

# Latest News

## Europe finally accepts its dependence on imports

### EU Commission adopts rule that allows low level of GMOs to be present in feed imports to avoid supply shortages and rising pressure on agricultural prices

On 24.06.2011, the European Commission adopted the long awaited “technical solution” that provides for a standard sampling and testing methodology for presence of GMOs not (yet) authorised in the EU. While the methodology achieves a very high level of statistical certainty, it for the first time deliberately accepts that there is a limit of detection and thus introduces a tolerance of de facto 0.1% for the presence of EU non-authorised GM material in feed (e.g. soybean meal, corn gluten feed). However, this very low “threshold” only covers GM material authorised for commercialisation in a third country (e.g. the US, Canada, Brazil and Argentina) for which the EU authorisation procedure is pending for more than 3 months and for which a validated detection method is available.

“This is an important step in the right direction – but there are more steps that now need to follow.” Garlich v. Essen, Secretary General of ESA European Seed Association commented on the final adoption of the text. “Naturally, for the seed sector, a similar provision for seed imports is our main request. Europe’s breeders and seed trade need legal certainty. We cannot accept to maintain a “zero tolerance” policy for our seed products while feed imports are met with a certain generosity.”

ESA also shares the request of agricultural trade and food industry operators to also apply this solution to food products. While in May 2008 the European Commission had officially announced that it would provide such a solution for both food and feed, it later on changed its position towards a step-by-step approach.

While the current rule obviously does not satisfy the seed and food operators, Garlich von Essen still considers it to mark a positive general development: “To make it clear: this is not a perfect solution. But it shows that we seem at least to begin to accept the realities of agricultural production, international trade and our, Europe’s, dependency on large scale imports to feed not only our pigs, chicken and cattle but in the end also ourselves. Accepting reality is the first step to work on practical solutions; to deal with it instead of demanding that reality changes.”

**You can find more details here:**

Commission Press Release: click [here](#).  
Q&A document can be found [here](#).