

FoEE Biotech Mailout

Information from the Biotechnology Programme of Friends of the Earth Europe

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EP ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ON DELIBERATE RELEASE DIRECTIVE

On 21 March the European Parliament's Environment Committee will vote on the amendments for second reading on the Common Position adopted by the Council in November of last year. Already the Council's Common Position was an improvement of the Directive as originally proposed by the Commission. In fact, on quite a number of points the Common Position goes beyond the amendments Parliament demanded in the first reading. There are, however, still several issues where differences in the position of the Parliament and the position of the Council have become obvious. These issues are, in particular, the use of antibiotic-resistant marker genes, the gene-transfer from GMOs to other organisms in the environment and the issue of strict civil liability for damage, including environmental damage, caused by GMOs.

With regard to antibiotic-resistant genes, Parliament has taken the position that the use of (at least) those genes which

express resistance to antibiotics which are in medical or veterinary use should be banned. The Council, on the other hand, thinks that only antibiotic-resistant marker genes which pose a risk to human health should be "phased out" in the future. On the issue of gene-transfer, which Parliament wishes to be prevented, the Common Position remains silent. Similarly, the issue of li-



ability is not addressed by the Common Position.

The big question for the second reading is how the fact that a new Parliament has been elected between the first and the second reading will impact the second reading results. There are serious fears that the Environment Committee and Parliament as whole might not back the afore-

mentioned three proposals in the second reading. The EPP's shadow rapporteur Peter Liese is obviously aiming to achieve compromise solutions with regard to both antibiotic-resistant genes and gene-transfer from GMOs. On the first issue, he proposes that while the ban should only apply to future products (and not to those already on the market) it should apply to all genes expressing resistance to antibiotics in medical or veterinary use *independently* of whether they may cause harm to human health. Liese also wishes to prevent gene-transfer that may pose risks to the environment or human health. This latter proposal ignores, of course, the fact that gene-transfer as such may be a serious problem as the many complaints by farmers, in par-

LAST MINUTE – see insert to this Mailout "Tougher European Regulation of GMOs? - Parliamentary Committee votes for better controls" (FoE press release, 21.03.00)



Friends of the Earth

EU DELAYS APPROVAL OF THREE GMOs

On Thursday, 9th March, the Regulatory Committee set up under the deliberate release directive 90/220/EEC, met in Brussels to decide on approval for market release of three genetically modified plants:

- Fodder beet tolerant to the herbicide glyphosate ("RoundUp"), notified by Monsanto/DLF-Trifolium/Danisco Seed, dossier forwarded by Denmark (the product also contains a marker gene conferring resistance to the antibiotic kanamycin);
- Oilseed rape tolerant to glufosinate ammonium, notified by AgrEvo (part of the Aventis conglomerate), dossier forwarded by Germany;
- Oilseed rape tolerant to glufosinate ammonium, notified by Plant Genetic Systems (a subsidiary of AgrEvo), dossier forwarded by Belgium.

It was the second time the committee had discussed these dossiers; it had already met in October 1999 and failed to vote on the applications. In the meantime, the companies concerned submitted new information to the European Commission undertaking to meet possible new requirements of the future revised directive regarding labelling, monitoring and traceability.

In advance of the 9th March meeting, there were already indications that some Member States, including those which adopted a moratorium on further authorisations at the June 1999 Environment Council - Denmark, France, Greece, Italy and Luxembourg - were not willing to vote in favour of the applications. As it turned out, the committee failed to vote at all based - according to the European Commission - on unclarity in the

dossiers concerning the scope and timing of the applications (which seemed to be even more unclear as a result of the additional information provided by the companies). According to a press briefing given by a spokesperson of the European Commission:

- Further information about the two oilseed rapes was supplied "rather late in the day" (end of February).
- The information created "some confusion" about the scope of the notification for the OSR, i.e. whether the scope is wider or narrower than in the original notification. The additional information "confused the interpretation" of the original notification.
- The Competent Authorities (Belgium and Germany in the case of the OSRs) could not clarify the information provided by the notifiers.
- There was also unclarity concerning the technical aspects, in particular timing, and scope of the notification for the GM fodder beet.
- The Member States agreed unanimously that the vote should be postponed.

