

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3362/07

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to the Commission

Subject: GMO approval procedure and zero tolerance regime and the economic consequences thereof

Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003<sup>1</sup> was adopted to regulate the placing on the market of genetically modified crops. The European Union is currently facing a rising number of incidents related to the adventitious presence of traces of genetically modified crops that are not yet authorised in the EU, but have received approval in major trading partners of the EU. Although importers and stakeholders are acting with due diligence to avoid such incidents, they are likely to recur due to the introduction of new events in the exporting countries and the application of a zero tolerance regime for the presence of unauthorised GMOs in imports to the EU. This worsening situation is likely to result in ever higher feeding stuff prices in the EU.

1. Given the high import dependency of the EU for protein-rich feeding stuffs (e.g. soybean meal, corn gluten feed), how would the European Commission assess the consequences of asynchronous approvals and the zero tolerance policy on the competitiveness of EU livestock production in the short and in the long run?
2. Is the Commission of the opinion that the current approval procedure for GMOs in the EU takes too long? Is the Commission of the opinion that the situation, in which the EU lags far behind with its approvals compared with the rest of the world, is highly undesirable?
3. Is the Commission planning to come forward with specific measures, or proposals for measures, that would speed up the current approval procedure? If so, could the Commission specify what these measures or proposals for measures will look like?
4. Is the Commission of the opinion that instead of the current zero tolerance regime, a threshold value should be applied for the adventitious presence of unauthorised GMOs that have already obtained a positive assessment from the EFSA or that have been authorised in third countries with a safety assessment equivalent to the one required for EU authorisation?
5. Does the Commission expect the current situation, if left unchanged, to result in trade disputes with affected countries? If so, how does the Commission intend to avoid trade disputes on the issues raised?

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