

## **The EU-US Dispute over Regulation of Genetically Modified Organisms, Plants, Feeds, and Foods**

### **Appendix A: Chronology**

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#### **Appendix Contents:**

- 1.) [GMO Chronology](#)

#### **References used in this section:**

US Joint Agency Website: [usbiotechreg.nbii.gov](http://usbiotechreg.nbii.gov)

Dispute settlement page of WTO website: [www.wto.org](http://www.wto.org)

## Chronology

The timeline below documents important events associated with the regulation of Genetically Modified Organisms, Plants, Feeds, and Foods.

### 1986

26 June US Government adopts the Coordinated Framework for the Regulation of Biotechnology, setting out specific regulatory duties for federal agencies, and establishing the baseline for subsequent US regulation by declaring GM plant varieties to be “substantially similar” to conventionally-bred varieties.

### 1990

23 Apr. EU adopts Regulation 90/220 on the process for approving commercial cultivation of GM plant varieties. Its main procedures are similar “substantial equivalence” guidelines of the US, but Article 16 allows member countries to block the import of varieties of GM food if they can be interpreted as detrimental to the nation as a whole.

### 1995

Nov. First meeting of the Transatlantic Business Dialogue in Seville, Spain. Recommends to the intergovernmental US-EU Transatlantic Economic Project (TEP) that the governments promote liberalization and synchronization of trade regulations on both continents.

### 1997

27 Jan. EU adopts Regulation 258/97/EC, the Novel Foods Regulation, introducing mandatory labeling of products containing GM material.

Feb. Austria invokes Article 16 of Directive 90/220 and bans Novartis Bt 176 maize. Five other EU countries – France, Germany, Greece, Italy, and Luxembourg – ban a total of eight GM varieties of plants in following months.

26 Nov. To stem further invocations of the safeguard clause, the European Commission announces it will amend Directive 90/220 to address concerns of its states.

### 1998

May TEP creates a biotechnology working group that attempts to create a process for simultaneous regulation of GMOs in both the US and EU

Oct. EU approves GM plant authorizations under Directive 90/220 but suspends their application for six years while policy revision proceeds.

## **1999**

15 June EU Environment Council announces it will not authorize additional GM plant varieties for cultivation or inclusion in food products until more stringent regulations are adopted.

later June The TEP cancels its regulatory synchronization project

## **2001**

12 Mar. EU enacts Directive 2001/18/EC. It repeals Directive 90/220 and substitutes much more stringent criteria for monitoring and approving the commercial growing of GM products.

## **2003**

13 May The US, Canadian, and Argentine governments file complaints with the World Trade Organization contending the European Union moratorium on GM food is a protectionist measure not allowed under GATT regulations. The EU maintains that it is permissible under the linked Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards.

7 Aug. After consultations fail, WTO establishes a Dispute Settlement Panel.

22 Sep. The EU replaces Regulation 258/97/EC (the Novel Foods Regulation) with two new regulations. Regulation 1829/2003/EC, the Food and Feed Regulation established strict guidelines to prevent the unauthorized mixture of GM food with non-GM food. Regulation 1830/2003/EC mandates strict labeling and tracing procedures for GM products in pre-packaged foodstuffs.

## **2004**

May EU moratorium on new authorizations of GM varieties ends with approval of Bt-11 variety of maize

June WTO Dispute Settlement Panel begins hearing oral arguments

## **2006**

7 Feb. WTO Dispute Settlement Panel releases preliminary report which supports most of the claims of the US, Canada, and Argentina

29 Sep. Final report issued by WTO Dispute Settlement Panel concludes that the EU pre-market approval system as applied so far violates WTO's Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) because it has led to unnecessary delays.

**2007**

21 Nov. WTO deadline for the EU to end the moratorium on approval of GM products in their member states. In defiance, Austria maintains a ban on two varieties of GM maize, Mon810 and T25, which had previously been approved by the EU.

**2008**

24 June Austria agrees to lift its ban on importing and processing the two varieties of GM maize

25 July Austria announces a ban on another variety of GM maize, Mon863

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