



USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

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Ireland

Biotechnology

Irish EPA allow field trials of potatoes

2006

Approved by:

Besa Kotati
U.S. Embassy

Prepared by:

Michael Hanley

Report Highlights:

The Irish EPA granted permission for field trials of potatoes engineered to be resistant to potato blight.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
London [UK1]
[EI]

The Irish Environment Protection Agency (EPA) has just given permission for field trials of a bio-engineered potato. The potato, developed by the German firm BASF, is engineered to be resistant to potato blight. The trial will take place on a one-hectare site in County Meath, adjacent to the capital Dublin. The trial will be for a five-year period from now to 2010 and there would be post-trial monitoring until 2014

The granting of permission has is provoked an angry reaction from opponents of biotechnology. The EPA said they had consulted widely with all relevant state agencies, including the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, before making a decision; and that it had assessed all 96 submissions on the application, of which 95 were hostile. The EPA said their consent was subject to stringent conditions and monitoring; and that the potatoes grown would not be used for food or feed or placed on the market.

The EPA last granted permission for field trials of bio-engineered sugar beets in 1998. Those trials were concluded but not before there were many physical attacks on the crop.