The Regulatory Committee will not meet again for another six months. It is intended that three months will be used for the lead Competent Authorities to clarify the dossiers with the notifiers, and the following three months will allow other Member States to scrutinise the dossiers.

The 'de facto' moratorium - or as the Commission prefers to call it, the "standstill in procedure" - on GMO approvals in the EU is therefore maintained for at least another six months.

Council decisions also delayed

Another interesting fact that

emerged from the press briefing following the Regulatory Committee was that the European Commission is waiting for further information on the four dossiers which failed to gain the approval of the Regulatory Committee and have been waiting (for months) to be forwarded to the Council. The products concerned are:

- Insect-resistant maize MON 809, notified by Pioneer (under licence from Monsanto), forwarded by France (the product also expresses some tolerance to the herbicide glyphosate, as well as containing a gene expressing resistance to the antibiotic kanamycin);
- Tomato with delayed ripening, notified by Zeneca, forwarded by Spain;
- Insect-resistant cotton, notified by Monsanto, forwarded by Spain (the product also contains genes conferring resistance to kanamycin and spectinomycin);
- Cotton tolerant to the herbicide glyphosate ("RoundUp"), notified by Monsanto, forwarded by Spain.

The Regulatory Committee failed to reach a decision by qualified majority on the Pioneer maize in October 1998, on the Zeneca tomato in December 1998, and on the two cottons in February 1999. Normal procedure under the current deliberate release Directive 90/220/EEC is that the Commission would forward these dossiers to the Environment Council. However, this failed to happen during 1999?

The Commission's spokesperson said that nothing would move forward on these four applications until further information had been added to the dossiers but that, so far, there were no new commitments from the notifiers. (GL)

GERMANY – ONE STEP FORWARD,

MINISTER BANS INSECT-RESISTANT NOVARTIS MAIZE BT 176 ...

Only two weeks after the German government had taken the decision to ban the cultivation of Novartis Bt 176 maize, the government made a Uturn and issued an exceptional permit allowing the cultivation of 12 tons of Bt-maize seeds, sufficient to cultivate about 500 hectares of land. It is not yet clear for which purposes these releases may be carried out.

On 16 February 2000, the German Federal Health Minister Andrea Fischer (Green Party) announced the ban of Novartis insect-resistant Bt 176 maize. The decision was made shortly before the German Federal Plant Variety Office was to register a maize variety called Windsor which carries the Bt 176 construct. The decision came as quite a surprise given that the minister and her aides had denied for the last eighteen months any possibility to ban the Novartis maize, even though Bt 176 has been banned in Austria and Luxembourg since early 1997, and was later also prohibited in Italy.

The decision of the German minister was explicitly based on Article 16 of the Deliberate Release Directive 90/220/EEC, which allows Member States to restrict or prohibit the use and/or sale of GMOs unilaterally. The reasons given by the minister in a press conference were:

- 1) the potential risks of the marker gene expressing resistance to the antibiotic Ampicillin,
- 2) the risk of the Bt toxin affecting other than target organisms, and
- 3) the persistency of the Bt toxin

in soil which became only known in December of last year.

In addition the minister argued that the ban was necessary since the EU marketing approval did not allow the German authorities to require farmers cultivating Bt 176 to apply

The EU marketing approval did not allow the German authorities to require farmers cultivating Bt 176 to apply resistance management measures

resistance management measures. There is, however, consensus, that such resistance management measures, in particular so-called refuges where non-Bt-maize is cultivated, are crucial to avoid increasing resistance of the European corn borer to Bt. Some scientists believe that even these refuges will not really prevent the development of Bt-tolerant insects. This would mean that *Bacillus thuringiensis* as such, whether applied as an insecticide or via a transgenic plant, would lose its effectiveness which would affect organic farmers in particular. Organic farmers have been using *Bacillus thuringiensis* very successfully as an organic insecticide for many years.

