

The European GMO-free Regions Network was born as a response to the European Commission Recommendation of July 2003 on Guidelines for the development of national strategies and best practices to ensure the coexistence of genetically modified crops with conventional and organic farming.

In order to draw up this Recommendation, the Commission took into account that farm and field sizes, production systems, crop rotations and cropping patterns, as well as natural and climatic conditions vary enormously across Europe. Therefore, the Commission admitted that these different regional aspects should be taken into account when applying the precautionary principle, or in other words, when evaluating on a "case by case" basis the risk of admixture between GM and non-GM crops. However, although the Commission states that certain strategies only make sense at a regional level, in practice nowadays the European legal framework allows neither for a regional implementation of that authority nor for the full freedom of choice in a situation of coexistence between GM and non-GM crops.

Since its creation the Network has held five conferences in which various subjects have been considered, but all of them have dealt with the regions' claim to have a regional scale decision-making on coexistence.

Throughout this last year a series of relevant Network events and activities have taken place. For example, in December 2007 we held our conference on non-genetically modified feed and, more recently, we had the German Parliament's decision to authorise the labelling of products as OGM-free.

These actions are fully consistent with the principles that inspired the creation of our regional network – namely, to assure the absence of genetic contamination from crops and to guarantee regions' freedom of choice in what to cultivate.

The VIth Conference will deal with these two fundamental subjects in order to put forward future actions that will continue in the same direction, and in particular to encourage the agro-food industry to use the OGM-free labelling.

Also, as a network of regions that have chosen a model of agriculture based on quality, it is the appropriate time to reflect on the insertion of our regional policies in the framework of the post "health-check" Common Agricultural Policy (COM (2007) 722 final).

INFORMATION
www.gmofree-euregions.net

ORGANISERS
Euskadi

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08 Bilbao



Euskalduna Palace
24 - 25 April

VIth conference
of the GMO-free
EUROPEAN
REGIONS
NETWORK



9:00-9:30

Opening session and Welcome

Juan José Ibarretxe President of Euskadi
Susana Cenni President of the Network and Regional Minister for Agriculture of Toscana

9:30-13:30

Session 1

Freedom of choice: Approaches for a consistent and fully protection of conventional and organic agriculture

Chairperson: Joseph Stockinger, Regional Minister for Agriculture of Upper Austria

9:30

Introductory Remarks	Joseph Stockinger	Regional Government OBERÖSTERREICH
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9:40

Regulatory experiences: The Italian approach	Daniel Schatzer	Regional Government BOLZANO
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10:00

Coexistence in Portugal	Paula Carvalho	Ministry of Agriculture PORTUGAL
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10:20

The Canary strategy in the agro-food sector	Guillermo Diaz	Regional Government CANARY ISLANDS
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10:40

Coffee break		
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11:10

The French Moratorium?	Claude Trémouille	Regional Government LIMOUSIN
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11:30

Coexistence in Europe: overview and perspectives	Fabio Boscaleri	Regional Government TOSCANA
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11:50

Protection of seed: The REVERSE Project	Angela Mallaroni & Erios Hugo	Bio d'Aquitaine & Frontaliza AQUITANIE
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12:10

Non-OGM feed, a strategic asset for European agriculture	Pascale Loget	Regional Government BRETAÑA
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12:30

Discussion and conclusions		
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13:30

Lunch break		
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Sesión 2

Freedom of choice: Towards a common label for GMO-free food products

Chairperson: Martin Ascacibar, Directorate for the Innovation and Technological Development, Basque Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

15:00

Introductory Remarks	Martin Ascacibar	Regional Government EUSKADI
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15:10

Labelling: Including the new German regulation on positive labelling	Rudi Anschober	Regional Government OBERÖSTERREICH
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15:30

GMO-free labelling. The view of the consumers	David M. Ortega	OCU Spanish Organization of Consumers and Users
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15:50

Exercising freedom of choice: The need for good information	Cinta Barrachina	CECU Spanish Confederation of Consumers and Users
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16:10

Coffee break		
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16:40

GMO: COOP position and guarantee system	Sonia Scaramagli	COOP Italia
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17:00

GMO-free labelling. The view of the farmers	Andoni García Arriola	COAG COAG Coordinator of Spanish Organisations of Farmers and Cattle dealers
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17:20

The labelling of ecological products as a tool for quality. Experience in Asturias	Enrique Rodríguez	Regional Government ASTURIAS
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17:40

Products of Origin and the GMO	Alain Fauconnier	AREPO Association of the European Regions for Products of Origin
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18:00

Discussion and conclusions		
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9:00-10:00

New organization of the Network Member Regions' MEETING		
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Sesión 3

Political strategies

Chairperson: Susana Cenni, Susanna Cenni, Regional Minister for Agriculture and Forest of Toscana

10:00

Introductory Remarks	Susanna Cenni	Regional Government/TOSCANA
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10:10

The post "health-check" Common Agricultural Policy (COM (2007) 722 final) and the revision of the quality policy	Jorge Garbisu	Regional Government/EUSKADI
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10:30

Lisbon Treaty & CAP future: the European Parliament agenda	Bernadette Bourzai	European Parliament/ Vice President of the AGRI Commission
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10:50

The new CAP as a food policy for Europe. Regional perspectives	Jacques Cochy	Regional Government/PAYS DE LA LOIRE
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11:10

Coffee break		
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11:40

Round Table Regional Governments of the Network		
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Future actions: Political strategies for the Network and a working plan for a common GMO-free label

Moderator: Lontxo Sainz, journalist

12:40

Conclusion of the Bilbao Conference and Signature of the Florence Charter by incoming new member Region		
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13:00

Press Conference		
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13:30

Lunch		
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