Resolution on Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/2627 authorising the placing on the market of products containing, consisting of or produced from genetically modified cotton COT102 pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 1829 /2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council

2024/2835(RSP) - 26/11/2024 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 496 votes to 143, with 18 abstentions, a resolution objecting to the Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/2627 authorising the placing on the market of products containing, consisting of or produced from genetically modified cotton COT102 pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

On 31 March 2017, Syngenta Crop Protection NV/SA, based in Belgium, submitted, on behalf of Syngenta Crop Protection AG, based in Switzerland, an application to the national competent authority of Germany for the placing on the market of foods, food ingredients and feed containing, consisting of or produced from genetically modified cotton COT102 consisting of the GM cotton for uses other than food and feed. EFSA adopted a favourable opinion which was published on 26 June 2023.

The GM cotton contains genes producing insecticidal proteins (‘Bt toxins’) and an antibiotic resistance marker gene.

Parliament stressed that questions remained regarding **Bt toxins** and the effects on non-target organisms of the use of genetically modified **Bt crops**.

Several Member States raised critical comments regarding the use of antibiotic resistance marker genes, including that, in the face of the current crisis concerning antibiotic resistance, it would be wise to implement the precautionary principle, especially in the present case where the application of the antibiotic resistance marker gene is completely unnecessary and the removal of the ARMG from the plant genome possible.

Member States submitted many **critical comments** to EFSA including that cultivation of the GM cotton on agricultural fields is to be considered as deliberate contamination of natural environments with antibiotic resistance genes, as well as that the information provided on molecular characterisation, composition and toxicology is insufficient and therefore EFSA’s conclusions of equivalence of the GM cotton with conventional cotton in terms of food and feed safety is premature.

Members also insisted on the need to **reduce the dependency** on imported feed.

On a **procedural** note, Parliament recalled that it adopted 38 resolutions objecting to the placing GMOs on the market. Despite its own acknowledgement of the democratic shortcomings, the lack of support from Member States and the objections of Parliament, the Commission continues to authorise GMOs.

On the basis of these considerations, Parliament considered that the Implementing Decision is **not consistent with Union law**, which is to provide the basis for ensuring a high level of protection of human life and health, animal health and welfare, and environmental and consumer interests, in relation to GM food and feed, while ensuring the effective functioning of the internal market.

Therefore, Parliament called on the Commission to:

- **repeal Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/2627** and to submit a new draft to the committee;

- **not to authorise** the placing on the market of any GM plants containing genes which confer antimicrobial resistance;

- **take into account the Union's obligations under international agreements**, such as the Paris Climate Agreement, the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The draft implementing acts should be accompanied by an explanatory memorandum explaining how they uphold the principle of 'do no harm'.