

WRITTEN QUESTION E-5467/06  
by Anne Ferreira (PSE)  
to the Council

Subject: Meeting of the Codex Alimentarius Commission in Chiba (Japan)

From 27 November to 1 December the Codex ad hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Foods Derived from Biotechnology held a meeting given over in part to discussion of a draft annex to the Guideline for the Conduct of Food Safety Assessment of Foods Derived from Recombinant-DNA Plants.

During the discussion the Finnish Council Presidency apparently approved the European Commission's planned decision to begin discussions with the United States on acceptance of the respective levels of contamination resulting from the different procedures and authorisation thresholds used in the United States and the Union.

Without anticipating the outcome, but without forgetting either that it is only a few weeks since a type of US rice was found to have been contaminated by an unauthorised GMO, a proposal to the above effect and its acceptance by the Presidency are to say the least surprising, since any genetically modified foodstuff not authorised by the EU in accordance with Directive 2001/18/EC<sup>1</sup> and Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003<sup>2</sup> cannot legally be marketed under the Community law on GMO authorisation. Any tolerance of contamination, even when this has occurred accidentally, is illegal and unacceptable.

Will the Council publish the Commission proposal and its favourable opinion on the Commission's proposed position, together with a record of the discussions at the above-mentioned Codex meeting?

What made the Council Presidency deliver a favourable opinion on the Commission proposal? Has the opinion been referred to Coreper? If so, what have been the reactions and the views expressed by the individual Member States?

Can the Council say why it has decided in favour of opening discussions with the United States on the above subject?

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

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 268, 18.10.2003, p. 1.