on the market of herbicide-tolerant genetically modified maize MON 87427 for food and feed uses, import and processing under Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 – Presentation by EFSA.

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) presented the opinion on the herbicide tolerant, genetically modified maize MON 87427 for food and feed uses, import and processing which was published in June 2015 and addressed questions raised by Member States during the consultation period. The presentation was followed by questions from Member States to EFSA.

A.02 Scientific opinion on application for the placing on the market of herbicide-tolerant genetically modified soybean MON 87708 × MON 89788 for food and feed uses, import and processing under Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 – Presentation by EFSA.

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) presented the opinion on the herbicide tolerant, genetically modified soybean MON 87708 × MON 89788 for food and feed uses, import and processing which was published in June 2015 and addressed questions raised by Member States during the consultation period. The presentation was followed by questions from Member States to EFSA.

A.03 Scientific opinion on application for the placing on the market of herbicide-tolerant genetically modified soybean FG72 for food and feed uses, import and processing under Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 – Presentation by EFSA.

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) presented the opinion on the herbicide tolerant, genetically modified soybean FG72 for food and feed uses, import and processing which was published in July 2015 and addressed questions raised by Member States during the consultation period. The presentation was followed by questions from Member States to EFSA.

A.04 Scientific opinion on application for the placing on the market of herbicide-tolerant, increased oleic acid genetically modified soybean MON 87705 × MON 89788 for food and feed uses, import and processing under Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 – Presentation by EFSA.

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) presented the opinion on the nutritionally modified, herbicide tolerant, genetically modified soybean MON 87705 × MON 89788 for food and feed uses, import and processing which was published in July 2015 and addressed questions raised by Member States during the consultation period. The presentation was followed by questions from Member States to EFSA.

A.05 Scientific opinion on application for the placing on the market of herbicide-tolerant genetically modified maize NK603 × T25 for food and feed uses, import and processing under Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 – Presentation by EFSA.

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) presented the opinion on the herbicide tolerant, genetically modified maize NK603 × T25 for food and feed uses, import and processing which was published in July 2015 and addressed questions raised by Member States during the consultation period. The presentation was followed by questions from Member States to EFSA.

A.06 New sequencing information of events MIR604 and GA21 maize – Information by the Commission.

The Commission informed about the discrepancy between the DNA-sequence of events MIR604 maize and GA21 maize identified by Syngenta in the framework of application Bt11 × GA21 × MIR162 × MIR604 maize and the original DNA-sequence of MIR604 and GA21 maize. A mandate for assessment of the impact of this new information on the already authorised events was sent to EFSA on 3 August 2015 who is currently analysing the additional data.

A.07 Experiences with comparative testing rounds organised by the EURL GMFF to foster the official controls on GMOs – presentation by the JRC (EU-RL GMFF).

The JRC (EU-RL GMFF) presented the experiences and the results of 12 comparative testing rounds organised since 2010 for the benefit of National Reference Laboratories, other official laboratories and non-EU countries. Follow-up activities implemented by the EU-RL for underperforming laboratories were also presented.

A.08 Study on the state of play in the EU on GM-free food labelling schemes and assessment of the need for possible harmonisation – Presentation by the Commission.

The Commission informed Member States about the findings of the study performed by an external contractor for the Commission, on the state of play in the EU of GM-free food labelling. The study gives a snapshot of GM-free labels in place or in development in the Member States, and describes their respective technical characteristics. The study also aimed to identify whether, and to what extent the existence of these different GM-free labelling schemes impact the access of European consumers to food information and the functioning of the internal market.

The study concludes that variations across GM-free labelling schemes suggest potential underlying internal market and consumer protection/information issues. However, the assessment of the current evidence, including the fact that GM-free labels markets are predominantly national with limited intra-EU exchanges, does not indicate a clear need for harmonization at the present time.

The Commission informed the Member States that, in view of the conclusions of the study, it does not consider appropriate to engage at this point in time in a harmonization process.

The presentation was followed by questions from Member States.

The study is available on the website of DG SANTE:
http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_food-safety/dyna/enews/enews.cfm?al_id=1621

A.09 Directive 2015/412/EU of the Council and the European Parliament amending Directive 2001/18/EC as regards the possibility for the Member States to restrict or prohibit the cultivation of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in their territory – State of play.

