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Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
Minister Charlie McConalogue
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IRELAND

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Regulation of New Genetic Engineering: Food Industry for Freedom of Choice

3 September 2024

Dear Minister McConalogue,

On behalf of European businesses in the food industry, I am sending you an Open Letter on the pending regulation of new genomic techniques (NGT). The Open Letter will be sent in parallel to the other EU Agriculture Ministers.

The entrepreneurs are calling for consistent genetic engineering labelling for food to be maintained. They fear that they will be restricted in their entrepreneurial freedom to continue offering their customers GMO-free food following the threat of deregulation of NGT 1 plants.

376 businesses from the food industry in 16 EU Member States have signed the Open Letter.

The initiators would like to talk to you to explain their point of view. For organisational reasons, this discussion can also take place online.

Kind regards,



Alexander Histing
Managing Director

Regulation of New GMOs: We need freedom of choice through transparency

Berlin, 3 September 2024

Dear Minister McConalogue,

On 7 February 2024, the European Parliament voted in favour of labelling and traceability of all products produced with New GMOs. The EU Parliament wants consumers, farmers, food producers and retailers to be able to continue to recognise when products produced using new genomic techniques (NGTs) are present in food or feed.

As leading companies in the food industry in the EU, we warmly welcome the European Parliament's vote in favour of full labelling of all products made from NGT plants. Many of our customers are sceptical about GMO products. They want to decide for themselves whether they want to buy and eat them. They can only do this if the products are clearly labelled. Not all signatories of this letter fully oppose NGTs. However, we are all united by the conviction that fair competition requires differentiation. Raw materials and products that have been produced without the use of genetic engineering are part of a diverse food market and should remain so. We are also united by the belief that those companies that introduce new technologies must take responsibility for their business decisions. In line with the polluter-pays principle, they must pay for the costs incurred, which arise above all for those who want to exclude NGTs from their supply chains.

In the interests of consumer protection and fair competition, we want to implement the obligation adopted by the EU Parliament for labelling and traceability of all NGTs in our companies. To do so we need detection methods for all products manufactured using new genomic techniques, including those in category 1. Companies that want to place NGTs on the EU market must therefore provide detection methods, reference material and data on the genetic modification during the authorisation procedure. In addition, we need an EU-wide binding legal basis on which Member States must adopt detailed coexistence measures that permanently protect agriculture and the food industry from contamination with category 1 and 2 NGTs. This is the only way we can offer our customers products without GMOs. We are also in favour of the possibility of national bans on the cultivation of category 1 and 2 NGTs.

We would ask you to support our cause and look forward to meeting with you.

Yours sincerely



Appendix

Why we need mandatory analytical detection methods for category 1 NGTs

The EU Parliament has passed a labelling requirement for all NGTs - and therefore also for all plants belonging to category 1 and the products derived from them. In the interests of fair competition and consumer expectations, it must be possible to verify that labelling is carried out in accordance with the law. This requires - analogous to the current system - analytical detection methods. In this way, missing declarations can be discovered - companies and consumers can be sure that an unlabelled product does not contain any New GMO. Inspection authorities can also check compliance with the labelling obligation.

The possibilities for detection methods for NGT1 plants depend largely on two factors: Firstly, investment in research, and secondly, regulation. The EU Commission is now funding two projects for the development of detection methods with a total of 11 million euros - a significant step forward. However, companies that want to bring category 1 plants onto the market are not yet obliged to submit detection methods, reference material and data on genetic modification. It can, though, be assumed that they have detection methods - simply in order to be able to assert their intellectual property, which is protected by patents.

Why we need EU-wide binding coexistence measures

In order to maintain agriculture and food production without GMOs in the long term, we need EU-wide binding coexistence measures. These must apply to all category 1 and 2 NGTs and be mandatory in all Member States. Otherwise, there is a high risk of permanent contamination of Non-GMO products. The consequences would hit the producers of conventional Non-GMO and organic products hard, as the contamination would lead to product withdrawals and reputational damage or even the loss of certifications. The food industry would suffer from a general loss of confidence.

