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GMO authorisations

MEPs vote to send Commission back to drawing board on GMO food and feed opt-outs proposal

The European Parliament's environment committee today voted to reject a proposal by the European Commission for a new scheme under which EU member states could opt out of EU authorisations for genetically-modified food and feed (1). After the vote, Green food safety spokesperson **Bart Staes** said:

"MEPs have today voted to send the Commission back to the drawing board with its proposal to revise the EU system for authorising genetically-modified food and feed. We would urge the Commission to heed the result of today's vote and come forward with a new proposal that properly addresses the major flaws with the EU authorisation process. So far, the Commission has sought to blackmail MEPs by saying it will not make another proposal but the Parliament must stay strong and ensure the Commission respects this democratic vote.

"There is definitely a need to reform the EU's GMO authorisation process: we cannot persist with the current situation by which authorisations proceed in spite of flawed risk assessments and the consistent opposition of a majority of EU governments and, importantly, a clear majority of EU citizens. Commission President Juncker has recognised and committed to proposing an EU authorisation system that takes account of this opposition. The proposal rejected by MEPs today would instead facilitate EU GMO authorisations by allowing member states to opt out but without legal certainty for doing so, while failing to address the flawed risk assessment process. This would be perverse response to the consistent opposition to GMOs and we urge the Commission to change tack."

(1) The European Commission proposed revising the EU system for authorising genetically-modified food and feed for use in the EU, allowing member states to opt-out of EU authorisations. The proposals foresee a streamlined decision-making process for EU GMO approvals, with the possibility for member states or regions to opt-out. However, concerns have been raised about the legal certainty of these opt-outs.

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Responsible MEPs



Bart Staes

Member

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