

Genetically modified food and feed

2001/0173(COD) - 08/10/2002 - Modified legislative proposal

The European Parliament made 111 amendments to the Commission's proposal at first reading. The Commission can accept 16 in their entirety and 38 in a part or in principle. The following amendments are amongst those accepted: - the summary of the dossier presented by the applicant will be presented in standard form, as this makes the handling and access to the application easier; - there is a time limit of twelve months from the date of application of the proposed Regulation to the transitional measure, so that the labelling requirements will apply fully to all genetically modified food and feed after this time limit; - the wording confirms that the precautionary principle has been taken into account in the drafting of the Regulation; - the Commission can accept a series of amendments that aim at strengthening information requirements and public involvement within the authorisation and supervision process of genetically modified food and feed. All provisions on public access should, however, be without prejudice to the protection of intellectual property rights relating to the data concerned; - competent authorities may be consulted for the adoption of implementing rules on the submission of application dossiers, but only for matters falling within their remit. Local authorities will not be consulted during this process. Only the EFSA will have responsibility for evaluation. The Commission does not accept the following amendments: - changes to the fact that the proposed legislation will have the status of sectoral legislation, and a centralised procedure will apply; - certain clauses on information requirements and public involvement go too far, such as a period of three months for public consultation, the publication of draft Commission decisions and public access to issues discussed in connection with the risk management decision and the result of the vote. - certain amendments aim at suppressing the derogation for adventitious presence of unauthorised GMOs in food and feed and thus refuse to amend Directive 2001/18/EC in this regard, which is unacceptable. The proposed Regulation would not be feasible if it does not provide for any tolerance under certain conditions, of traces of genetically modified materials that are not authorised in the Community. Only adventitious or technically unavoidable presence of GMOs, which were positively assessed by a European scientific committee, will be tolerated under a threshold of maximum 1%, which can be lowered by comitology in order to take account scientific developments and product particularities. - certain amendments relate to the derogation to the labelling requirements in case of adventitious presence of material produced from genetically modified organisms and provide for a maximum threshold of 0.5%. The Commission feels that the threshold should be established by comitology and that the derogation should also apply to material containing GMO's. These measures should not be confused with actions to prevent the unintended presence of GMOs in non-genetically modified products, which are not the subject of the proposed Regulation. - amendments that include the objective of prevention of the unintended presence of genetically modified material in food and feed are not acceptable. - certain issues on assessment and authorisation procedure are rejected. - amendments on labelling of genetically modified feed are not acceptable because they do not take into account Directive 96/25/EC.