In order to minimise the risks of foreseeable contamination, a legal basis is required on which EU Member States can adopt national and regionally adapted coexistence measures.

To ensure that agriculture and food production with and without GMOs remains possible in the EU in the long term, a site register is needed that records all fields on which NGTs are grown commercially or for experimental purposes, plant-specific distance rules and specifications for product segregation from the field to food production and retail. Liability rules must be introduced to ensure compensation in the event of contamination, including a compensation fund if the polluter cannot be identified, and the polluter pays principle must be consistently applied - those who use New GMOs must be responsible for keeping their NGTs out of the supply chain and bear the corresponding costs.

Economic operators who do not use NGTs must not be burdened with costs and requirements. Without this obligation, the production costs for conventional and organic Non-GMO products would be driven up. Companies that produce the food that the majority of consumers want would be at a competitive disadvantage.

Why we are in favour of the possibility of national and regional cultivation bans

To date, in none of the current legislative proposals national bans on the cultivation of category 1 and 2 NGTs are permitted. In accordance with the principles of subsidiarity and national

sovereignty, we call for Member States to be able to continue to decide whether NGTs may be cultivated on their territory or parts thereof. Such room for manoeuvre is particularly important where the coexistence of both forms of agriculture and food production is not practically or economically feasible.

Signatories

A. Loacker AG	ASTROM, export-import, s.r.o.	Bio Hotel Haus am Weinberg
A.R.T. Services GmbH	Auer Mühle GmbH	Bio Konditorei Tillmann GmbH
Aboca S.p.A. Società Agricola	Azienda agricola Furlan Giovanna	Bio Planet S.A.
Abraxas Biomarkt GmbH	Bäckerei Bahde GmbH	Bio-Bäckerei Weber GmbH
Agrar GbR Tanna	Bäckerei Mast	BioBackHaus Leib GmbH
Agrarhandel Krassnig GmbH	Backstube Angerer GmbH	Biochi KG
Agriblea di Agosta Giorgio & C.s.s.a	Balema GmbH	Biocoop SA
AGRO FOOD Lebensmittel GmbH	Bauck GmbH	BIOCOP PRODUCTOS BIOLOGICOS S.A.
AGROSEMENS Semences maraîchères agroécologiques certifiées 100% Bio	Bäuerliche Erzeugergemeinschaft Schwäbisch Hall AG	BioCore B.V.
ALB-GOLD Teigwaren GmbH	Baumeister Frischei GmbH & Co. KG	Biofisch GmbH
Allos Hof-Manufaktur GmbH	beckers bester GmbH	Biofleisch NRW eG
Alnatura Produktions- und Handels GmbH	Berisia & Beer GmbH & Co. KG	BIOG Genossenschaft
Alois Lachner, Food Ingredients & Consulting	BERNAM SRL	BIOGARTEN Handels GmbH
Altdorfer Biofleisch GmbH	Bettina und Franz Handl GesbR	Biogast GmbH
Alte Schmiede Ottensen GmbH	Beutelsbacher Fruchtsaftkellerei	BioGourmet GmbH
Alternatur,s.l.	Bia società agricola consortile srl	Biogros S.à r.l.
Andechser Molkerei Scheitz GmbH	Bingenheimer Saatgut AG	Bio-Gut Rosenthal GmbH & Co. KG
Apimel d.o.o.	Bio Bäckerei Postler GmbH	Biohof Achleitner GmbH
ARCHE Naturprodukte GmbH	Bio Benjamin OOD	BIOhof Krautgartner Fleischerei GmbH
ARGE Heumilch	Bio Breadness GmbH	Biohof Otilie & Otilie Hofcafé
Aroma Snacks GmbH	Bio Frischgeflügel Roth GmbH & Co. KG	BioHof Wöhler
AROMANDISE	Bio Gut Rosenthal GmbH & Co KG	BioHotel AmVieh-Theater
	Bio Handwerksbäckerei Backwerk Christian Lecht e.K.	Biohotel Stillebach GmbH&Co.KG
		biokaiser GmbH
		Biokonditorei & Bäckerei Bucheckchen/ Einzelunternehmen