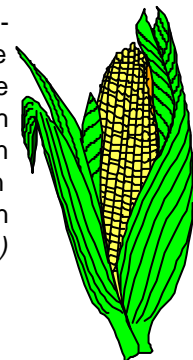
While Friends of the Earth Germany and other environmental and consumer groups immediately welcomed the minister's decision, Novartis and several individual scientists severely criticised it as arbitrary, political and unscientific. The

majority of newspapers and commentators welcomed the decision.

... AND ISSUES AN EXCEPTIONAL PERMIT FOR 12 TONS TO BE CULTIVATED ON 500 HA

Only two weeks later, however, the German Health Ministry confirmed that it was going to issue an exceptional permit allowing Novartis to cultivate 12 tons of Bt 176 seeds, an amount sufficient for planting approximately 500 hectares of land. Before this was confirmed, the Health Minister and Novartis had obviously tried to negotiate a contract with more or less the same content. Novartis, however, insisted on a withdrawal of the ban as well as the official notification of the ban which the German government, according to Article 16 of the Deliberate Release Directive, had sent to the European Commission. This was unacceptable for the Health Ministry which, however, was prepared to issue an exceptional permit.

The main reason for the Health Ministry to issue such an exceptional permit might have been the pressure from other ministries, in particular from the research ministry which actually funds monitoring experiments that require the cultivation of Bt 176 in the environment. The general ban imposed by the Health Ministry also included those experiments the existence of which was obviously unknown to the Health Ministry when the decision in favour of the ban was taken. (DL)

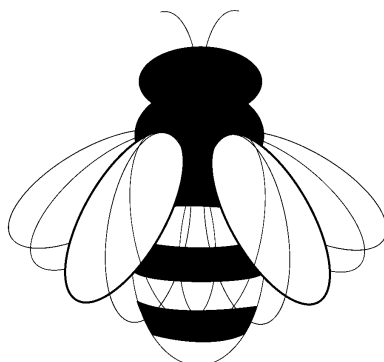


THE EUROPEAN CAMPAIGN TO HALT GMO POLLUTION

On Tuesday, 7th March, Friends of the Earth launched its "European Campaign to Halt GMO Pollution". The event was marked by a well-attended press conference in Brussels, together with simultaneous press releases in many other countries including Austria, Denmark, EWWNI, France, Greece, Scotland, Spain and the USA, as well as some countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

Twenty-three of FoE Europe's member groups are involved in the main campaign: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, England/Wales and Northern Ireland, France, Germany, Georgia, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Scotland, Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the Ukraine. The campaign aims to safeguard the right of European citizens to choose GMO-free food, to grow GMO-free crops and to protect GMO-free habitats.

The launch was timed to coincide with the announcement of a survey of leading European food manufacturers carried out by FoE England/Wales/Northern Ireland. The survey showed that, faced with consumer opposition to GMOs, nearly all of Europe's top twenty food processing companies, including Unilever, Nestlé and Kraft/Jacobs/Suchard, either already have removed, or intend to remove, genetically modified ingredients from their product lines. What is apparent, however, is that even if companies wish to get ingredients from GMO-free sources, that cannot always be guaranteed due to non-labelling of derivatives such as soya and maize oils. Furthermore, the companies do not yet extend their GMO-free policy to dairy products and/or meat from animals fed on GM crops.



Results of the Survey

Friends of the Earth received the following replies from the following top food processors:

Nestle:

"In those countries where consumers are reluctant to accept the use of GM crops as a source for ingredients, Nestle products do not contain these ingredients, in as far as practically possible".

Philip Morris (Kraft/Jacobs/Suchard):

"sourcing conventional, non-GM soya and maize based ingredients, including additives and flavours, controlled through a system of analysis... We also fully recognise and respect the fact that consumer acceptance of biotechnology is lower in Europe than in other parts of the world".

