

IFOAM EU'S POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:



Maintain and correctly implement the existing EU legislation on GMOs (Directive 2001/18/EC, Regulation 1829/2003).



The decision of the European Court of Justice (C-528/16), which recognises that the GMOs legislation applies to new GMOs, with no 'long record of safety', must be immediately implemented by the Commission and all Members States.



The EU should fund research projects to develop detection methods and strategies for GMOs obtained through new genetic engineering techniques.



No new GMOs should be put on the market without detection method available.



No patents should be granted on plants and animal, nor on genetic traits that be found in nature or obtained through conventional breeding.

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ALL TECHNIQUES OF GENETIC MODIFICATION MUST BE REGULATED GIVE ORGANIC FARMING THE TOOLS TO REMAIN GMO-FREE



GMOS IN FOOD: PRECAUTION NEEDED

Since the 1990s, techniques of genetic modification (GM) (mainly transgenesis, which involves the insertion of genes from another organism) have been used in agriculture to produce genetically modified organisms (GMOs) to introduce traits in plants such as herbicide tolerance or insecticide production. Their use can trigger unintended effects and lead to potential risks. That is why their release into the environment and the food chain is regulated in the European Union.



ORGANIC IS GMO-FREE

The organic food and farming movement believes that GMOs are not compatible with the principles of organic agriculture, and their use is banned from organic production in Europe and world-wide.



NEW TECHNIQUES...

In recent years, new GM techniques have been developed, such as TALENs, zinc finger nuclease and CRISPR/Cas9 (sometimes called gene editing, directed mutagenesis or new breeding techniques). Some biotechnology companies want to bypass GMO regulations and the costs related to the authorization process and risk assessment. To do this they claim that plants and animals modified with these new GM techniques should not be considered GMOs.



...STILL GENETIC MODIFICATION

But new GM techniques that allow the direct modification of plants' or animals' DNA, even if they do not involve the insertion of a foreign gene, are still genetic modification from a technical and legal point of view. According to IFOAM, they raise similar risks, problems and uncertainties as transgenesis, and must be regulated as GMOs.



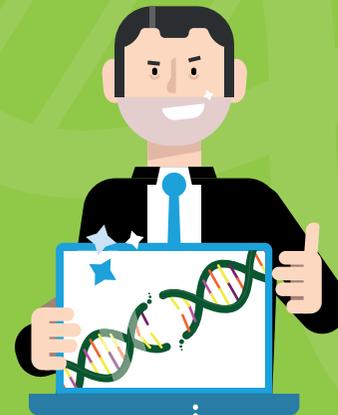
COURT RULES THAT NEW TECHNIQUES LEAD TO GMOs

In July 2018, the European Court of Justice clarified that of all new techniques of genetic modification with no 'long record of safety' lead to GMOs and must be regulated as such under the relevant EU legislation on GMOs.



BIOTECH INDUSTRY WANTS DEREGULATION

Unhappy with the Court's decision, biotechnology companies are now calling for a revision of European GMO legislation in order to exclude these new techniques from risk assessment, traceability and labelling. This would take away European consumers' right to know what is in their food.



TRACEABILITY MAKES GMO-FREE POSSIBLE

Organic agriculture, as well as GMO-free and conventional agricultures, has been able to ensure a GMO-free supply chain thanks to the EU traceability and labelling system that guarantees transparency on the presence of GMOs at every step of the production. It is crucial for the freedom of breeders, farmers, processors and consumers not to use GMOs that the current GMO legislation is maintained and applied to old and new genetic modification techniques alike, in line with the decision of the European Court of Justice.

INNOVATIVE AGRICULTURE DOES NOT NEED GMOs

To face the challenges of the 21st century we do not need transgenic GMOs or new GM techniques. We need a truly innovative agriculture, based on the principles of organic farming and agroecology. We need an agriculture which provides a fair pay to farmers and preserves biodiversity and the resources on which we depend to produce our food.

