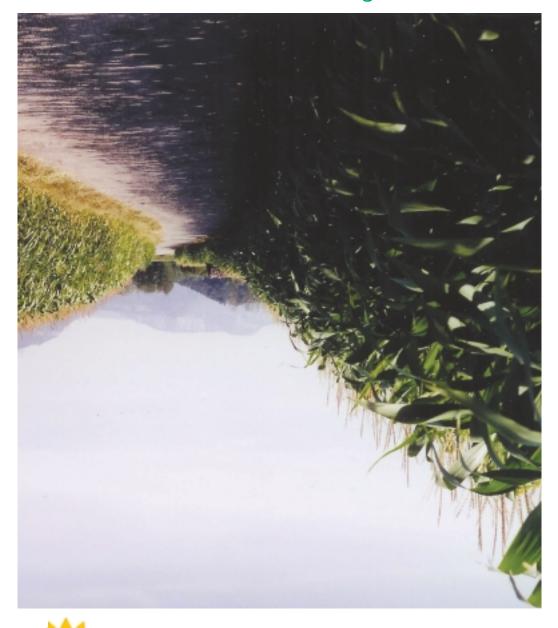
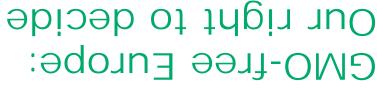


www.gmofree-europe.org





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Friends of the Earth Europe





loss and environmental damage

- Strict liability to make biotechnology companies pay for any economic
 - lough measures to prevent contamination of seeds, crops and food

crops can be grown in their areas

• The democratic right for regions and local authorities to decide if GM

law that includes:

GMO-free crops and food. To do this we need an EU-wide coexistence European citizens must be guaranteed the right to grow and eat

Our demands:



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.

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 GMOfree 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.