Unilever:

The "situation in Europe is changing... (Unilever's new) European sourcing policy has to take into account the GM sensitivities in certain markets... This will mean that (in the whole of Europe) hardly any GM ingredients will be used".

Pepsi Cola:

"Ingredients used in our products are not derived from genetically modified sources and no GMOs are used in our soft drink manufacturing process or in those of our ingre-

redient suppliers in Europe... We will review and consider any new technologies and ingredients that have been approved by national and international health authorities, and accepted by consumers".

Coca Cola:

"... does not use any ingredients that are genetically modified".

Diageo:

Is made up of its drinks business (no information on GMO policy) and two food arms.

Pillsbury - *"None of our brands contain any ingredients derived from genetically modified crops which could fall within the labelling regulations in Europe. Recognising consumer concerns in Europe, we have been progressively removing ingredients and additives that could have been derived from GM crops, wherever it is technically feasible .. for the last 18 months".*

Burger King - *"in relation to the countries in Europe...Burger King has removed GM ingredients from its menu items". BK had no information on derivatives.*

Mars:

"Products do not contain ingredients or additives from GM sources".

Danone:

"respecting consumer concerns was a priority for Danone. Therefore it has decided not to use such ingredients in its products sold in the EU". Danone told FoEE that this was the same position for derivatives.

Anheuser-Busch:

"For all our beer brands that we either brew in the UK or import into the European market, we use no GM ingredients. This includes Budweiser, Bud Light, Bud Ice (and) Michelob".

Kirin Brewery:

"think about our consumer's preference as a top priority. Kirin Beer does not contain GM crops".

Heinz:

"Where there is potential for GM material to be present, or where ingredients are derived from soya or maize, we source non-GM, identity-preserved ingredients through carefully audited suppliers. In addition, independent testing is carried out. We continue to take every possible step to ensure that Heinz varieties remain free of ingredients derived from GM crops... We are also reviewing all ingredients in respect of GM-derived enzymes, and are already reviewing the use of GM animal feed".

Asashi Breweries:

Asashi Beer Europe Ltd is "GMO-free".

Campbell Foods:

"We respect the present concerns of consumers". Campbell's told FoEE that all its ingredients in Europe are from GMO-free crops. Derivatives would shortly follow.

Bestfoods:

told FoEE that there are no notifiable GMO ingredients (soya and maize) in their products, but said there was no company policy on sourcing derivatives. The wouldn't put this in writing.

Seagram Spirits and Wines:

Products in Europe "contain no GMOs".

Kellogg's:

"Kellogg's is conscious of consumer preferences and does not use GM maize or soya ingredients or derivatives in its breakfast cereals sold in Europe... At present, our other grain-based morning foods such as Kellogg's Pop-tarts, Rice Krispies Squares and Nutri-Grain bars contain maize or soya derivatives produced from raw materials purchased on the world market. Kellogg's is currently seeking non-GM sources for these ingredients and we hope to have completed this process by the end of the year".

Associated British Foods (ABF):

"A survey of our manufacturing

operations confirms that this (the process of ensuring that products contain neither GMO ingredients nor derivatives of GMO crops) is now completed".

Cadbury Schweppes:

Told Friends of the Earth that it is making every effort to ensure that all its ingredients and derivatives are from GMO-free crops.

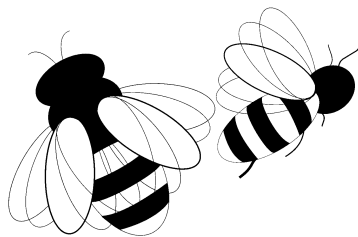
Friends of the Earth also contacted **McDonald's Europe** - Europe's largest restaurant outlet. It said that "McDonald's in Europe have asked suppliers to source non-GM ingredients, additives and processing aids".

