

GMOs in The Netherlands

Commercial cultivation

Not at this moment. But the coexistence law is expected to be soon finalised, and afterwards commercial cultivation can theoretically happen. The coexistence law in The Netherlands is based on an agreement between interest parties. In practice 4 organisations:

LTO – biggest farmers organisation in NL

Biologica – organic farmers chain organisation

Plantum NL – association for production and trade of seeds and young plants (over 500 firms)

Platform Aarde Boer Consument – smaller farmers organisation

-> still a decision needs to be taken regarding liability and compensation fund in case of contamination

Political situation

* the Government is pro

-> always supports new proposals for cultivation on EU level

-> financially supports research on biotechnology

-> supports the coexistence concept

Research and experiments

Field trials 2009 -> applications

potatoes

* resistant to late blight – Wageningen and BASF

* starch - BASF

Field trials 2008

potatoes

* resistant to late blight/phytoftera: Wageningen University (+ cisgenic), BASF (gm)

* starch altered composition: BASF, AVEBE (similar to Amflora, but without the antibiotic resistance gene)

maize

* Roundup Ready maize (NK603) - Monsanto

* herbicide & glyfosate resistant - Pioneer

2006-2007

2 years coexistence research with maize MON810

[Coexistence is impossible]

13% contamination in a receptor field situated 250m away from the GM maize field. The cause of this high contamination percentage is badly cleaned machinery. This way one GM seed was left behind on the field. If in a scientific conducted experiment it was impossible to perfectly clean the machinery and prevent contamination, how is it expected that this will happen in practice?

GMOs in the food chain

soy and maize in animal feed -> not on the label of meat and dairy products

oil and starch ingredients on basis of rapeseed, soy and maize -> labelled

micro-organisms for east production, aspartam, vitamin B6, B12, C -> not labelled

Companies present in The Netherlands

-> Seed and pesticides

- Monsanto (soy, rapeseed, maize)
- Syngenta (maize, rapeseed)
- Pioneer / DuPont (maize)
- Bayer (rice)
- BASF (potatoes) -> NL
- AVEBE (potatoes) -> NL

-> transport / trade: Cargill – Bunge – ADM - Dreyfus

GMOs in The Netherlands

Forms of protest – what A SEED is doing

videos – filmtour

gmo free zones initiatives – end of this year:

whereas one or two years ago GMO free regions didn't appeal to much to local authorities and farmers, now, when the situation is getting closer to possibility to cultivate GM crops, and after the film tour, there's an increased interest in working for GMO free zones.

One day conference about gmo free zones -> local authorities, farmers, nature areas, political parties who have shown an interest in working for GM free regions

There's not too much knowledge on what is the best way to go about declaring a GMO free zone in the Netherlands, this is why we want to meet and see together what could be the best way.

A SEED GMO free zone campaign / GMO campaign

2000 – COP6 Den Haag

2005 – Wadden zee boat tour – raise awarness through street action, meet with local politicians and organisations

2006-2007

raising awarness through informative events, film screenings and public actions
gmo free zones: household, farms, shops

2008

raising awarness through Gen Zoekt Boer film tour & working with local authorities to declare GMO free zones

Obviously the Netherlands is way behind the GMO free regions movement in Europe. This is partially caused by Dutch agriculture being more intensified in comparison to many other regions. Farmers are less tied to their land and more used to follow the technological developements force-fed by agrobusiness. But another possible reason could be that the average Dutch citizen stands even further away from the country side and food production than other European citizens.

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