

Media release



Will the EU Commission soon authorise nine genetically engineered crop plants all at the same time?

Industry pushes for fast-track authorisation

13 October 2014. Testbiotech is warning that the EU Commission might soon rush to give market authorisation to nine genetically engineered plants, all at the same time. This is a crucial decision about allowing about eight genetically engineered crop plants for import and usage in food and feed. Member States have already voted on these applications, but there was no qualified majority either in favour or against. Further, the Commission might allow maize 1507 for cultivation at any time soon. Testbiotech is demanding a reorganisation of the process for authorisation, and that further authorisations are stopped for the time being.

„We are seeing more and more flaws and deficiencies in the European Food Safety Authority, EFSA dossiers. For example, it is obvious in several of the applications that industry performed feeding trials which were then rejected by EFSA due to fundamental flaws. However, instead of requesting reliable data, the authority simply gave the green light and concluded safety,” says Christoph Then for Testbiotech. “EFSA’s approach is clearly biased in favour of assuming safety in the absence of reliable data.”

Already in July 2014, lobbyists from the biotech and feed industry were pushing heavily to allow the import of eight genetically engineered plants for food and feed, warning that a „huge disruption to feed grain trade and subsequent price hikes would follow if the EU regulator does not approve eight genetically modified (GM) crops before the summer recess“. Such pressure is highly problematic because EU regulations require a high level of protection for human health and the environment, and priority cannot be given to any particular commercial interests. Testbiotech is concerned that industry might increase pressure and authorisation might be given shortly after the new Commission is in power.

“The pressure from the biotech industry has been very successful in recent years and now 48 genetically engineered plants are allowed for import. Summing up this mixture of uncertainties and risks inherent in the current authorisations, we are becoming very worried about the effects these products will have on health in the long-term. We expect the new EU Commission to take these concerns more seriously”, says Christoph Then. “And we also hope that the EU Parliament will back a revision of the EU authorisation process, including risk assessment of genetically engineered plants.”

Contact Christoph Then, Tel + 49 15154638040, info@testbiotech.org

Flaws in risk assessment of eight crops: www.testbiotech.org/en/node/1103

Flaws in risk assessment of maize 1507: www.testbiotech.org/node/1054

Link to feed navigator:

www.coceral.com/data/1405346370COCERAL_FEDIOL_FEFAC_joint_statement_urgent_EC_decision_food_feed_import.pdf