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## Spain

### Biotechnology

## Spain Approves Nine GMO Corn Varieties for Planting

### 2004

**Approved by:**

Lloyd J. Fleck  
U.S. Embassy

**Prepared by:**

Diego Pazos

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**Report Highlights:**

On February 16, 2004, the Minister of Agriculture gave final approval for nine new varieties of genetically modified BT corn for planting in Spain. With these additions, corn area planted with BT corn should reach about 50,000 hectares in the coming season. In addition, in the few weeks the Ministry of Agriculture will publish recommendations on coexistence among GM crops, non- GM crops and organic crops. These actions reflect once again Spain's national goal of enhancing its competitiveness as an agricultural producer within the EU.

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Includes PSD Changes: No  
Includes Trade Matrix: No  
Unscheduled Report  
Madrid [SP1]  
[SP]

## Summary

The Spanish Government continues to support and expand the use of biotechnology. On February 16, 2004, the Minister of Agriculture, Miguel Arias Canete, approved nine additional varieties of GM corn for planting and cultivation in Spain. These varieties are based on two "events," MON 810 and CG 00256-176.

These nine newly approved varieties, combined with the seven Bt varieties already approved, give Spanish farmers sixteen varieties of BT corn which can be planted this year: five are based on event CG 00256-176 (Compa CB, Jordi CB, Brama, Sansone BT, and Escobar) and eleven on event Mon 810 ( Aliacant Bt, Aristis Bt, DKC 6575, PR 33P67, Campero, Cuartal BT, DKC 6550, Gambier BT, Jaral, Pr 32 P 76 and Protec ).

With sixteen varieties available, seed companies should be able to supply sufficient seed to expand this season's area planted to BT corn well beyond last season's 32,000 hectares; some industry contacts expect it will reach around 50,000 hectares in 2004. BT corn is effective in resisting infestations of the European corn borer, which is a problem on 140,000 hectares of corn mainly located in the Ebro River Basin in Northeastern Spain, as well as areas in the regions of Castilla la Mancha, Andalucia and Madrid. The corn borer is also a problem in almost any area of Spain where corn is planted as a second crop.

The National Seed Producers Association (APROSE) expects additional varieties of GMO seeds based on events CG 00256-176 and Mon 810 could be approved for planting in the next few years. In addition, varieties based on other events and evaluated under EU directive 18/2001 could be approved and added to the list once they are approved in Brussels.

This expansion of GM corn area places Spain far in front of the rest of the EU in the application of modern biotechnology. The Spanish Government has publicly stated its view that the EU should end its moratorium on approvals of GMO products. In addition, at recent EU Council meetings in Brussels, Spain voted to approve two new GMO events (NK 603 and BT-11).

In parallel with its support of GM crops, Spain is also strengthening its ability to monitor their impact on the environment. On December 12, 2003, a Royal Decree created the National Commission of Bio-Surveillance ( Comision Nacional de Biovigilancia or CNB), to advise the Minister of Agriculture on GMOs and to control the monitoring plans for GM crops and coexistence among GM crops, non-GM crops and "organic" crops. In addition, the Ministry of Agriculture is expected to publish recommendations regarding coexistence in the next few weeks. These recommendations could be mandatory in CY 2005.