During the launch of its main campaign, FoE underlined the risk that even if food manufacturers try to meet consumer demands for GMO-free food, this will become increasingly difficult due to:

- 1) lack of segregation and adequate labelling of commodities and raw materials imported from outside the EU,
- 2) the likelihood of GMO pollution due to contamination of conventional (and organic) crops through cross-pollination from GM crops.

FoEE is pressing for better legislation on both points, in particular for the revised EU deliberate release directive to ban release of GMOs which can outcross.

A separate insert on FoE's European Campaign to Halt GMO Pollution is included with this Mailout.



The campaign's web site is www.foeeurope.org/Halt-GMO-Pollution.

PARLIAMENT SUPPORTS CONTINUED

During its Plenary Session in Strasbourg week of 13th March, the European Parliament adopted a Resolution on the European Commission's legislative programme for 2000. Part of the text relating to food safety, public health and consumer confidence is particularly interesting - the Parliament:

48. Welcomes the many ambitious and far-reaching programmes set out in the areas of food safety, public health and consumer confidence but emphasises the need for quality over quantity and reminds the Commission that problems still remain in implementing and monitoring existing legislation;

49. Supports the full application of the precautionary principle in all matters of food safety and calls, in this context, for the continuation of the existing moratorium on new GMO releases.

Although the resolution is without

... Parliament calls, in this context, for the continuation of the existing moratorium on new GMO releases

significance as far as GMO legislation is concerned, what is even more interesting is the fact that all European People's Party (including the British Conservatives) voted in favour, whereas the Socialists voted against. This is - to say the least - somewhat incongruous in light of the situation in the Parliament with regard to the revision of Directive 90/220/EEC, bearing in mind that the PES is in favour of more stringent legislation (widely opposed by the EPP), including liability, banning antibiotic-resistant markers, and measures to prevent genetic pollution. (GL)

WALES BLOCKS UK LISTING OF AVENTIS T25 MAIZE

Good news came on 1st March when the Welsh Assembly's Agriculture Committee requested the Labour Party's Welsh Agriculture Minister, Christine Gwyther, not to add Aventis' GM T25 fodder maize (CHARDON LL) to the UK National List until further scientific and legal information had been considered. Undeterred by the Dutch listing of CHARDON LL last November, Gwyther accepted their request and the matter will come before the Committee again on 29th March.

In agreeing to the request, the Minister said that her initial legal advice from civil servants was that she was obliged to list. She added, however, that she had received legal advice to the contrary from Friends of the Earth England/Wales/Northern Ireland and said she was anxious to apply the Precautionary Principle. The Minister



has publicly supported the objective of a GMO-free Welsh environment, a campaign launched by FoE Cymru (Wales) last summer.

The delay has caused chaos in the UK's GMO policy - a direct but unintended result of the Blair Government's devolution programme - as all four administrations (including England, Scotland and Northern Ireland) have to agree unanimously to add a variety to the UK National List. But it is not at all certain that

the Assembly will back down and agree to list this GM maize for animal feed. Labour forms a minority Welsh government, the majority of Assembly Members are keen to market Welsh agricultural produce as GMO-free and the effects of the BSE disaster are still felt in rural communities.

Meanwhile, FoE EWNI have kept up the pressure by publishing an independent legal opinion that sets out how the Assembly could lawfully adopt a GMO-free policy. And before 29th March they will publish a further independent opinion indicating how the Assembly need not, and may even be obliged not to, add the maize to the list. One of the key arguments, which will apply EU-wide, is that "all appropriate measures" to avoid environmental and health damage, as required by the new Article 4.4 of Directive 70/457/EEC, have not been taken. This is because the GMO marketing consent granted to AgrEvo France in the summer of 1998 pre-dated the EU Environment Ministers' agreement of December 1998 aimed at strengthen-

SPAIN – DEMANDS GROW FOR A MORATORIUM

The international turmoil over GMOs seems to have woken up Spanish perceptions on the issue. In Spain, more and more voices are demanding precautionary attitudes when faced with the potential risks that GMOs present. The uncertainties surrounding the issue have boosted statements of political groups and regional authorities asking for a moratorium until more scientific expertise bring clarity about the potential risks and benefits of GMOs, among other arguments.

