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Join the Food Revolution Newsletter

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JOIN THE FOOD REVOLUTION: THE STORY OF THE MONTH

Every month food actors who joined the ['Join the Food Revolution'](#) network share their story, showing the way to take back control over your plate –

WHAT'S ON THE PLATE?

Upcoming Events

GREEN INSIGHT INTO EU FOOD POLICY

Unfair trading practices in food supply chain: we must ensure that all entities are protected

Unfair Trading Practices (UTPs) in the food supply chain is a major problem, particularly for farmers, producers and SMEs. In addition, farmers are already currently suffering from chronically low prices and high input costs. Unfair trading practices can come in many forms, from late payments to arbitrary and unilateral changes to contracts to unfair fees which retailers charge their suppliers in order for them to be included on the supplier list ("pay to stay"). Green MEP [Igor Šoltes](#) explains that the Greens/EFA group's main goal and priorities for UTPs is to ensure that all entities in the food supply chain are protected from them: this requires regulatory action at European level. Given that UTPs have a tendency to be passed down the chain, we must address both direct and indirect supplier-to-supplier contractual relationships, cross border and with third countries. The Green/EFA group therefore welcomes the results of the vote on 20th April in the internal market and consumer protection committee, by which the European Parliament sends a clear demand to the European Commission for an EU legislative framework tackling UTPs.

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The "New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition" A threat to local populations in Africa

The New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition (New Alliance), a large public-private partnership launched in 2012 by the G8 and aiming to boost private investment in agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa, in fact works against the objective of improving the lives of millions of local family farmers and small-holders. It promotes corporate-led, input-dependent agriculture and has been heavily criticised by civil

society organisations around the world which have highlighted the risks it poses to local communities and the environment.

Given the EU's involvement in the initiative as well as the risks this public-private partnership poses to food sovereignty and the fight against poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa, the European Parliament's development committee today adopted its report, drafted by Green MEP [Maria Heubuch](#), on the New Alliance for Food and Nutrition Security (New Alliance) and took a critical stance towards this initiative.

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External fisheries: Ensuring sustainable fisheries beyond EU waters

The EU must continue to control its fishing outside the Union and open the door for transparency, according to Green MEP [Linnea Engström](#). Linnea Engström's report on the external dimension of fisheries was adopted by the European Parliament on Tuesday, 12 April. The report sets out clear proposals on how to deal with the problems of ensuring fisheries beyond European waters are made more sustainable and transparent.

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REFIT: Consumers have the right to know what they are eating

The European Commission's Regulatory Fitness and Performance Programme (REFIT) programme is meant "to make EU law simpler and to reduce regulatory costs", making sure that EU legislation remains fit for purpose and delivers the results intended by EU law-makers. Green MEP [Heidi Hautala](#) explains that the scope of this Regulation is too restrictive with regards to nutrient profiles, potentially opening the door for products that are high in salt, sugar or saturated fat to be advertised as beneficial to health provided for example that some vitamins are added. The amendment, tabled by the Greens/EFA group and designed to ensure that consumers' rights are protected, was not adopted by the Parliament in plenary, which led Green MEPs to vote against a report which disrespects the right of citizens to know what they are eating.

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Glyphosate: Will the Commission finally listen to the call to stop glyphosate use?

Glyphosate is the substance used in the most common herbicide in the world and sold by Monsanto: Round Up. Pressure from civil society, supported by the Greens/EFA group, has achieved a postponement of the Member States' vote on a first Commission proposal to reapprove glyphosate for use in the EU for a further 15 years. Then on 13th April, the European Parliament voted on the issue calling for a reduction of the re-license to 7 years and unfortunately not a full ban. But, the text flagged important concerns with the Commission's proposal, opposing approval of glyphosate for most of its uses: non-professional uses; in or close to public parks/playgrounds/gardens; no approval where integrated pest management systems are sufficient for necessary weed control; and no approval for purposes of pre-harvest desiccation.

However, last week, a leaked document, picked up in the EU press and in different countries^[1] revealed that the European Commission intends to come up with a new proposal which proposes a re-licensing of the substance for 10 years instead of 15 but with no restrictions at EU level. This proposal therefore clearly completely ignores [European citizens' opposition](#) to glyphosate as well as the specific demands to ban the use in certain cases.

The Member states' representatives' vote on the Commission proposal takes place on 18-19 May. Greens MEPs urge the Commission to seriously consider the European Parliament's demands to ban, at EU level, private uses and use in public parks and playgrounds, as well as in farming, where alternative methods exist.

- [Read our press release on the European Parliament Resolution](#)
- [Share our 7 reasons to stand up against glyphosate](#)

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

New GMOs: the debate gathers momentum

The debate on the new techniques of genetic manipulation is heating up, as Greenpeace, Corporate Europe observatory and Genewatch UK have produced [a short report](#) affirming that the European Commission's legal interpretation has been delayed to facilitate the TTIP discussions, under pressure from the US negotiators. The European Commission has denied any correlation between the trade agreement's negotiations and the repeated postponement of their legal advice, but one of their representatives [declared to Politico](#) that they would like "to move away from a GMO-centered discussion, when it comes to innovation in plant reproductive materials," and that "we should not treat all new techniques as 'hidden' GMOs", joining in that regard the demands of the seed industry. This is in total contradiction with [the position of 16 European environmental NGOs](#), which have now made it clear that they consider all these new techniques to be GMOs.

