Veille citoyenne d'information sur les OGM et les semences

EU : 4,3 % drop of transgenic crops

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In 2017, not one hectare was sown with genetically modified maize in the Czech Republic and in Slovakia. And in Portugal and in Spain, the surfaces of transgenic crops decreased. All in all, throughout the European territory, this surface declined from 136 338 to 130 571 hectares, a decrease of 4 %.

Transgenic crops do not exactly have the wind in their sails in the European Union. In 2016, only four countries of the European Union continued to cultivate MON810 maize (the only one allowed for cultivation in the European Union) : Spain, Portugal, Czech Republic and Slovakia [1].
Two of those countries have abandoned these crops in 2017 : the Czech Republic and Slovakia. The crop surfaces strongly decrease in Portugal, and a little in Spain. The drop of transgenic corn

area (-4,3%) is higher than the drop of the total corn cultivation area (conventional, GM, or organic) (-1,3%) [2]

The end of transgenic crops in the Czech Republic and in Slovakia

The Czech ministry of Agriculture announced on 18 August 2017 that not one transgenic maize had been cultivated in his country this year. In 2008, when transgenic crops reached their climax, the Czech Republic cultivated 8 380 hectares of these crops. Since then, the cultivation of this maize has been in constant decline… until it disappeared completely this year. Last year, only one farmer cultivated MON810 maize on 75 hectares (a decline of 92 % compared to 2015, when eleven farmers together cultivated 997 hectares). The total corn cultivation area has decreased by 3,6% between 2016 and 2017 [3].

As regards Slovakia, the ministry of Agriculture told Inf'OGM that no transgenic crops were cultivated. In 2016, this country cultivated 112 hectares of transgenic maize and the surfaces were at their highest in 2010, with however only 875 hectares of MON810. The total corn cultivation area has decreased by 2,6% between 2016 and 2017 [4].

Portugal : again a significant decline

The third country we succeeded in getting information from is Portugal. Maize MON810 remains present in the fields, but the reduction of plantings continues. According to an assessment of the ministry of Agriculture, these GMOs were sown on only 6 344 hectares in 2017, compared to 7 070 hectares in 2016, a decline of 10,3 %. This country cultivated up to 9 278 hectares in 2012. The total corn cultivation area has decreased by 2,6% between 2016 and 2017 [5].

In Spain, the undisputed leader of transgenic crops in Europe, the maize MON810 cultivation area declined 3,8 % : from 129 081 to 124 227 hectares, according to the ministry of Agriculture. Two provinces remain in the lead : Aragon (49 608 ha) and Catalonia (39 092 ha). Spain's assessment of the maize MON810 cultivation area is based on the sale of seeds, a data given by the businesses [6]. The country does not impose a parcel register to record this planting. The total corn cultivation area has decreased by 3,6% between 2016 and 2017 [7].

The countries which cultivate trangenic GMOs are ever fewer from year to year. It is worth recalling that Romania left the transgenic cultivators' club in 2016, and that its governement recently confirmed that no transgenic crop was cultivated in 2017.

Few cultivation but steady importations

However, transgenic GMOs remain present in most of the European countries, particularly in the animals' troughs. The Roundup Ready soy importations from the other side of the Atlantic continue to enter via the European ports.
And we also know that European countries cultivate or import GMOs produced with mutagenesis, such oilseed rape, sunflower or rice genetically mutated so as to be tolerant to herbicides.

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[1] See https://www.infogm.org/-Qui-cultive-des-OGM-dans-les-monde-Et-ou-

[2] Eurostat said that corn's area was 14,5 million hectares in 2017 and 14,7 Mha in 2016.

[3] Eurostat said : 320 810 ha in 2016 and 309 210 ha in 2017

[4] Eurostat said : 261 590 ha in 2016 and 268 440 ha in 2017.

[5] Eurostat said : 167 610 ha in 2016 and 162 750 ha in 2017.

[6] The ministry considers that a dose of 85 000 seeds corresponds to one hectare.

[7] Eurostat said : 465 520 ha in 2016 and 448 540 in 2017.

Adresse de cet article : https://infogm.org/eu-43-drop-of-transgenic-crops/