The Green Coalition (led by *Los Verdes de Madrid*, *Grupo Verde* and *Foro Verde*) will demand a moratorium on the marketing and production of GMO food - more

concretely, they will require the end of imports of GM maize and soya from the US. A referendum in which the Spanish people would have the chance to decide whether they want to assume the risks of GMOs or not will also be proposed.

Recently, Alejandro Alonso, responsible for the Agriculture and Environmental Council in one of the Spanish autonomous regions *Castilla-La Mancha* sent a letter to the Environment Minister, Isabel Tocino, proposing a meeting with the rest of autonomous regions to analyse current developments in this field, in particular the Biosafety Protocol. Alejandro Alonso stated that with respect to both the Precautionary Principle and the new legal develop-

ments in the GMOs field, "the Spanish government should adopt a moratorium on GMOs releases, including also experimental ones".

FoE Spain, which is part of the main campaign of FoE Europe to Halt Genetic Pollution, has welcomed all these statements. On 15th March (Consumer's Day), FoE Spain gave the Environment Minister and the European Commission delegation in Madrid a statement supported by several organisations and local entities around Spain. The statement requested a moratorium, as well as more transparency, public participation and company liability for GMOs, among other things. (*Victoria Boulton, FoE Spain*)

UK FARM SCALE TRIALS

Government Gambling With the Countryside

Friends of the Earth England/Wales/Northern Ireland has accused the UK government of ignoring the views of local people and gambling with the countryside by giving the green light to a huge increase in farm-scale trials of genetically modified crops. FoE also said that the Government had clearly experienced serious trouble finding sufficient sites for the trials. Although the government claims to be intending to stage 80 trials during 2000, only 30 sites have so far been announced. FoE is demanding that the government disclose when they expect to meet their 80 site target.

According to FoE EWNI's Food Campaigner Peter Riley, *"The Government is gambling with the future of the British countryside. If these trials go ahead, genetic pollution will threaten both the environment and livelihoods of neighbouring farmers. These trials are being imposed on the public without their consent. People living near these sites have not been consulted and they have no right to object."*

"The market for GM ingredients has all but collapsed in the UK. Why are we wasting over £3 million of taxpayers' money on something for which there is little demand? This money would be far better spent on conducting research into something the public does want such as organic farming."

Only one site in Scotland

Friends of the Earth Scotland claimed victory following the news that the government only managed to secure a single Scottish site for the farm-scale trial of GM crops. While this single site will still pose a threat to the environment, FoE claimed that the majority of Scot-

land's farmers had listened to public opinion and rejected attempts by the government to force them to trial GM crops on their land. FoE also questioned the decision to announce the trial locations before Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) have had a chance to debate the issue.

Kevin Dunion, Director of Friends of the Earth Scotland said: *"Scotland's farmers have turned their backs on these trials and rejected the government's 'GM shilling'. The fact that only a single Scottish site has been found shows these trails for what they really are - a sham. Failure to find more Scottish locations completely undermines the validity of these trials. However, one site is one too many and we urge the landowner to reconsider their plans. After all, we are only one site away from keeping our countryside GM-free."*

Despite being a devolved power, the Scottish Parliament has never debated the issue of GM crops. A debate has now finally been scheduled for later this month. According to Kevin Dunion: *"The Scottish Executive should be ashamed of itself. Not once has it had the decency to allow MSPs to debate the release of GM crops into Scotland's environment. By comparison its Welsh counterpart has been consulting its Agriculture Committee on these issues (see separate article on page 6 of this Mailout). Next week, MSPs will simply be debating a done deal. We have yet to solve problems of containment, contamination or liability as a result of releasing these crops into our countryside. Devolution may as well never have happened when it comes to the issue of GM. The Executive's failure to listen to public opinion will now put the environment at risk."* (Pete Riley/FoE EWNI, Lang Banks, FoE Scotland, GL)

SACK SOME SCIENTISTS!