Biolait S.A.S.	Consorzio marche Biologiche	Ennstal Milch KG
Bioland Betrieb Gerhard Tartsch	CROC SNACK - JBG	erasmus bio fine dining - Einzelunternehmen
Biolandhof Steidle	D'Angelo Pasta GmbH	ErdmannHAUSER Getreideprodukte
biologon GmbH	De Bolster bv	Ernst Triebaumer Rust eGEN
Biomarkt Hauser OHG	De Öko Melkburen GmbH	Erste Raabser Walzmühle M. DYK GmbH & Co KG
BioMarkt proNatur / Inh. Paul Hurnaus	Demeter Getreide Chiemgau GmbH	Etelser Käsewerk GmbH
Biomüse UG (haftungsbeschränkt)	Demeter Imkerei Susanne Weirich	Fa.Ulmer GmbH & Co.KG
biond GmbH	Demeter Landbauerzeugnisse GmbH	Fahner Frucht Handels- und Verarbeitungen GmbH
Bioobst Sabisch	Demetermilchviehbetrieb Rinderle	Faire Biogetreide Vermarktung
Biopekarna Zemanka s.r.o.	Denningers Mühlenbäckerei, Einzelunternehmen	Fairfleisch GmbH
Biopont Kft.	Detmers Getreide-Vollwertkost GmbH	Farma Oldřiš
BioTrio GmbH	DFM Vermarktungs GmbH	Fattoria Petrini
Biovum GmbH	Die Biohennen AG	FILEANE
Biscuits Roc'hélou SAS	Die Nudelwerkstatt Magdeburg	Fiordelisi Srl
blattfrisch GmbH	dm-drogerie markt GmbH & Co. KG	Fit Life Europe Kft.
Bodan Großhandel für Naturkost GmbH	Do.Da.Co.srl	FRANCE RECHERCHE DEVELOPPEMENT SAS
Böhm's Hofladen	Donath-Mühle GmbH&Co KG	Franken-Gemüse Bio eG
Boßhamersch Hof GmbH & Co. KG	Dorfkäserei Geifertshofen AG	Fritz Mühlenbäckerei GmbH
Brauerei Clemens Härle KG	Dorfladen Frauenzell - Inhaberinnen geführt	FRoSTA AG
Brotique (Inh.: Sophie Henne)	dreher bio gmbh	GAEC DE L ARBRE
BSB GmbH	Dünninger GbR	Gasthof zur Linde
Bühler GmbH	Dupin d.o.o.	Gebrüder Woerle GMBH
Bunthaus Brauerei	eco united GmbH	Gemeinschaftsverpflegung Paisler
Burkhardt Feinkostwerke GmbH	EcorNaturaSi Spa	GEN NO GmbH & Co.KG.
by Nikolaihof GmbH	ECOTONE	Germline SAS
C.F. Grell Nachf. Naturkost GmbH & Co. KG	Egesun GmbH	GF Fleischproduktion GmbH & Co KG
Campo Verde Österreich GmbH	EGGspert4u e.K.	Gino Girolomoni Cooperativa Agricola
Caroma GmbH	Eickermühle GmbH	Gläserne Molkerei
Casa Grande de Xanceda	EKIBIO SAS	Gläserne Molkerei GmbH
Castello di Grillano Società Agricola s.s.	Elbmüller GmbH	Globus Holding GmbH & Co. KG
Cbet FrischeService & Handels GmbH		Globus Markthallen Holding GmbH & Co KG
Chiemgauer Naturkosthandel GmbH		

