

Greenpeace press release/GMOs

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE IS BREAKING THE GMO LEGISLATION GREENPEACE HOLD THE GMO QUARANTINE IN THE ISLAND OF BRAILA

Braila, Romania, the 6th of September 2007 - Greenpeace is outraged because the Agriculture Ministry refuses to respect the GMO legislation [1] and to destroy the illegal production of GM maize and soya from the big island of Braila [2] “We will continue the quarantine [3] on the island until the Romanian Government will take the GMO problem seriously and will incinerate illegal production from big island of Braila, said Gabriel Paun of Greenpeace Romania.

Yesterday, the local representatives of Agriculture Ministry in Braila have tried to make a control on illegal GM crops production in presence of a Greenpeace team protected by the local police but they did not wish or they are not capable to take the necessary legal measures to stop contamination. “We were shocked to observe that the local authorities have refused to destroy the illegal GM maize from the island and they are not capable to find the GM soya that has been harvested over the night. Furthermore they did not use sterile equipment and they did not take relevant samples from the left overs from the fields I have doubts that the producer will show the authorities were the GM soya was taken to. It is a new challenge for the Romanian Government to verify the entire chain production and to discover where the GM soya is. Is it still on the island, is it in the processing factories or are we going to discovered them in our food without knowing? said” Maciej Muskat of Greenpeace Poland.

Cultivation of GM soya has been banned starting 1st of Januray 2007 [4]. GM maize MON810 is also illegal in Romania because the competent authority “Ministry of Environment” has not issued authorisation to Monsanto according to the existing legislation at the date of sowing for the 2007 season. Instead, Ministry of Agriculture is forcing illegall cultivation of GM crops against romanian’s will (5) endangering organic production. “Organic production has recorded highest values for Romania in 2007. Respecting the existing legislation is an essential requirement for every citizen and for every state institution, including Minisrtry of Agriculture. The Ministry is endangering the organic agriculture, the environment and the human health. There is more than enough scientific and economic arguments to ban GMOs but the decision makers seem to give Romania for rented to the GMO industry as a playing ground for GM crops instead of offering support for organic agriculture and romanian research in the field of agriculture.” said Ion Toncea, President of National Federation for Organic Agriculture.

Greenpeace demands Ministry of Agriculture to take seriously the issue of GM crops and the necessity to protect organic agriculture:

- to destroy immediately GM soya and maize that are illegally produced in the big island of Braila
- to protect organic agriculture from the threat of GMOs
- to ban import and cultivation of all GM crops and especially MON810 which is under reassessment in EU level.

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NOTES:

[1] Ministry of Environment letter to Greenpeace No. 122411/41635/16.05.2007

“According to law 214/2002 any cultivations of superior GM crops can done only on the basis of a notification. Up to date Minister of Environment has not received any notification regarding commercial cultivation of MON810 maize.

[2] Analysis of the GE components no. M0706/034 were done at a certified laboratory, Umweltbundesamt, Vienna, Austria

[3] The quarantine was set up by 30 Greenpeace activists from Romania, Hungary, Austria, Italy, Poland, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Greece and Scotland (UK)

[4] Romanian gov has ban the cultivation of GM soya starting 01.01.2007

http://www.mapam.ro/pages/view_presa.php?id=1238&lang=2

[5] 67% of the Romanians are rejecting GE food according to the opinion poll conducted in May – July 2007 by S.C Mercury Research S.R.L