Veille citoyenne d'information sur les OGM et les semences

A wide range of stakeholders opposed to the deregulation of GMOs/NGTs

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Whilst the process of deregulating GMOs/NGTs is continuing within the European institutions, opposition to it has been growing in recent weeks. These positions are being taken by a wide variety of stakeholders. Without claiming to be exhaustive, *Inf'OGM* offers an overview of the main statements published recently.



As we have been documenting for nearly three years now, the European Commission is seeking to deregulate GMOs derived from new genetic modification techniques (GMOs/NGTs). Whilst organisations have long been campaigning on this issue, recent weeks have seen numerous statements emerging from a wide range of stakeholders. Although this surge in opposition is partly due to the timetable of the procedure[ii] – which has accelerated since a compromise text was presented in December 2025 – the broad spectrum of stakeholders taking a stance on this new legislation highlights public concern and the dangers looming over many industries.

Farmers and small seed producers on high alert

A few weeks ago, we reported[iii] on the joint initiative by 18 French organisations sending an open letter to MEPs calling on them *to "defend the founding values, principles and treaties of the European Union, as well as the position adopted by the European Parliament in February* 2024"[iv]. This appeal aims to remind MEPs of the need to maintain detection, traceability and labelling for GMOs/NGTs, to reject the patent system and to ensure that the costs of coexistence measures are borne by GMO/NGT growers.

This position is not shared by other stakeholders in the seed sector, such as members of the Syndicat des Trieurs A Façon de France (STAFF), who nevertheless reject the compromise text[v]. Indeed, whilst the union also rejects the patent system, it *"fully recognises that varietal innovation and NGTs require significant investment in research*". Its concern regarding the proposed text centres in particular on the "*lack of labelling and traceability*", leading to *"increased risks of contamination during sorting and collection operations*", as well as *the "forced acceptance of contamination in organic farming*". STAFF also bases its rejection of the text on the deregulation of GMOs/NGTs on one of the responses to concerns regarding patents: *"the Commission will work with stakeholders to draw up a European code of conduct within a maximum of 18 months after the regulation comes into force*". The union believes that *"implementing such a far-reaching reform without a prior framework is unacceptable*", summarising the procedure as: *"deregulate today, reflect in 18 months*". It therefore calls on MEPs *"to reject this agreement as it stands […] and on seed and agricultural professionals to mobilise to defend […] an intellectual property rights (IPR) model that guarantees a balance between breeders and farmers*".

Organic farming in grave danger

As we have seen in previous statements, the threats facing the organic sector are also highlighted. The FNAB (National Federation of Organic Agriculture) is under no illusion and has, in fact, long been a key player in any initiative aimed at denouncing the text on the deregulation of GMOs/NGTs. Its latest statement dates from 16 March, alongside 12 other organisations[vi]. On this occasion, they published a 130-page document (which *Inf'OGM* will discuss in detail in a forthcoming article), submitted to the Commission on 21 February, which *"highlights, in detail, the significant gaps and shortcomings in the way the Commission has prepared and drafted its legislative proposal, thereby undermining its* legitimacy"[vii]. Drawing on a substantial scientific bibliography, they demonstrate *"that the proposed regulation on NGTs is based entirely on flawed scientific paradigms, despite numerous studies and scientific warnings that the Commission could not have ignored, particularly regarding the risks*" and highlight *"shortcomings in the prior consultations and impact assessments, as well as problematic deficiencies in the organisation of institutional expertise, the results of which have been exploited*". Far more than a simple call for MEPs to vote against this text, the organisations are calling on the European Commission to withdraw its proposed regulation on GMOs/NGTs. They conclude by announcing that, should the Commission fail to take action within 60 days of receiving their letter, they intend *to "exercise all available legal and administrative remedies, including [...] lodging an official complaint with the European Ombudsman*".

Whilst the FNAB is taking a stand by calling for the withdrawal of the text, the position of its European federation, Ifoam Organics Europe, is aligned with this. In a press release dated 30 March[viii], it points out that the compromise text negotiated in the trilogue has set aside the Parliament's initial requirements regarding traceability, labelling and *"the scope of patent rights on NGT crops*". As a means of action, Ifoam refers to two campaigns:

- "BLacked-out Ingredients", launched by some thirty European organisations calling on MEPs to mandate the labelling of GMOs/NGTs[ix] .
- “No GMOs through the back door!”, also launched by a coalition of European organisations calling on MEPs for strict regulation of GMOs/NGTs[x] .

New players are taking a stand

Against this backdrop, new players have more recently voiced their opposition to this text.