Gloria Grogger Einzelunternehmerin	HUOBER BREZEL GmbH & Co.	LFW Ludwigsluster Fleisch- und Wurstspezialitäten GmbH & Co.KG
Gmundner Molkerei GmbH	HUOBER BREZEL GmbH + Co.	LindenGut GmbH & Co. KG
Govinda Natur GmbH	Hütthaler KG	Lorenz Rupert, BACK KULTUR
Green Goodies Food GmbH	Imkerei Florian Faber	mainhaus Stadthotel Frankfurt - Hotel und Restaurant Kolpinghaus Frankfurt GmbH
Greenic GmbH	Irish Hedgerow	Maintal Konfitüren GmbH
guterrat Gesundheitsprodukte GmbH & Co. KG	JEAN HERVÉ SAS	Märkisches Landbrot GmbH
Hamegg Nootbaar GmbH	Kamut Enterprises of Europe bv	Marold- Ökologischer Samenbau GmbH & Co. KG
Hamfelder Hof Bauernmeierei GmbH & Co. KG	KAOKA SAS	Martin Bauer GmbH & Co. KG
hanf&natur, Ralf Buck	Käsbaur GmbH & Co. KG	Martinshof Vertriebs GmbH
Hausrucköl Verein & Co KG	Käserei H. Birkenstock GmbH	MATERVIVA spa Società Benefit
Healthy Powerfood	Käserei Plangger GmbH	Mayer & Geyer GmbH
Hebofrut GmbH	Käserei Pötzelsberger GmbH	MEDO-FLOR d.o.o.
Heggelbach Süd GbR	Käserei Stift Schlierbach GmbH & CoKG	Mellifera AD
Heidelberger Partnerschaftskaffee e.V.	Kellerei Bozen Gen. landw. Ges.	Mëtrienas pagasta zemnieku saimniecība "Priežukalns"
Herbaria Kräuterparadies GmbH	Kiebitz e.V.	Metzgerei Allmendinger GmbH & Co. KG
Heuschrecke Naturkost GmbH	Kornkraft Naturkost GmbH	Metzgerei Packhof GMBH
High Quality Organics B.V.	KRAUT&RÜBEN Bioladen GmbH	Michael Lootz VEGETUS Einzelunternehmen
Hof Dannwisch Landwirtschaft GmbH & Co. KG	Kupfer Holding AG	Midsona Deutschland GmbH
HOFER KG Österreich	La Fourche SAS	Milchwerke Berchtesgadener Land Chiemgau eG
Hofgut Kapellenhof	La Garbancita Ecológica S. Coop. Mad.	Minderleinsmuehle GmbH&CO.KG
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Holle Europe GmbH	Landhandel Nord-West GmbH&Co. KG	MMag. Rudolf Schwarzer Schwarzer Brennerei
Hotel Leutascherhof - Wandl OHG	Landhotel Yspertal GmbH	möhrengrün, Inh. Albrecht von Schultendorff
Hotel Rastbichlhof GmbH	Landmann's Biomarkt II GmbH & Co. KG	Moin Biologische Backwaren GmbH
Hotel zur Post GmbH	LaSelva società bioagricola	
HOYER GmbH	LaSelva Toskana Feinkost Vertriebs GmbH	
Hügli Nahrungsmittel GmbH	Lay Gewürze GmbH	
Hühnerhof Wiesengrund GmbH	LECKER'S Bio Manufaktur GmbH	
Humboldt Stubn, MMMoon GmbH	Leev.nu B.V.	
	Lehner Handels GmbH	
	Les Délices de l'Ogresse	

