



European Commission
Agriculture and Rural Development



***European Co-Existence Bureau –
Best Practice Document for Maize Crop Production***

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development



Co-existence of GM crops with conventional and organic agriculture

- Co-existence concerns the segregation of GM crops from non-GM crops
- Socio-economic issue, separate from the assessment of health or environmental risks
- Competence lies with Member States
- Commission Recommendation 2003/556/EC on guidelines for co-existence between GM crops and conventional and organic agriculture



Council conclusions on co-existence of May 2006

The Council invites the Commission to:

Identify, in close co-operation with the Member States and stakeholders, best practice for technical segregation measures and, on the basis of this work, develop guidelines for crop specific measures. At the same time, ensure that the crop-specific guidelines leave the necessary flexibility for Member States to take account of their regional and local factors (share of different crops in cultivation, crop rotations, field sizes, etc).



Work principles of ECoB

- Organisation similar to that of working groups under the Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Directive (codified version: Directive 2008/1/EC)
- Leave sufficient flexibility for national and regional fine-tuning
- Consensus principle, diverging opinions clearly marked



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ECoB Structure and Work

- Secretariat located in Seville, at the Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (IPTS) of the Joint Research Centre
- Technical Working Groups composed of national experts – one at a time
- Stakeholder consultation process via Advisory Committees



Crop-specific guidance documents

- Do not interfere with national competence to regulate co-existence
- Contain agreed best agricultural management practices that ensure co-existence between GM crop, conventional and organic production
- Do not cover administrative procedures, public access to registers, distribution of responsibility and liability
- Will remain non-binding



Crop-specific guidance documents

- Aimed to have EU-wide application, while taking into account the diversity of agricultural systems
- Focus on co-existence during agricultural production (first point of sale)
- Compliance with 0.9% labelling threshold
- Cost-effectiveness of segregation measures



Technical Working Group for Maize Crop Production – scope of work

- Maize only GM crop currently cultivated in the EU
- Seed production excluded (scenarios for seeds thresholds)
- Single-gene events (e.g. MON810; possibly extended towards multiple gene events)
- Authorised events (application of 0.9% threshold)
- Grain, silage and whole plant production
- Spatial and temporal segregation



Expected outcome

- Guidance documents adopted by consensus of the Crop-Specific Working Group after consultation of relevant Advisory Committees
- Discussed with Member States in the Coordination Network for Co-existence (COEX-NET)
- Could become a basis for Commission guidelines on crop-specific technical co-existence measures



Maize Crop TWG - time table

March 2008	– ECoB Secretariat operational
April 2008	Letter to MS asking for nomination of experts
July 2008	Invitation to TWG Members
6-7 October 2008	Kick-off meeting
	Consensus building process of about 20 months



Stakeholder consultation process

- Relevant advisory committees are consulted
 - at the beginning of the process and
 - once a consolidated reference document is established by the TWG (possibly in written procedure)
- Comments can be presented at the meetings or in written afterwards
- Reports of stakeholder opinions will be placed on the future ECoB website



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