The Commission gave an update on the state of play of the Cultivation Directive with regard to the demands submitted by Member States under the transitional measures, informed Member States that no measures to opt-out based on compelling grounds have been submitted and reminded Member States of the different procedures and deadlines.

B.01 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision authorising the placing on the market of genetically modified maize MON 87427 pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003

The draft Decision authorising the placing on the market of genetically modified maize MON 87427 was presented to the Committee. Several Member States commented on the fact that the decision is submitted for a vote at the same meeting where EFSA presents its scientific opinion. The Commission reminded Member States that there was no legal obligation to proceed with a vote in a separate meeting and that the Commission has a legal deadline of 3 months to present the draft decision to the committee.

Reasons for the negative vote or abstention:

- No agreed national position
- Negative public opinion
- Political reasons
- 90-day feeding study with whole food/feed not appropriate
- Risk assessment deemed not sufficient
- Precautionary principle
- The Regulation on GM food and feed is not considered as the right legal basis to authorise products other than food and feed containing and consisting of GMOs

AT written statement

Although several scientific questions concerning the risk assessment of maize MON 87427 have been clarified between EFSA scientists and national experts from the Austrian competent authority some important concerns relating to the safety of the product remained.

Austria therefore objects the placing on the market of MON 87427 due to

a) missing information for the compositional analysis and the agronomic and phenotypic characteristics of this genetically modified maize variety

b) from the Austrian point of view, products others than food and feed containing or consisting of maize MON 87427 are not within the scope of EU Regulation 1829/2003 but under Directive 2001/18/EC.

Vote taken: No opinion

M.01 Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 as regards the possibility for the Member States to restrict or prohibit the use of genetically modified food and feed on their territory.

A Member State asked about the state of play with the WTO notification of the new Commission proposal on the opt out from the GM food/feed uses. The Commission informed that the proposal was notified to the WTO/TBT Committee for transparency purpose on 20 May and the Commission has so far received comments from 6 countries, as well as comments from third countries industries. Commission's responses to those comments will be shared with the Council and European Parliament.

M.02 Technical zero food study.

The Commission informed Member States on the state of play of the study on methods of sampling and analysis for GM material in food. The consultant has submitted the draft report and the final report will be issued in the following weeks.

M.03 GM free certificates required by Turkey.

The Commission updated the Member States about the GM-free official declaration that the Turkish authorities have been requesting since 24 October 2014 for microorganisms and enzymes imported into their country. After an exchange of letters

between the Commission and the Turkish authorities, the latter informed the Commission on 1 June 2015 that the request for the GM-free declaration is no longer in place according to a decision implemented as of 5 May 2015.

M.04 Technical zero seeds.

A Member State asked about the Commission's plans regarding technical zero for seeds. The Commission updated on the ongoing activities on seed testing. The replies to the questionnaire sent to Member States competent authorities to collect an overview of the approaches followed regarding the detection of GMO presence in seeds are under evaluation. The European Network of GMO Laboratories its report on seed testing for the presence of GMOs will be presented to the Member States at the next Regulatory meeting for Directive 2001/18/EC. It may inform the discussion on the need and possible ways of harmonisation of seed sampling and testing.

M.05 New Plant Breeding Techniques.

At a request from a Member State, the Commission informed about the state of play regarding the legal analysis on the new plant breeding techniques. The analysis should be ready by the end of the year and it will be presented in PAFF and 2001/18 committees.

M.06 Proposal for a Regulation on Official Controls of the food and feed chain.

The Commission informed Member States of the inclusion of the deliberate release of GMOs in the scope of the Regulation (Article 1(2)b) of Regulation 882/2004 currently discussed in the Council. At the meeting of the Working Party of Agriculture Counsellors/Attachés on official controls on 11 September 2015, it was agreed that Article 1(2)b should read "deliberate release into the environment of GMOs for the purpose of food and feed production".

The Commission acknowledged that the latest proposal goes to the right direction. However, the Commission reiterated its initial position that it is considered necessary to include all stages of releases and all types of GMOs in the scope of Regulation 882/2004.