

From: [REDACTED] (SANTE)
Sent: vendredi 15 novembre 2019 14:52
To: [REDACTED] (SANTE); [REDACTED] (SANTE); JUELICHER Sabine (SANTE); [REDACTED] (SANTE); [REDACTED] (SANTE)
Subject: BTO Workshop on Genetic Innovation vs climate change in the EP - 5.11.2019

BTO Workshop on "GENETIC INNOVATION VS CLIMATE CHANGE -The opportunities of New Breeding Techniques for sustainable development and the competitiveness of agriculture"

Date: 5 November 2019
Place: European Parliament, Brussels
Organisers: Simona Bonafè, Member of the ENVI Committee and Vice President of the S&D Group
Paolo De Castro, S&D Coordinator of the AGRI Committee
[REDACTED] CIA Agricoltori italiani
Other MEPs present: MEP Patrizia Toia (S&D, IT), MEP Mazaly Aquilar (ECR, ES)
COM present: [REDACTED] (SANTE)

The workshop was organised to reflect on the role of new breeding techniques (new genomic techniques, NGT) as a possible tool to respond to climate change and on the need to have sustainable production.

MEP De Castro opened the meeting by advocating for science based policies and underlined that NGTs are different kind of biotechnological tools. If NGTs are considered under GMO legislation, EU will lose out as these techniques can help against plant diseases.

[REDACTED] spoke about importance of innovation and the need for larger debate. He noted the huge economic loss in the world production and environmental damage due to plant diseases, giving Xylella as an example. He mentioned some advantages of NGT s (strengthen ancient species, need less water for the same yield, less chemicals thus benefit to environment) and noted that public should not be afraid of this innovation.

[REDACTED] Italian Society of Agricultural Genetics, SIGA) gave a presentation on the history of plant breeding. On the impact of climate change on agriculture, he noted drastic consequences to EU agriculture referring to 2019 EEA report "*Climate change adaptation in the agriculture sector*" (EEA report No 4/2019). [REDACTED] considered the Court of Justice ruling on mutagenesis as problematic and saw as a solution in long term to adopt a new European legislation on genetic innovation in agriculture, with product-based approach. In the short term, Annex 1B of Directive 2001/18 should be amended (mutagenesis exemption).

[REDACTED] CIA) expressed his views on the difficulties of a small scale farmer to be able to reap advantages from innovation, although this is key to small companies and can improve people's lives. He noted the importance of expert (scientists) opinions vs. personal opinions. He was also concerned about the regulatory burden on NGTs, which only big companies can endure.

[REDACTED] ASAJA Asociación Agraria de Jóvenes Agricultores) outlined five priorities: 1) support of science based decision making; 2) benefits of precision farming and precision breeding – climate change is a reality and we need new tools to adapt; 3) freedom of choice – farmers should be able to choose the type of agriculture they use, the choice is driven by market as otherwise farming is not competitive; 4) smart agriculture; 5) innovation should be in the centre of next CAP. He listed series of benefits from the use of NGTs (less pesticide use, less need of fertilizers, rationalisation of use of water, adaptation to drought and to new pests). He was concerned that investments will be made in 3rd countries, from where the products, difficult to trace, are imported to EU, whereas EU

farmers cannot use the same tools. He also noted that according to Eurobarometer, gene editing is of no concern to EU-citizens (4% concerned, 22% aware).

██████████ (SANTE E3) welcomed the discussion with MEPs and stakeholders on the benefits and impacts on farmers from new techniques. She recalled the political context of GMO authorisations referring also to EP resolutions. She explained the legal situation after the ruling of the EU's Court of Justice on mutagenesis and the discussions with the Member States on the implementation of the legislation as interpreted by the Court. She noted that Member States have brought up challenges in relation to easily tracing and labelling products obtained by new techniques. She informed about the work of ENGL on detection methods and the work of EFSA on scientific guidance. She noted that all operators, including importers of products from third countries as well as respective operators in third countries, have to comply with EU rules. She also informed about the request of the Council to the Commission to carry out a study on a status of NGTs, content of which will be decided at a later stage, but will in any case be based on targeted consultation. To this end, she called for substantiated views of stakeholders, with concrete data, to help informed discussions.

MEP Bonafe concluded the workshop by thanking for the interesting debate on a sensitive issue. She noted that the Green Deal will touch every sector and that climate change needs a new approach. She considered NGTs could be one of the solutions to adaptation to climate change.