Basic information

2013/2099(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
Plant breeding: what options to increase quality and yields **Subject** 3.10.06 Crop products in general, floriculture 3.10.09.02 Plant health legislation	

Key players

European Parliament	**Committee responsible**	**Rapporteur**	**Appointed**
	AGRI Agriculture and Rural Development	PAULSEN Marit (ALDE)	31/01/2013
		Shadow rapporteur LE BRUN Agnès (PPE)	

European Commission	**Commission DG**	**Commissioner**
	Agriculture and Rural Development	CIOLOŞ Dacian

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
10/06/2013	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
21/01/2014	Vote in committee		
24/01/2014	Committee report tabled for plenary	A7-0044/2014	Summary
25/02/2014	Decision by Parliament	T7-0131/2014	Summary
25/02/2014	Results of vote in Parliament		
25/02/2014	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2013/2099(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55

Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	AGRI/7/11979

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE506.031	07/11/2013	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE506.032	04/12/2013	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A7-0044/2014	24/01/2014	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T7-0131/2014	25/02/2014	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2014)447	22/07/2014	

Plant breeding: what options to increase quality and yields

2013/2099(INI) - 25/02/2014 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 442 votes to 143 with 41 abstentions, a resolution on plant breeding: what options to increase quality and yields? It aimed to launch a thorough debate and inquiry concerning the whole situation with regard to plant-breeding in European and global agriculture.

It noted that population growth would place extreme demands on agriculture, and the FAO estimated that the food supply would need to increase by 70 % over the next 30-40 years. The main problem remained of how populations in different parts of the world would be able to feed themselves, as the cultivable land area declined due to inappropriate land use, including poor agricultural practices, and to climate change. Members noted that opportunities to increase the area under cultivation were extremely limited, given that in many parts of the world it is thought to be quite unrealistic to bring new agricultural land into use. The FAO estimated that it would be possible to achieve approximately 10 % of an increase in agricultural production by cultivating new farmland, which meant that around 90 % would have to be achieved by increasing the yields from existing farmland.

Parliament stressed that, in order to respond to forthcoming challenges, it was exceptionally important to have an effective and competitive plant-breeding sector.

Members advocated:

- the importance of **developing varieties** that can cope with the conditions we expect to encounter in the future;
- the need for crops that absorb nitrogen and phosphorus effectively and which are more tolerant of drought and heavier precipitation, more resistant to pests and can withstand changes in temperature;
- the development of perennial crops;
- the use of new plant-breeding techniques (concern is expressed at the Commission’s delay in assessing new breeding techniques and the Commission is called upon, as a matter of urgency, to clarify their regulatory status);
- the importance of guaranteeing access to genetic resources as the basis for plant breeding;
- that the European plant-breeding market must be further improved in the interest of healthy competition;
- the role of publicly funded independent scientific research carried out in the long term public interest as regards long term food security;
- that fundamental plant-breeding research in the EU should be funded by the EU and its Member States.

The Commission was urged to:

- use the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme for Research and Innovation to fund applied research that supports the development of new, innovative planting-breeding techniques such as accelerated breeding;
- allocate financial resources and create a coherent structure for plant-breeding research and practice within research programmes and other suitable policy instruments, so that European diversity can be preserved and developed;
- elaborate an overall strategy on agricultural inputs, especially in relation to plant breeding;
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provide a policy framework that supports the agricultural input sector as one of the key areas for the development of agricultural productivity and sustainability

Parliament noted the estimates put forward by the FAO that the diversity of cultivated crops declined by 75 % during the 20th century and that **a third of today's diversity could disappear by 2050.** It stresses the vital need to preserve the vast majority of local and regional varieties in situ and on-farm, in order to increase genetic and cultural diversity both within strains and breeds and in terms of their absolute number.

The resolution also noted the length of the protection of variety rights in respect of those plants that require an extended development period prior to the commercialisation stage was **not sufficient to encourage commercial investment in their research and development.** While Parliament understood it was both costly and time-consuming to develop new improved varieties, it stressed that this was needed in order to maintain Europe's competitiveness in this area. It suggested that **such costs could be compensated for by extending the length of plant variety protection rights after a proper impact assessment.**

Plant breeding: what options to increase quality and yields

2013/2099(INI) - 24/01/2014 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development adopted the own-initiative report by Marit PAULSEN (ALDE, SE) on plant breeding: what options to increase quality and yields?

The committee aims, by means of this report, to launch a thorough **debate and inquiry** concerning the whole situation with regard to plant-breeding in European and global agriculture.

The plant breeding industry is of fundamental importance as regards the productivity, diversity, health and quality of agriculture, horticulture, food and feed production and the environment. Estimated population growth will place extreme demands on agriculture. Cultivable land areas are declining due to inappropriate land use, including poor agricultural practices, a problem which has been exacerbated by climate change.

The report stressed that, in order to respond to forthcoming challenges, such as future food supply needs and climate change, it is exceptionally important to have an effective and competitive plant-breeding sector.

Members advocated:

- the importance of **developing varieties** that can cope with the conditions we expect to encounter in the future;
- the need for crops that absorb nitrogen and phosphorus effectively and which are more tolerant of drought and heavier precipitation, more **resistant** to pests and can withstand changes in temperature;
- the development of **perennial crops**;
- the use of new plant-breeding techniques (concern is expressed at the Commission's delay in assessing new breeding techniques and the Commission is called upon, as a matter of urgency, to clarify their regulatory status);
- the importance of guaranteeing access to **genetic resources** as the basis for plant breeding;
- that the European plant-breeding market must be further improved in the interest of healthy competition;
- the role of publicly funded **independent scientific research** carried out in the long term public interest as regards long term food security;
- that fundamental plant-breeding research in the EU should be funded by the EU and its Member States.

The Commission is urged to:

- use the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme for Research and Innovation to fund applied research that supports the development of new, innovative planting-breeding techniques such as accelerated breeding;
- allocate financial resources and create a coherent structure for plant-breeding research and practice within research programmes and other suitable policy instruments, so that European diversity can be preserved and developed;
- elaborate an overall strategy on agricultural inputs, especially in relation to plant breeding;
- provide a **policy framework** that supports the agricultural input sector as one of the key areas for the development of agricultural productivity and sustainability.