



Laura Jones (Welsh Assembly Member) signs the GMO-free areas petition for South Wales East.

“The declaration of a GMO-free region Menorca is a political declaration to make sure that the quality of our products is not jeopardised.”

Toni Allès, Menorca (Spain), Economy minister



Contamination from GM fields would be impossible to avoid in areas of small scale farming, like here in Austria. A GM-free area is the only workable solution to avoid contamination.

GMO-free areas in the EU As of January 2006

- GMO-free region
- GMO-free municipality, or farmer declared GMO-free zone
- GMO-free province, department or prefecture
- Non EU countries

For updates see www.gmofree-europe.org



“We want protection for our area because GM crops were perceived by the local food and farming industries as not only a threat to local biodiversity and local farming but also to the local economy - of which green tourism is a major part.”

Councillor Anne Ward, South Hams District Council, Devon, England

“The farmers in Lower Austria offer a variety of regional, high-quality products whose quality should not be threatened by genetically modified organisms (GMOs). Together with the European Network of GMO-free Regions, we want to make sure that our well-founded demands for protecting GMO-free production are met.”

Ernest Reisinger, Lower Austria (Austria) Deputy Head, Department of Rural Development

“Limousin became a member of the network of GMO-free regions to enhance the image of quality in our region. The quality of our agriculture and our environment must be preserved.”

Claude Tremouille, Limousin (France), Regional Councillor for Agriculture

“Our local authority has been a member of the European network of GMO-free regions since 2004. We believe that the network can play a significant role in the revision of the European Community's legislation.”

Mollas Konstantinos, Drama Kavala Xanthi (Greece), Regional Councillor

“The agricultural and food heritage of our province has to be protected. The genetic contamination – even though accidental – of our rural environment would be a deadly threat to the future of our agriculture and its traditional high-quality products. For this reason, our Administration is fully involved in the campaign of regional and local authorities across Europe for the inclusion into EU legislation of our right to set up GMO-free areas.”

Avelio Marini, Ascoli Piceno (Italy), Spokesperson for Agriculture

Source: Assembly of European Regions A.E.R., Friends of the Earth Europe, GENET/SOS

“We have founded the association Champs Libres to preserve our high quality agriculture and to protect it against the problems caused by GM contamination. We demand that preventive measures are passed that will enable us to remain a GMO-free area.”

Philippe Bedel, Mayor of Bax (France)



Austrian farmers reject GM crops.

“Southern Transdanubia's decision to go GMO-free is in line with our goal of becoming an 'Eco-region' laid down in the Development Plan of the Region.”

Attila Panovics, Southern Transdanubia (Hungary), Chair of the Regional NGO Forum



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- The democratic right for regions and local authorities to decide if GM crops can be grown in their areas
 - Tough measures to prevent contamination of seeds, crops and food
 - Strict liability to make biotechnology companies pay for any economic loss and environmental damage
- European citizens must be guaranteed the right to grow and eat GMO-free crops and food. To do this we need an EU-wide coexistence law that includes:

Our demands:

GMO-free Europe: Our right to decide



“For our region it is a basic principle that we can decide on our own what will grow on our fields! We demand the right of self-determination for the regions.”

Rudi Anschober, Upper Austria (Austria), Minister for Environment

Resistance to GMOs in Europe is greater than ever. But while the movement for GMO-free areas is growing, so is the pressure to grow and import GM crops and foods. A change in EU law is urgently needed to protect the communities, farmers and local authorities that want to keep their areas GM free.



Anti GMO protest in Italy.

European citizens oppose GMOs

The majority of European citizens are opposed to GMOs in their food and are concerned that growing GMOs will harm the environment. Farmers are also concerned about GM crops contaminating traditional, conventional, and organic crops and the effect this could have on their businesses and consumer choice for GMO-free food.

Growing movement for GMO free regions

As of January 2006, 172 regions, provinces and prefectures and more than 3400 local authorities in the EU alone had declared themselves GMO-free areas. They have done so by passing regional laws or declarations expressing their citizens' will to keep GMOs out of their territory. But under current EU law they cannot legally enforce these bans. In reality once a GM crop is approved for growing in Europe it can be grown anywhere without any further local consultation.

GMO-free choice under threat

Spain is the only EU country that has been growing GMOs (GM maize) in any significant quantities. Otherwise, the EU remains largely GMO-free. However, biotechnology companies still have many applications in the pipeline to grow GMOs in the EU and internationally the



Local people make their voices heard for a GMO-free region.

US-led GMO dispute at the World Trade Organisation has already caused the European Commission to approve new GMOs for import. Meanwhile, there are no EU-wide measures in place to prevent contamination from GM-crops (so called "coexistence measures"). Some member states have started putting in place national measures, but they vary widely from country to country. In many countries the cultivation of GMO crops could begin at any time, without adequate measures in place to protect non-GM crops.



Switzerland (which is not in the EU) has now passed a moratorium on GM crops within its borders.

Local areas – the right to decide

While the European Commission and national governments have an important role to play in assessing the impact of GMOs on the environment and health, the problems GM crops are likely to cause will be felt by the farmers, food companies and communities living and working in those areas where they are grown. Local and regional decision makers are much closer to the concerns of their citizens, therefore they should have the final say about whether GM crops are grown in their areas.