



Frans Timmermans
Executive Vice-President of the European Commission

Stella Kyriakides
Member of the European Commission

Brussels, 11/09/2020

Dear Honourable Member,

We would like to thank you and your co-signatories for your letter of 14 June 2020¹, concerning the pending authorisation of a genetically modified soybean² for import for food and feed uses, in light of the European Parliament resolution.

Firstly, we would like to reassure you that the Commission is closely following the debate in the European Parliament on genetically modified organism (GMO) authorisations and takes due note of the resolutions adopted by the European Parliament.

The safety of food and feed products placed on the EU market is of utmost importance for the Commission. We would like to underline that the EU framework to assess the safety of GMOs is among the most stringent in the world and that the recently adopted regulation³ will ensure that the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) works with even more transparency, so as to give access to the scientific information underlying the EFSA opinions.

While the Commission has continued to comply fully with all the procedural steps set out by the co-legislators, we regret that the proposal⁴ to make the voting of the Member States in the Appeal Committee more transparent and accountable has not succeeded so far.

¹ Our reference Ares(2020)3153994

² GM soybean MON 87708 × MON 89788 × A5547-127

³ Regulation (EU) 2019/1381 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on the transparency and sustainability of the EU risk assessment in the food chain and amending Regulations (EC) No 178/2002, (EC) No 1829/2003, (EC) No 1831/2003, (EC) No 2065/2003, (EC) No 1935/2004, (EC) No 1331/2008, (EC) No 1107/2009, (EU) 2015/2283 and Directive 2001/18/EC (OJ L 231, 6.9.2019, p. 1–28).

⁴ Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 laying down the rules and general principles concerning mechanisms for control by Member States of the Commission's exercise of implementing powers COM(2017)85 final, 2017/0035 (COD)


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We will continue to encourage the co-legislators to pursue the negotiations on this proposal to achieve a genuine democratic process and ensure the full accountability of the Member States. In addition, the Commission is reflecting on a new approach that is aligned to the political ambition set by the European Green Deal and the Farm to Fork Strategy: the Commission will continue processing the outstanding applications for GM food and feed under existing rules to uphold its legally binding commitments, and at the same time, the Commission will encourage applicants to wait pending a future approach based on sustainability considerations. Furthermore, it will also present a legislative proposal and other measures to avoid or minimise the placing of products associated with deforestation or forest degradation on the EU market to reduce the EU's contribution to global deforestation and forest degradation.

We look forward to constructive cooperation with the co-legislators on all these measures, which we believe will enable the achievement of a sustainable food system, including GMOs on which the EU feed sector is presently highly dependent.

Yours faithfully,



Frans Timmermans



Stella Kyriakides