

CO-EXISTENCE OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED AND OTHER CROPS IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Summary

Current status of legal framework related to the co-existence of GM and other crops (eg. hybrid production) or cropping systems (eg. organic farming) considering the freedom of choice by farmers and consumers as a principle in the Czech Republic is presented. Recommendations for establishing the rules were based on following information: (a) specific agriculture systems in the country; (b) scientifically supported data; (c) practical experience in co-existence in Spain, cultivating GM maize commercially since 1999; (d) the national regulations on production of certified hybrid seeds; (e) the government decree on co-existence of organic and commercial farming; (e) the EC recommendation 2003/556/EC and (f) inputs from non-government organisations and stakeholders. General principles considered dur-

ing working phase on the rules included following factors: efficiency, practical feasibility of implementation, comprehensibility, feasibility of controlling, no administrative burden on conventional farmers, a minimal administrative burden on farmers growing GM crops, crop specification and co-operation between farmers. The amended Act no. 441/2005 on agriculture and the Regulation no. 89/2006 provides details on co-existence for production of GM crops in the Czech Republic.

The commercial production of GM maize (based on MON 810) on 1.290 ha on 118 fields by 85 farmers in south Moravia and central Bohemia showed 5–20% yield increase; lower cob damages by European corn borer and significant decrease of mycotoxins content in kernels.