

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001511/26
to the Commission**

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(14 April 2026)

Subject: Genetically modified organisms: prohibited from production, but authorised for import

In spite of the highly restrictive framework that the European Union applies for growing genetically modified organisms (GMOs), on 10 March 2026 the Commission authorised the placing on the market of genetically modified soybean DBN-09004-6 and renewed the authorisation for several GMOs, including maize T25, for human and animal consumption, without taking any steps towards allowing their cultivation in the EU. This authorisation is yet another example of what has become standard EU practice.

The EU has become a major importer of soybeans and animal feed derived from GMOs, notably from Latin American countries.

This situation highlights a major contradiction: for health or environmental reasons, the EU considers that the cultivation of GMOs should remain strictly regulated, even as it grants authorisation to import and place GMO products on the market, and even deems them to be safe.

In view of the above:

1. How does the Commission justify such a discrepancy between the strict rules imposed on our farmers and the EU's leniency with regard to imported products?
2. Is the Commission prepared to implement genuine measures to put an end to this practice and actually protect European consumers and farmers? If so, what action will it take?

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Answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission

(22 June 2026)

EU legislation⁽¹⁾ imposes strict rules both for the cultivation and for the placing on the market (including imports) of genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

In both cases, GMOs must undergo an authorisation process which includes a thorough and comprehensive risk assessment, adapted to the intended use. In addition, once authorised, all GMOs are subject to traceability and labelling requirements as well as environmental monitoring.

Access of farmers to GMO for cultivation depends on whether applicants request an authorisation for cultivation of GMOs in the Union and whether Member States make use of the possibility in the directive 2015/412⁽²⁾ that allows them to prohibit or restrict cultivation on their territory of GMOs authorised for cultivation in the EU, for reasons other than safety.

Currently, eighteen Member States prohibit the cultivation within their territory of the only genetically modified maize authorised for cultivation in the EU.

The Commission grants authorisations for the import and placing on the market of GMOs for food and feed uses only when they are considered safe in a risk assessment by the European Food Safety Authority, and in accordance with the conditions and procedures of the applicable EU legislation.

These authorisations enable in particular the import of genetically modified feed, responding to the high protein feed demand of EU livestock farmers.

⁽¹⁾ Directive 2001/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 March 2001 on the deliberate release into the environment of genetically modified organisms and repealing Council Directive 90/220/EEC, OJ L 106, 17.4.2001, <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2001/18/oj>; and Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 September 2003 on genetically modified food and feed, OJ L 268, 18.10.2003, <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2003/1829/oj>.

⁽²⁾ Directive (EU) 2015/412 amending Directive 2001/18/EC as regards the possibility for the Member States to restrict or prohibit the cultivation of GMOs in their territory, OJ L 68, 13.3.2015, pp. 1-8, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2015/412/oj>.