

Voluntary - Public

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Voluntary German Logo for Biotech-free Products Unveiled

Report Categories:

Biotechnology

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Report Highlights:

German Minister for Agriculture presented a new logo for use in Germany on products that meet the new definition of biotech-free food. Consumer organizations, anti-biotech politicians and NGOs are happy. The majority of the German food processing industry is very critical of the logo and its underlying definitions and has called the label misleading to consumers.

General Information:

On August 10, German Agricultural Minister Aigner publically presented a new logo for use on food products which are produced according to the new definition of "biotech-free." In order to use the logo, The food company must promise that the animal products are derived from animals which have not been feed with biotech feed for a certain period prior to slaughter or milking. All feeds which need to be labeled as biotech feeds are prohibited. This implies that adventitious traces of approved biotech events of less than 0.9 percent are allowed in animal feeds used under this system. In composed food products traces of biotech products (i.e. corn flower or soybean oil from biotech varieties) are not permitted.

The use of the logo is voluntary and free of charge. The Agriculture Ministry hopes that more companies will make use of the “without genetechnology” labeling and labeling option legislated a German regulation amendment of April 2008. So far only a very few companies are labeling a products as “without genetechnology”. See also GAIN reports GM8044 and GM8014.

The German government is promoting the logo as an opportunity for consumers to better choose between food products made with biotechnology or free of biotechnology. The logo is likely to come into use by the end of this 2009.

The umbrella organization of the German food processing industry, BLL, and the German Farm Cooperatives Association continue their criticism that the “without genetechnology” labeling option is misleading to the majority of German consumes. An opinion poll of the spring of 2009 revealed that the majority of consumers expect that such labeled products have not been in touch with biotechnology at any stage of the production process.



The logo can be downloaded from the internet at <http://www.bmelv.de/cae/servlet/contentblob/617382/poster/35718/Ohne-Gentechnik.jpg>