

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1896/04  
by Willi Piecyk (PSE)  
to the Commission

Subject: Mandatory GMO labelling of eggs, meat and milk

The revised Directive 2001/18/EC<sup>1</sup> introduces the authorisation of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in seeds, feed and food in Europe. The Directive is designed to ensure safety and freedom of choice for the consumer. This freedom of choice is to be achieved by watertight traceability and mandatory labelling. However, the requirement to label produce ends on the way through the animal's digestive system: if the consumer buys and consumes meat, eggs or milk from animals fed with genetically modified feed, these products do not have to be labelled. This labelling loophole prompts the following questions to the Commission:

1. Is the Commission aware of cases where the feed industry, in order to avoid the risk of liability, is already labelling most of its produce as genetically modified and, in some cases, is even mixing non-genetically modified produce with genetically modified produce, in order not to break the rules on labelling?
2. What is the Commission's reaction to the allegation that the situation outlined in Question 1 will lead initially to price rises and, subsequently, to non-genetically modified produce being forced off the market?
3. What is the Commission's reaction to the allegation that this labelling loophole regarding eggs, meat or milk makes a nonsense of the declared freedom of consumer choice?
4. In the Commission's view, how can this labelling loophole be reconciled with the precautionary principle and the principle that preventive action should be taken, as laid down in Article 174(2) of the Treaty?
5. Does the Commission see a need for further European action in the area of mandatory labelling?

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 106, 17.4.2001, p. 1.