

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: European Commission Authorizes 8 GE Crops for Import

Country: European Union

Post: Brussels USEU

Report Category: Biotechnology - Plants and Animals

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Report Highlights:

On January 22, 2021, the European Commission (EC) approved five genetically engineered (GE) crops (three corn and two soybeans) and renewed the authorization for three corn crops used for food and feed. The EC approves groups of events twice a year - during the December holiday season and in mid-summer. These were the eight events remaining at the end of last year that were not yet authorized by the Commission. The eight authorizations and renewals were published in the European Union's Official Journal on January 26, 2021, and they remain valid for 10 years.

General Information:

On January 22, 2021, the European Commission (EC) approved five genetically engineered (GE) crops (three corn and two soybeans) and renewed the authorization for three corn crops used for food and feed. The authorization and renewal decisions apply to food and feed for import and processing, but do not cover cultivation and are valid for 10 years. All products will be subject to the EU's strict labelling and traceability rules.

The following eight Commission Implementing Decisions for the authorizations and renewals were published in the [European Union's \(EU\) Official Journal on January 26, 2021](#):

- [Commission Implementing Decision \(EU\) 2021/60 of 22 January 2021 authorising the placing on the market of products containing, consisting of or produced from genetically modified maize MON 87427 × MON 89034 × MIR162 × NK603 and genetically modified maize combining two or three of the single events MON 87427, MON 89034, MIR162 and NK603](#)
- [Commission Implementing Decision \(EU\) 2021/61 of 22 January 2021 authorising the placing on the market of products containing, consisting of or produced from genetically modified maize MON 87427 × MON 87460 × MON 89034 × MIR162 × NK603 and genetically modified maize combining two, three or four of the single events MON 87427, MON 87460, MON 89034, MIR162 and NK603](#)
- [Commission Implementing Decision \(EU\) 2021/62 of 22 January 2021 renewing the authorisation for the placing on the market of products containing, consisting of or produced from genetically modified maize MIR604 \(SYN-IR604-5\)](#)
- [Commission Implementing Decision \(EU\) 2021/63 of 22 January 2021 renewing the authorisation for the placing on the market of products containing, consisting of or produced from genetically modified maize MON 89034 \(MON-89034-3\)](#)
- [Commission Implementing Decision \(EU\) 2021/64 of 22 January 2021 authorising the placing on the market of products containing, consisting of or produced from genetically modified soybean SYHT0H2 \(SYN-000H2-5\)](#)
- [Commission Implementing Decision \(EU\) 2021/65 of 22 January 2021 authorising the placing on the market of products containing, consisting of or produced from genetically modified maize MON 87427 × MON 89034 × MIR162 × MON 87411 and genetically modified maize combining two or three of the single events MON 87427, MON 89034, MIR162 and MON 87411](#)
- [Commission Implementing Decision \(EU\) 2021/66 of 22 January 2021 authorising the placing on the market of products containing, consisting of or produced from genetically modified soybean MON 87751 × MON 87701 × MON 87708 × MON 89788](#)
- [Commission Implementing Decision \(EU\) 2021/67 of 22 January 2021 renewing the authorisation for the placing on the market of products containing, consisting of or produced from genetically modified maize MON 88017 \(MON-88017-3\)](#)

Authorization Process:

All GE crops have gone through the EU's full authorization procedure, including a favorable scientific assessment by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), as set in Directive 2001/18/EC.¹ After a positive evaluation by EFSA, the EC puts forward a proposal for the authorization of the events that must be voted at the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed (PAFF) for Genetically Modified Food and Feed and Environmental Risk by EU Member State (MS) representatives. A positive outcome in the PAFF Committee requires a qualified majority.² Member States did not reach a qualified majority either in favor or against the GE crops at the Standing Committee and at the subsequent Appeal Committee thus the Commission has the legal duty to proceed with the authorizations.

Consideration and Outlook:

The EC approves groups of events twice a year - during the December holiday season and in mid-summer. The Member States had many EFSA approved GE crops waiting in the authorization pipeline last year due to the COVID-19 outbreak and the suspension of Standing Committee meetings. In 2020, the PAFF Committee did not convene for the first time until September 15, 2020. It convened twice more on October 7, 2020 and December 16, 2020 to work its way through all the waiting applications before 2021. The Appeal Committee met on January 23, 2020, November 12, 2020, and December 3, 2020. These eight events were ready for Commission authorization and publication in the Official Journal before the winter holiday. However, the Commission did not prioritize them as they usually have in previous years. These authorizations mark the first GE approvals for export to the EU for 2021.

Attachments:

No Attachments.

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32001L0018>

² <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/council-eu/voting-system/qualified-majority/>