

Current EU position – Impacts for the UK

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Current Position - EU

- Currently a Centralised approvals system
 - ◆ Case by case assessment by EFSA sent to EC
 - ◆ EC drafts proposals for granting or refusing authorisation
 - ◆ Vote in the "Standing Committee for the Food Chain and Food Safety" (Member States): where it may be accepted or rejected with a qualified majority
 - ◆ If no qualified majority the EC submits its draft to the Council of Ministers
 - ◆ Vote in the Council of Ministers: Approval or rejection by qualified majority - without qualified majority the Commission's draft takes effect

Current Position - EU

- A number of GM crops have authorisation in the EU for feed or food ingredients
 - ◆ Maize, Cotton, Oilseed rape, Soybean, beet.
- Two varieties of Maize approved for cultivation in the EU.
- T25 herbicide tolerance but Bayer not making available
- MON 810 BT Maize commercially grown in the EU
 - ◆ 20% Spanish maize production
 - ◆ Czech Republic, Slovakia, Portugal, Romania and Poland
 - ◆ Not suitable for UK or silage production

Current position - UK

- GM has been of the public radar for best part of a decade.
- No commercial crops
- GM Feed fed to animals
- Raising up the political and public agenda once again.
- UK government increasingly supportive
- Field trials undertaken
 - ◆ Spring Wheat – alarm pheromone for aphid control
 - ◆ Camelina – omega-3 oils
 - ◆ Potato – blight resistance

EU “opt out” proposal

- EU proposal to allow some countries to opt-out of growing GM whilst others press ahead
- Paterson shifted UK position to support this: aim to fast-track crops into pro-GM countries (incl. England)
- GeneWatch got a copy of the industry’s plan: anti-GM countries expected to vote for GM crop approvals in return for being allowed to ban them
- Proposal adopted by Council.
- Sent to Parliament

EU “opt out” proposal

- European Parliament are amended proposal
- MEPs voted to allow national bans for environmental reasons, even if already approved for cultivation
- Now going through the EU processes but will return to the Commission in early 2015
- May be finalised early next year or

Changes needed to the proposal

- Stronger legal basis for bans (including environmental grounds)
- Improved centralised risk assessment: to stop fast-track approvals into countries without bans
- Option to ban at any time (so new governments can do this)
- Co-existence, contamination and liability measures to protect GM free supplies
- Remove role for companies in decisions

Implications for UK

- England would go GM but Scotland and Wales very uncertain but the reasons for any ban need to meet regulator requirements
- Complexity of UK geography and politics make any bans or opt ins extremely complicated
- GM cultivation will become a political issue again in the UK and plantings could happen in 2016 (maybe earlier?)
- UK co-existence and liability measures required

Implications for UK

- Only GM crop in the EU pipeline suitable for growing in England is Syngenta's GA21 maize (Round Up Ready)
- Likely cultivation areas include the South West
- A weak opt-out proposal might see Monsanto re-submit applications: but a strong opt-out could see more applications blocked or withdrawn at EU level