

GMO Information Center – ROMANIA

The Romanian Ministry of Agriculture insists on growing GM soy

Romanian authorities reveal their real intentions regarding GMOs

Wednesday, May 23, 2007

On 10th of May 2007, the Romanian Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development clearly expressed the will to re-introduce GM soy in Romania. As Romania is an EU member state since 2007, this favorable position for GM soy commercial growing, will affect the entire European Community.

Romania cultivated GM soy (14 varieties owned by MONSANTO, Stine Seeds, Asgrow Seed, Dekalb Genetic Corporation and Pioneer) starting with the year of 1998.

The GM soy crops increased every year since '98, Romania becoming the largest GMO cultivator in Europe : 86 700 ha in 2005 and 136 000 ha in 2006.

In February 2006, the Romanian Government announced in a press release the fact that the GM soy cultivation will be banned in Romania starting with the date of the EU adhesion (1st of January 2007) as this transgenic plant is not approved at EU level. Therefore, behind this so-called decision there was no real political will to ban GM soy, but only a docile position regarding EU's policy on GM soy and a PR strategy to improve Romania's image.

Recently, the new Romanian Minister of Agriculture (ex. Minister of Economy and Finances – 1998 – 2000) publicly announced his intention to support GM soy cultivation in the EU:

“As the GM soy cultivation technology proved to have obvious advantages for farmers, with positive outcome for Romania's national economy, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development will support the approval for cultivation of GM soy at the European Union level, by expressing a favorable position in the decision making process.”

Dan Craioveanu, GMO Campaigner of the Romanian Federation of Organic Farmers declares: “It's no surprise to see that the Romanian authorities don't want to give up on GM soy. Instead of taking action to protect small farmers, consumers and the environment, the Romanian Ministry of Agriculture continues to support the strategy of contamination carried out by the industry. This strategy is confirmed by the fact that there was no real action taken to eliminate GM soy from the fields after Romania's accession to the EU. We call on all member states to listen to the will of their citizens and reject any proposal of deliberate release of GM soy in the EU”.

Please read below the official press release of the Romanian Ministry of Agriculture - 10th of May 2007 Translated by InfOMG – Romania.

Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development - ROMANIA Press release

In Romania, the legal framework concerning GM superior plants cultivation and testing was established in 2006, in respect to the EU legislation.

Therefore, according to the stipulations of the article no. 54, from the Law no. 265/29 June 2006 concerning the Protection of Environment, which applies at national level :

“(1) Starting with the date of Romania's adhesion to the EU, the cultivation or testing of GM

superior plants will comply to the aquis communitaire.

(2) Starting with the date of Romania's adhesion to the EU, the cultivation of GM superior plants, other than the ones accepted in the EU, is forbidden in Romania.”

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development organized an information campaign on this issue in order to warn the farmers that starting with 2007 the cultivation of GM soy is not allowed in Romania because these GMO varieties are not approved for commercial cultivation in the EU.

The notification submitted by MONSANTO in October 2005 is currently analyzed by the European Food Safety Authority .

In the European Union, it is possible to cultivate GM plants registered in the Common Catalogue (insect resistant genetically modified maize MON 810).

The GM soy is not authorized for cultivation in the EU, and therefore is not registered in the Commune Catalogue.

So, at this time, the cultivation of GM soy is not legal, no metter what the destination of the production would be: export, biofuels, human consumption or animal feed.

As the GM soy cultivation technology proved obvious advantages at farms level, with positive results for Romania's national economy, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development will support the approval for cultivation of GM soy at the level of the European Union, by expressing a favorable position in the decision makin g process.

Press Office - Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development - ROMANIA

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