Molkereigenossenschaft Hohenlohe-Franken e.G.	Peter Riegel Weinimport GmbH	Schälühle Nestelberger Naturprodukte GmbH
Montebello Cooperativa Agrobiologica	Pfarrgut Taubenheim GmbH & Co. KG	Schnappinger GmbH
MoringaVerde	Pfluger Ohg	Schnelles Grünzeug OWL UG
Moulin Marion	Pharmaherb Kft.	Scholderbeck GmbH & Co KG
MRCA Mushroom Research Center Austria GmbH - Tyroler Glückspilze	Pichler Biofleisch Vertriebs GmbH & Co. KG	Schönegger Käse-Alm GmbH
Mühlenbäckerei Andreas Scherbarth e.K.	Poppy & Seed Verarbeitungs- und Handels GmbH	Schubert Bio & Vollwert Bäckerei GmbH & Co.KG
NaNa Bio BV	Porchers GbR	Schwarzwaldmilch GmbH Freiburg
Naturata s.à r.l	PPURA GmbH	Schweizer Sauerkonserven GmbH
Nature Et Compagnie	Primal Feast s.r.o.	Sennereigenossenschaft Steibis e.G.
Naturkost Elkershausen GmbH	PrimaVera Naturkorn GmbH	Sennereiverband Südtirol Genossenschaft
Naturkost Erfurt GmbH	PRODPLANT IMPEX SRL.	Sojarei Vollwertkost GmbH
Naturkost Kontor Bremen GmbH	Pur Aliment S.A.R.L.	Sonnberg Biofleisch GmbH
NEULAND Fleischvertriebs GmbH	Purvegan GmbH	Sonnengold Distribution Kft.
Neuner's Gesundheit & Wellness GmbH	Racio, s.r.o.	SONNENTOR Kräuterhandels GmbH
NÖM AG	Rapunzel Naturkost GmbH	Sonnentor Kräuterhandelsgesellschaft mbH
OBEG Hohenlohe GmbH & Co. KG	rebio GmbH	Sonnentracht GmbH
Ökofrost GmbH	Reformhaus eG	Spa Therme Blumau Betriebs GmbH.
Ökoland GmbH Nord	Regionalwert AG Rheinland	SPAR Österreichische Warenhandels AG
Ökoring Handels GmbH	REGIONIQUE - Die Produktfabrik GmbH	Springer Bio-Backwerk GmbH & Co. KG
Olga Deutschland GmbH	Reigershof CV	Steffeshof
Ölmühle Kappelbauer	REWE Group	Süd West Bio GmbH
ÖMA Beer GmbH	Rinklin Biomarkt GmbH	Südei Packstelle Strücklingen GmbH
Optima Feinkost GmbH	Rinklin Naturkost GmbH	SunflowerFamily GmbH
OPW Ingredients GmbH	Rosenfellner Mühle & Naturkost GmbH	SuperBioMarkt AG
Ostermühle Naturkost GmbH	rosmarin BIOBACK e.K.	TAIGA Naturkost Jaroslaw Sojnikow e.K.
Österreichische Bergkräutergenossenschaf t eGen (mbH)	Salus Pharma GmbH	tegut... gute Lebensmittel GmbH & Co KG
Pain de Belledonne	SalzburgMilch GmbH	
Pastarica reisegewerbe	Samen Maier GmbH	
Pestalozzi Kinder- und Jugenddorf Wahlwies e.V.	SANATUR GmbH	
Pestalozzi Kinderdorf- und Jugenddorf Bäckerei	Sarchio Spa	
	SAS EPICES ROELLINGER	
	SAS Olga	
	SAS TERRE ADELICE	
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Teigwarenerzeugung Melchart	Werner Lampert Beratungsges.m.b.H.
Terra Naturkost Handels KG	Wesermühle GbR
TerraSana	Wikana Keks und Nahrungsmittel GmbH
Tigernuts Traders, S.L	Wildwuchs Brauwerk Hamburg KG
Topas GmbH	Wino Bio GmbH
Töpfer GmbH	Worlée NaturProdukte GmbH
TOP-TEAM Zentraleinkauf GmbH	ZERLINA s.r.o.
TORRE COLOMBAIA DI FASOLA BOLOGNA ALFREDO	ZiegenUnion Grüne Hügel GbR
Udea BV	Zotter Schokolade GmbH
Ulmer direkt	Züger Frischkäse GmbH
Ulmer GmbH & Co. KG	ZWERGENWIESE Naturkost GmbH
Ulrich Walter GmbH Lebensbaum	
Unimarkt Handels GmbH & Co KG	
Upländer Bauernmolkerei GmbH	
Valdibella cooperativa agricola	
Veritas	
VFI Oils for Life GmbH	
Vier Jahreszeiten Einzelhandels KG	
Vinné sklepy Kutná Hora, s.r.o.	
Voelkel GmbH Frucht- und Gemüsesäfte	
VollCorner Biomarkt GmbH	
Vollkornbäckerei Borrek	
Vollkornbäckerei Sartorius Inh. Strauß und Kaleske OHG	
Vollkornbäckerei Siebenkorn GmbH	
Vulkan Brauerei GmbH & Co. KG	
wageswiese GmbH	
Weingut Feth GbR	
Weltladen Hailer	