Resolution on the draft Commission implementing decision authorising the placing on the market of products containing, consisting of, or produced from genetically modified maize DAS-40278-9

2017/2674(RSP) - 17/05/2017 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 435 votes to 216, with 34 abstentions, a resolution on the draft Commission implementing decision authorising the placing on the market of products containing, consisting of, or produced from genetically modified maize DAS-40278-9, pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council on genetically modified food and feed.

The resolution was tabled by the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety.

Parliament considered that authorising the import of DAS-40278-9 maize into the Union will undoubtedly lead to an increase in its cultivation elsewhere, such as in the US, Brazil and Argentina, and to a corresponding increase in the use of 2,4-dichlorophenoxyacetic acid (2,4-D) and aryloxyphenoxypropionate (AOPP) herbicides, to which this maize is resistant.

Issues of concern: Members stressed that independent research raised concerns about the risks of the active ingredient of 2,4-D as regards embryo development, birth defects and endocrine disruption.

Moreover, it recalled that many critical comments were submitted by Member States during the three-month consultation period. Those comments referred to, inter alia: (i) missing or insufficient data, (ii) contradictory statements in the application, (iii) poor test design, (iv) missing tests, e.g. as regards allergenicity, (v) questionable results of the safety assessment studies.

In spite of all these concerns, the European Food Safety Agency (EFSA) did not consider any post-market monitoring of food/feed derived from maize DAS-40278-9 to be necessary.

Procedural aspects: Parliament recalled that since the entry into force of Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003, authorisation decisions have been adopted by the Commission without the support of the Member States committee opinion. Therefore, returning the dossier to the Commission for final decision, which is very much the exception for the procedure as a whole, has become the norm for decision-making on genetically modified food and feed authorisations.

In its resolution of 28 October 2015, Parliament rejected, at first reading, the legislative proposal of 22 April 2015 amending Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 and called on the Commission to withdraw it and submit a new one.

On the basis of these considerations, Parliament considered that the draft Commission implementing decision is not consistent with Union law, which is to provide the basis for ensuring a high level of protection of human life and health, animal health and welfare, the environment and consumer interests in relation to genetically modified food and feed, whilst ensuring the effective functioning of the internal market.

Therefore, Parliament called on the Commission to suspend any implementing decision regarding applications for authorisation of genetically modified organisms until the authorisation procedure has been revised in such a way as to address the shortcomings of the current procedure, which has proven inadequate.