On 3 February, Kokopelli, echoing the arguments put forward in January by the 18 French organisations[xi], launched an initiative open for signature by all citizens and organisations (over 15,000 to date)[xii]. The aim is to call on MEPs *“to reject the regulation on plants derived from New Genomic Techniques (NGT) during the vote in the European Parliament’s plenary session*”.

On 9 February, Safe Food Advocacy Europe (SAFE), a European consumer organisation specialising in food policy, warned in a press release that the deregulation of GMOs and novel foods would mean *“the end of organic food as we know it”*[xiii]. At Biofach, Europe’s largest organic trade fair held annually in Germany, Luigi Tozzi, deputy director of SAFE, stated: *“Organic food production is at serious risk under the new legislation, because the measures in place to separate organic food production from food derived from new genomic techniques will disappear soon. This means that in the future, products sold as organic may contain traces of NGT crops, restricting consumer choice and undermining the very concept of organic food production. This is a very serious threat for an important sector trusted by millions of European consumers*”. SAFE believes that the European Union must guarantee consumers the traceability and labelling of GMOs/NGTs, as is the case under current regulations. To publicise its views, SAFE has also produced a short video as part of its campaign for full transparency on GMOs/NGTs[xiv].

On 25 March, the INRAE branch of the SUD Recherche trade union issued a press release calling for *“a debate with strong involvement from INRAE, before it is too late for all the various stakeholders in the plant* sector”[xv]. Indeed, beyond reiterating the criticisms of the biased scientific foundations of the proposal to deregulate GMOs/NGTs and recalling the false promises made and not kept regarding the first generations of GMOs, the union also warns of the risk of the French GMO-free seed sector disappearing if the patent system were to replace the COV system. According to the union, the deregulation of GMOs/NGTs and the shift from COV to patents would lead to the "*concentration of the sector in the hands of a few companies, [the] closure of access (or even disappearance) to the diversity of genetic resources, [more] expensive seeds (licence fees), [the] impoverishment of biodiversity through the simplification of cropping systems, even as we are already witnessing a collapse in biodiversity that must be urgently addressed*”.

On 28 March, around forty chefs published an open letter in *Le Monde* denouncing the provisional agreement on the deregulation of GMOs/NGTs, which *“threatens to break the bond of trust that binds [them] to [their] customers*”[xvi]. Their main concern relates to the abandonment of GMO/NGT labelling, without which they *“will no longer be able to identify whether an ingredient is genetically modified*” and thus *“guarantee [their] customers GMO-free cuisine*”. Furthermore, they believe that *“the arrival of these plants in Europe could exacerbate the genetic standardisation of crops in favour of a few standardised varieties*”, leading to the loss of *“local, heritage or forgotten varieties, [which] form the basis of our culinary reputation and define the identity of our small-scale producers* ”. Finally, they highlight the threat these plants pose to the organic sector, which, without strict traceability, will be unable to guarantee that open-field crops are not contaminated. They are therefore calling on MEPs to oppose the deregulation of GMOs/NGTs in order to preserve *“the right to choose freely what we eat*”.

Slovakia lying in wait?

In Slovakia, a country opposed to the text on the deregulation of GMOs/NGTs, a civil society coalition (Quid est veritas) has just issued an appeal to its government. It requests on "*the Slovak Republic, in the interest of protecting the health of its citizens, biodiversity, transparency, and food sovereignty, maintain its dissenting position and file a petition with the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) for a judicial review of the legality of the pending Regulation*". In their letter, the organisations begin by listing *"the fundamental points of the proposal's systemic failure*" that they have identified:

- "*Destruction of Market Transparency and Loss of Consumer Sovereignty*" due to the removal of mandatory labelling;
- "*Threat to Competition, Liquidation of Organic Farming, and Non-GMO Production*" due to the loss of transparency and traceability;
- "*Absence of Scientific Consensus and Violation of the Precautionary Principle*", as there is no relevant evidence demonstrating the safety of GMOs/NTGs nor any studies proving their equivalence to conventionally grown crops;
- "*Uncontrolled Spread in the Environment and Threat to Biodiversity*" through genetic contamination;
- "*Disregard for the Will of Citizens*", with opinion polls confirming a societal demand for the maintenance of strict regulation and transparency.

Should the regulation be adopted, the collective believes legal action is a possibility. Indeed, any EU Member State has two months to lodge such an appeal with the CJEU. Quid est veritas believes that Slovakia *" has an exceptionally high chance of success in upholding its promise to maintain current GMO regulations*". The group is therefore calling on its government to *"reject the NGT deregulation and issue instructions [...] to file a petition with the CJEU for a review of the Regulation's compliance with EU law*".