Government told: Act Now on Conflict of Interest

Friends of the Earth England/Wales/Northern Ireland has revealed that one of the scientists carrying out controversial research for the UK government on the safety of GM crops is also being paid by the biotechnology industry to *"make the case for GM crops"*. FoE EWNI has written to British Environment Minister Michael Meacher demanding that he sack the scientist and his Institute from the Government's GM research programme.

Dr Peter Lutman works at the Institute of Arable Crops Research (IACR), part of a consortium of research groups carrying out government work on farm-scale trials. The consortium has contracts worth GB£ 3.3 million with the government for this work. Dr Lutman is a co-author of a report to the government on progress on the trials. Dr Lutman is also *"at the heart"* of CropGen, a new initiative launched by the biotechnology industry to make the case for GM crops. Two other scientists from IACR are also part of CropGen. CropGen has confirmed to FoE EWNI that scientists on the CropGen panel are paid *"honoraria"* for their work as panel members.

Commenting, Friends of the Earth's Food Campaigner, Pete Riley said: *"This is absolutely outrageous. IACR seems to be happy that their scientists are paid by the biotech industry to make the case for GM crops, while they are working on supposedly neutral scientific studies on the subject for the government. This simply deprives IACR's work on the farm-scale trials of any credibility. The Government must act fast to sack these scientists and their research institute from the already tarnished farm-scale trials."* (PR/GL)

FRANCE - "NO GMOs IN MY

On 3rd March, Friends of the Earth (les Amis de la Terre) France held a press conference at the offices of the Regional Council of *Ile de France* to celebrate the first 100 municipalities to participate in the "No GMOs in My Canteen" campaign. Speakers at the conference, which was widely covered by the French press, included representatives of municipalities involved in the move to ban genetically modified foods from publicly-run cafeteria, as well as school administrators, FoE and France Nature Environnement.

More than half of the meals eaten at lunchtime in France are served in cafeteria or canteens owned by municipalities or public services. Pressure to ban food containing, or derived from, GMOs is growing fast, led not just by environmental and consumer groups but also by parents, canteen managers, food producers, citizens groups and local politicians themselves. By mid-March, the number of municipalities from all over France that are declaring their canteens to be 'GMO-free zones' had already

More than half of the meals eaten at lunchtime in France are served in cafeteria or canteens owned by municipalities or public services

grown to 106.

The measures taken by the municipalities which exclude GMOs from, for example, school lunches, include:

- banning any products which indicate the presence of GMOs on their labels,
- requesting from suppliers of goods and services certificates which guarantee the absence of any foods containing, or derived from, GMOs,
- using organic produce as much as possible.

The press conference also addressed the problems of being able to ensure GMO-free food due to inadequate labelling legislation and lack of segregation of GM and non-GM crops.

For more information about the 'No GMOs in My Canteen' campaign and a list of the municipalities in-

ILLEGAL GM COTTON IN GREECE

Greenpeace has announced that illegal cotton has been found in Greece. Samples of seven varieties of cotton seed were analysed, two of which were clearly contaminated with a GM variety, while another three showed strong indications of contamination. The seed was imported from the US and originated in Mississippi and Arizona where 60-70% of the crop is genetically modified. The majority of the Greek cotton crop ends up as oil and animal fodder, 85,000 tons of which is exported annually to Italy and Spain.

Greenpeace is calling on both the Greek government and the European Commission for the cotton seed to be immediately withdrawn from the market. No varieties of GM cotton are approved by the European Union, although two - one insect-resistant and the other herbicide-tolerant, both produced by Monsanto - are pending approval. The Regulatory Committee under Directive 90/220/EEC failed, in early 1999, to deliver a positive

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