

## **The EU should bring down barriers for the use of GM crops**

The European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party, convening in Barcelona, Catalonia on 19th and 20th November 2009:

Whereas:

- Genetically modified (GM) foods are food items derived from organisms that have had their DNA changed through genetic engineering. These modifications are not only aimed at improving productivity, but they can contribute to improving public health, increasing food safety, lowering food prices, protecting the environment and reducing waste;
- Denying European farmers access to GM crops is harming their ability to compete with their global counterparts, e.g. China, India, South America and the USA, where GM crops have already been widely adopted for years;
- If our choice is to relax patent protection on GM plants, though always granting a strict protection of plant variety, it will make the technology more accessible to humanitarian efforts as well as stimulate competition, leading to greater consumer choice.

Noting that:

- GM technology is a natural extension of modern breeding techniques, with the benefit of conferring a much greater control over unforeseen gene flow;
- GM crops may represent an opportunity to ensure food safety in the developing world by increasing yields and reducing losses to plant diseases and pests;
- GM crops may represent an opportunity to produce medicines in a way that is practical and affordable, in the EU as well as in developing countries;
- Strict anti-GM import rules act as a de facto trade barrier to the developing world;
- GM technology is still a relatively new technology and there are concerns that it can limit biodiversity and has the potential to lead to other undesired consequences;
- The use of restrictive and bundled contracts by seed companies has unfairly constrained the freedom of farmers to reap the benefits when adopting the technology in many parts of the world;

Concludes that:

### **Resolution:**

The EU should bring down barriers for the use of GM crops

### **Year and Congress:**

November 2009,  
Barcelona

### **Category:**

Environment and  
Energy

### **Page:**

1

- Crops (conventional or GM) should be permitted or banned on the merits of their health and environmental effects, not based on the methods used in their development (precautionary principle vs. equivalence);
- EU labelling rules should be the same for EU imports as for products produced in the EU, in order not to put the EU products at a disadvantage. Countries and regions should have the right to declare themselves as GM free growing zones.
- The EU should explicitly ban the use of bundled contracts for the growing of any GM crops it sees fit to authorise.

**Resolution:**

The EU should bring down barriers for the use of GM crops

**Year and Congress:**

November 2009,  
Barcelona

**Category:**

Environment and  
Energy

**Page:**

2