A petition has been launched by Greenpeace and other NGOs [at the EU level](#), [in France](#) and [in Greece](#) calling on the Commission to confirm that these techniques are covered by EU GMO legislation. In

France, there have been heated exchanges on the issue and several articles in the newspapers, after a scientist and 7 NGOs [decided to resign](#) from the National committee on genetic engineering (HCB) over the content and writing process of the opinion this committee delivered on the new GMOs.

The Greens/EFA, [whose position](#) is that these techniques are legally GMOs and do not support a sustainable agriculture system, will in May publish a brochure in English, French, Dutch and German on the status of these techniques, as well as a dedicated webpage.

No patents on my tomato: join the mass opposition!

A Europe-wide coalition of NGOs has launched a mass opposition against a patent held by the Swiss company Syngenta on tomatoes produced by conventional breeding.

Indeed, in 2015, the European Patent Office (EPO) granted a patent to Syngenta, on tomatoes "with a high content in flavonols". These compounds are supposedly beneficial to health. The patent covers the plants, the seeds and the fruits. This so-called "invention", however, is simply a product of crossing tomatoes from their countries of origin (Latin America) with varieties currently grown in the industrialised countries. This means Syngenta has successfully patented perfectly natural common tomatoes, granting them rights on every tomatoe, tomato seed and tomato plant with the same characteristic.

The NGO coalition aims to mobilise thousands of people within the time period of the opposition, lasting until 2 May. The organisations taking part in this action will also be raising the pressure on European politicians to take measures against patents on plants and animals.

- [Join the opposition here](#)

Belgium Bites Back – Brussels' Everything Else Big Parade

On Sunday 20th March, the "Big Everything Else Parade" (Tout Autre Chose/Hart Boven Hard) took place in Brussels. Many alternatives to the business-as-usual austerity and corporate control agenda were represented, including the better food and farming brigade. The Big parade denounced short termism and austerity policies, policies which prioritise competition between people, rampant individualism and the marginalisation of the weakest. Just two days after the Big Parade, violence and intolerance hit Brussels. But most of Belgians are not afraid. It's not that easy to knock them out! You understand why when you feel the positive energy from the Big Parade and the practical desire to continue to implement all the alternatives aimed at changing our food system and society as a whole.

- [Read more](#)
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Land for our Food: A road movie on the difficulty of accessing land for agroecological farming

The Land for our Food is a documentary movie produced by the Access to Land network and directed by Julio Molina. The video takes us on the journey of Gavin Bridger, a grower from the Community Supported Agriculture project of Farnham Local Food in England, through various European countries in his quest to access land for agroecological farming. This road-movie documentary gives us insights into the contexts and approaches of civil society initiatives from various countries in Europe. The movie provides a very concrete introduction to access to land issues in Europe and captures a range of practical experiences in a unique way!

- [Learn more](#)
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JOIN THE FOOD REVOLUTION: THE STORY OF THE MONTH

In "The Natural Talent", Veerle introduces you to wines with an excellent value for money and a good story. No story of big profits, but people with a heart for the profession and the product. Because this much is clear: natural wine growers are not businesspeople, but quirky daredevils! Natural Wine has no fixed definition. Natural Wines are often certified organic or biodynamic, but not always. The term 'natural wine' has pretty much become the generic term for all the efforts of winemakers to achieve a healthier wine by excluding artificial means and industrial processes. Natural Winegrowers are more subject to the whims of nature (climate, pests). They get lower yields per hectare, but strive for a genuine product. Because from grapes to bottle, they put quality first.

Get to know more about [The Natural Talent](#) and [Join the Food Revolution](#) yourself!

WHAT'S ON THE PLATE?

[14/05: World Fair Trade Day](#)

18-19/05: Standing Committee on Pharmaceuticals: vote of Member states on glyphosate reauthorisation

[1]Spain:http://www.eldiario.es/sociedad/comision-planea-renovar-glifosato_0_509199670.html

UK:<http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/apr/22/european-commission-glyphosate-weedkiller-leaked-proposal#comments>

Germany:

www.spiegel.de/spiegel/vorab/eu-will-pflanzengift-glyphosat-kaum-beschraenken-a-1088785.html

France:http://abonnes.lemonde.fr/planete/article/2016/04/22/pesticides-bruxelles-va-proposer-une-reautorisation-du-glyphosate-pour-dix-ans_4907043_3244.html

Finland:<http://www.uusisuomi.fi/kotimaa/194557-syopavaaralliseksi-epailty-aine-hyvaksytaankin-eussa-meppi-suomessa-pitaisi-olla>

Belgium: http://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20160421_02250954

Recommended

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08.10.2024

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[EFA STATEMENT ON THE HISTORIC ECJ RULING ON THE EU-MO...](#)

04.10.2024

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ricardo-gomez-angel



[Greens/EFA welcome Commission's Strategic Dialogue con...](#)

04.09.2024

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<https://unsplash.com/photos/gray-concrete-building-covered-trees-dqXiw7nCb9Q>



[EU Parliament continues to support big Agri over small...](#)

24.04.2024

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