Marketing of seeds, propagating and planting materials: Community comparative tests and trials

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The committee adopted the report by Danielle AUROI (Greens/EFA, F) amending the proposal under the consultation procedure. MEPs said that seed marketed for use in organic farming should be tested in an environment reflecting that type of farming. Special tests were needed to determine that such seed was free of all traces of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and pesticides, and more funding should therefore be provided for testing under the relevant budget lines. The committee also pointed out that, while the directive stipulated that genetically modified varieties (GMV) of seed must be labelled, what had not been regulated, to date, was how non-GMV seed should be handled if it contained traces of GMOs. It therefore tabled a number of amendments stipulating that non-genetically modified varieties of seed which contain GMOs may not be placed on the market. It added, however, that where traces of GMOs authorised under Community law are "adventitiously or technically unavoidably present" in seed, a threshold may be set beneath which the seed may be placed on the market. The threshold should be set as low as possible in line with the latest scientific and research findings and, in order to establish that traces of GMOs are present accidentally, evidence must be supplied that suitable measures were taken to prevent their presence. Lastly, the committee called for new specific directives on the marketing of seed and plants for conservation and diversity of genetic resources in Europe, based on Directive 98/95/EC, to be adopted to supplement the arrangements laid down in the proposal.