

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release – 3 July, 2002

SNP WELCOMES CONSUMER-FRIENDLY VOTE ON GMO'S

Ian Hudghton MEP (Scottish National Party), has welcomed the outcome of votes in the European Parliament in Strasbourg today on the traceability and labelling of GM products. Amendments supported by the SNP's group in the European Parliament, and backed by a majority of MEP's, require producers to label ALL foods which contain genetically modified material, and ensure that a "zero tolerance" approach to GMO's is adopted. The result was greeted with delight by the SNP in Strasbourg, and by SNP MSP's in Edinburgh who have been vociferous in their calls to put a halt to field scale crop trials of GM crops in Aberdeenshire and Fife. Speaking after the debate, Mr Hudghton said:

"The voice of European consumers sounded loud and clear in Strasbourg today when a majority of MEP's from across Europe upheld the principle that consumers have a right to know where their food is from and what it contains. Furthermore, it is now incumbent on producers of GM products to bear the cost and the responsibility for ensuring that consumers are given accurate information on produce.

Unfortunately the measures do not extend to animals fed with GMO's – but the fight is not yet over. The SNP will continue to lobby for this to be included during the next stage of the passing of this legislation when Ministers from Scotland will be tested to see whether they uphold the views of the directly elected European Parliament, or whether they are bullied into submission by the biotech industry giants."

Speaking from her constituency office in Markinch, SNP MSP Tricia Marwick said,

"This is a great result for consumers and shows the strength of feeling against duping the public into consuming genetically modified products. The SNP in Scotland and in Europe are fighting against GM contamination. It is a pity that Ross Finnie and his Lib/Lab pals have chosen instead to foist GM crop trials on communities in Fife and Aberdeenshire. The SNP can be trusted to

continue the fight to protect consumers in Scotland – today's votes are a positive step to achieve this aim.”

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NOTES FOR INFORMATION

1. Traceability and labelling:

All GM food and feed products have to be labelled and to be traceable irrespective of whether they contain DNA / protein or not. Thus in the future, products such as sugar and highly refined oils produced from GMOs have to be labelled.

2. Unauthorised GMOs:

Unauthorised GMOs or GM materials may not be present in any food or feed. The Commission proposed a threshold of 1%, which was rejected.

3. Labelling thresholds:

The labelling threshold applies only to GMO derivatives (such as sugar, starch, and tomato paste) accidentally present in conventional food/ feed. It shall be 0.5% maximum. The threshold shall be reviewed as and when science and technology allow. In contrast, the Commission proposed an unspecified threshold level (to be defined in comitology) and the threshold proposed by the Commission would apply to live GMOs as well as GM derivatives. The Commission did not foresee a review clause.

4. GMO producers shall take measures to avoid GM contamination:

All Green/EFA amendments were adopted which require GMO producers/ users to take anti-contamination measures. They shall take effective measures to prevent the unintended presence of their products in other conventional or organic products. This is a big step forward in the up coming co-existence debate.

5. GMO-free label:

The amendments calling for a GMO-free label were rejected. Now the onus and the costs shall remain with GMO producers rather than those who do not want to use GMOs.