The imminent plenary vote in the European Parliament is therefore prompting many stakeholders to make public their arguments against all or part of the text on the deregulation of GMOs/NGTs negotiated in trilogue last December. Although the methods of action and grounds for rejection differ, the backlash is intensifying and seeing new players come forward, notably to engage with MEPs ahead of their vote. Whilst it is difficult to predict whether this will be enough to tip the balance towards a vote against the text, Slovakia appears to be opening up a new avenue for bringing down the Commission's initiative. Will others follow suit?

ii Eric Meunier, « What "*discussion*" procedures are imposed on European legislators? », *Inf'OGM*, 11 February 2026.
Eric Meunier, « Le Conseil de l'UE prêt à voter la déréglementation des OGM/NTG ? », *Inf'OGM*, 16 April 2026.

iii Antoine Vépierre, « French organisations call on MEPs to reject GMO deregulation », *Inf'OGM*, 9 March 2026.

iv Joint open letter, "Nouveaux OGM : 18 organisations appellent les eurodéputés à rejeter l'accord", 9 January 2026.
List of signatories: Agir pour l'environnement, Bio Consom'acteurs, Confédération paysanne, CSFV 49, FNAB, Foll'avoine, France Nature Environnement, Générations Futures, Groupe International

d’Etudes Transdisciplinaires, Mouvement de l’Agriculture Biodynamique, Objectif Zéro OGM, OGM Dangers, POLLINIS, Synabio, UFC-Que Choisir, Vigilance OGM et Pesticides 16, Vigilance OGM 46, Vigilance OG2M.

v STAFF, « Position du STAFF sur les Nouvelles Techniques Génomiques (NTG) », 10 December 2025.

vi FNAB, « Déréglementation des OGM-NTG : 13 organisations dénoncent de graves défaillances scientifiques », 16 March 2026.
Collective letter, « Lettre à la Commission européenne du 21 février 2026 – Proposition de règlement sur les nouvelles techniques génomiques (NTG) », 21 February 2026.
List of signatories: Synabio, GIET, Foll’avoine, CNAFAL, FNAB, Pollinis, Vigilance OGM et Pesticides 16, OGM Dangers, Sciences citoyennes, FNE, RSP, Générations futures.

vii Collective document, « Préoccupations, demandes d’information et revendications concernant la Proposition de règlement de la Commission européenne sur les végétaux obtenus au moyen de certaines nouvelles techniques génomiques et les denrées alimentaires et aliments pour animaux qui en sont dérivées », 20 February 2026.
Download the document in PDF format here.

viii Ifoam Organics Europe, « “*New Genomic Techniques*”: Everything you need to know before the upcoming final vote on the legislative proposal », 30 March 2026.

ix Blacked-out Ingredients Collective, « If you stay silent now, it stays dark later ».

x Collective, « No GMOs through the back door! », 17 avril 2025.

xi Antoine Vépierre, « French organisations call on MEPs to reject GMO deregulation », *Inf’OGM*, 9 March 2026.

xii Kokopelli, "Les NGT, un danger pour notre autonomie agricole", 3 February 2026.
Non-exhaustive list of signatory organisations and individuals: Sativa, Germinance and the Conservatoire des Mille Variétés Anciennes (seed producers); the FNAB (inter-professional body for organic farming); Pierre-Henri Gouyon, Isabelle Goldringer, Philippe Grandcolas (scientists); Philippe Piard, François Veillerette (environmental activists); Marie-Monique Robin, Yann Arthus-Bertrand (documentary filmmakers);...

xiii SAFE, "Consumers about losing the battle for GMO-free organic food, SAFE warns", 9 February 2026.

xiv SAFE, "The new legislation of NGTs will mean the end of organic food as we know it", 11 February 2026.

xv Sud Recherce, "« *NGT – nouveaux OGM* » : 25 ans après le moratoire sur les OGM, pourquoi abandonner la souveraineté européenne dans le domaine végétal en basculant dans le régime industriel des brevets ?", 25 March 2026.

xvi Collective, "« *Pour nous, chefs, restaurateurs et cuisiniers, l’accord provisoire sur la déréglementation des nouveaux OGM marque un recul inacceptable* »", *Le Monde*, 28 March 2026.

Adresse de cet article : https://infogm.org/en/a-wide-range-of-stakeholders-opposed-to-the-deregulation-of-gmos-ngts/