

Petition 1179/2019 by H.R. (German) on better information of consumers in relation to genetically modified products

The petitioner calls for better information for consumers on the labelling on the packaging of food, pharmaceuticals, animal feed, cleaning and washing products and textiles which have been manufactured or processed using genetic engineering techniques. The cultivation of genetically modified plants is constantly increasing. For example, a large proportion of food products of animal origin comes from animals fed exclusively or partly with such feedstuffs. Genetic engineering is also used in many medicines, cleaning and washing products and textiles. The petitioner claims that consumer information on the use of genetic engineering is currently completely inadequate and in some cases misleading.

He therefore calls for all products to be correctly and accurately labelled.

Information

- The petition was forwarded by the German Bundestag Petitions Committee.
- The risks posed by GMO products have been raised in a number of petitions (Petitions 343/2012, 807/2012 and 1164/2014); Petition 761/2017 concerns the mandatory labelling of products produced from animals fed with genetically modified feed.
- Regulation (EC) No 1830/2003 of 22 September 2003 concerning the traceability and labelling of genetically modified organisms and the traceability of food and feed products produced from genetically modified organisms and amending Directive 2001/18/EC: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2003:268:0024:0028:EN:PDF>
- After the European Court of Justice (ECJ) ruling in 2018 (in Case C-528/16) that organisms obtained by new plant breeding techniques (NBTs) should, in principle, fall under the GMO Directive, the Council of the EU has requested a study from the Commission on the “options to update the existing legislation”.
<https://www.euractiv.com/section/agriculture-food/news/eu-study-to-clarify-gene-editing-court-ruling-further-muddies-waters/>.

Recommendations

- Declare admissible;
- ask the Commission for information regarding the comprehensive labelling process at European level;
- send the petitioner, for information, the following link from the Commission regarding genetically modified organisms: https://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/gmo_en;
- send the petitioner, for information, a copy of the Commission’s reply to Petition 761/2017 jointly with the above information (4th indent).