

Latest News

While worldwide GM Cultivation and use continues to rise, Europe still leaves its breeders and farmers in legal limbo

According to ISAAA, the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications, GM crop cultivation saw another year of strong growth in 2011. With an increase of 8% (or 12 million ha), the total cultivation area reached some 160 million ha worldwide. Still, GM is one of the fastest adopted technologies in agriculture – and experts predict that this trend will continue over the coming years.

While more and more countries use GM crops and while the technology is applied to a growing number of species with a larger variety and combination of traits, Europe's breeders and farmers are left behind. The EU continues to drag its feet on new GM approvals; and after almost two years, the Commission's proposal to re-nationalise decision making on cultivation to end the current stalemate is as blocked as the authorisation process it is supposed to resolve.

“Our problems literally grow year by year”, Garlich v. Essen, Secretary General of ESA European Seed Association comments on the current situation. While the EU's imports of GM crops continues to rise due to the regions shortage of protein, a “zero tolerance” policy on GM presence is applied to seed and fields - which regularly leads to seed discards and field destructions. “We urgently need a harmonized testing protocol and a practical tolerance level for this unavoidable presence o GMOs in seed and fields to end the legal uncertainty Europe's breeders and farmers currently face.”, von Essen repeats the long standing request of the sector. “Every year, the ISAAA report highlights the growing need for a realistic policy for Europe. The ‘zero tolerance’ concept is a myth. It must be abandoned and replaced by a practical approach that is fair and economically viable.”

For more information on the ISAAA report, please clic [here](#) (Executive Summary) and [here](#) (2011 ISAAA Report on Global Status of Biotech/GM Crops)

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