



Press Release

EU moratorium can be lifted as European Parliament votes yes to new GM rules

Strasbourg, 2 July 2003: Today, the European Parliament voted strict new standards for the approvals of GM crops and GM derived foods, including more extensive labelling requirements. “The good news is that Parliament voted against the extreme amendments of the Environment Committee that in effect would ban genetic modification from being used in agriculture, and GM products from being offered to European consumers,” said Simon Barber, Director of the Plant Biotechnology Unit at EuropaBio (1).

The new GM Food and Feed and Traceability and Labelling rules are the most broad ranging laws in the world. They are the result of more than two years of hard negotiations amongst the Commission, the Council and the Parliament that resulted in a compromise agreement. The adoption of these two regulations completes the legislative package that a group of Member States had demanded before the *de facto* moratorium on approvals of new GM crops could be lifted. “The new rules will impose a heavy regulatory burden on the agri-food chain, and are not all that we had wanted. But at least an agreement has been reached that will allow the new and pending applications (2) in the pipeline to move forward,” says Simon Barber.

The agreed regulation foresees a review after two years of implementation. “It is welcome that the Member States have left themselves the opportunity to review the efficiency of the traceability and labelling requirements. Between now and then, the whole food and feed chain will have to work very hard to implement the new rules” says Simon Barber.

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(1) About EuropaBio

EuropaBio, the European Association for Bioindustries, has 35 corporate members operating worldwide and 21 national biotechnology associations representing some 1200 small and medium sized enterprises involved in research and development, testing, manufacturing and distribution of biotechnology products. www.europabio.org

(2) <http://gmoinfo.jrc.it>