

Genetically modified food and feed

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The Council held a policy debate on the basis of a questionnaire from the Presidency, focussed on the three major elements of the proposal, whose results will be taken into account by COREPER in the preparation of the debate to be held at the next session of the Council in November. Regarding the authorisation procedure for the placing of a GMO on the market, a large majority of delegations expressed their wish to keep a centralised procedure as proposed by the Commission. Concerning the transitional provisions on the threshold set for traces of unauthorised GMOs that have nevertheless been assessed as risk-free, a majority of delegations had an open approach on the Presidency suggestion, while others expressed their concerns regarding the level of the threshold or were doubtful on the time limit. The Presidency suggests to limit the application to GMOs which have received a positive scientific assessment before 31 December 2002, and to limit the tolerance at 1% (which could be reduced by means of a committee procedure) for the maximum proportion of GMO during a transitional period of three years. The Commission supported the Presidency suggestion. Lastly, regarding the scope of application for labelling rules and the minimum threshold on this matter for labelled products, a majority of delegations considered that the Presidency suggestion was a good basis for the continuation of the discussion, while others expressed their concerns regarding the exclusion from the scope of application of live animals fed with GMOs, and the proposed level of 1% rate for the threshold applied to labelled products. The Presidency suggests to set a 1% rate threshold for the labelling of GMOs (which could be reduced by means of a committee procedure).