

CROATIAN GMO-FREE COUNTIES AND EU NETWORK OF GMO-FREE REGIONS

HRVATSKE ŽUPANIJE BEZ GMO-A I MREŽA BEZ GMO-A REGIJA EUROPE

Marijana Petir

The application of modern biotechnology in agricultural production processes has generated new ethical, economic, social and environmental dilemmas confronting scientists all over the world. While current knowledge is insufficient for assessing the promised benefits and possible risks of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), the principle of “substantial equivalence” in comparing GM and conventional food is profoundly flawed and scientifically insupportable. The current generation of GMOs provides small benefits except corporate profit and marginally improved grower returns.

The TRIPS agreement has allowed worldwide patenting of genes and microorganisms, as well as genetically engineered organisms. Granting patents on life encourages biopiracy and the theft of genetic resources belonging to the local community. At the same time, the patented products are sold at relatively high prices to developing countries – the same countries from which the product originated.

Untill now 17 Croatian counties have been declared as GMO-free, but only two - Sisak-Moslavina county and Varazdin county - are included in the European network of GMO-free regions. To realize efficiency in self-protection against GM crops entering in their region, the GMO-free counties should cooperate and act simultaneously. The purpose of this round table is to initiate building Croatian GMO-free network, and including it in the network of Europe.

Round Table 1- GMO-free regions, at 2nd Mediterranean Conference on Organic Agriculture – *Contribution to Sustainable Ecosystem*, Dubrovnik, April 2-4, 2008,

CONCLUSIONS

1. We call on all the counties in the Republic of Croatia to proclaim themselves GMO-free counties and to ban release of live GM organisms into the environment.
2. We call on all the counties in the Republic of Croatia to join the Network of GMO free European regions.
3. We call on the Government of the Republic of Croatia to create implementation instruments for seeds and crops control, such as inspection services and specialized laboratories.
4. We call on the Government of the Republic of Croatia and all the counties to promote organic agriculture and ecotourism and support education programs for farmers.
5. Based on the Cartagena Protocol precaution measures we call on the Croatian National Parliament to proclaim the Republic of Croatia a GMO-free country.

Authors' address – Adresa autora:

Received - Priljeno:

Petir Marijana

May 5, 2008

e-mail: marijana.petir@yahoo.com

Chairperson of the Environmental Protection Committee
of the Croatian National Parliament
Zagreb, Croatia