Belarus decrees GM food must be labelled

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Labelling of genetically modified (GM) food is now law in Belarus. The Belarus government issued a decree requiring labelling of GMOs in spring this year and it was brought to our attention by Consumers International (CI) member Belorussskoe Obstestvo Zastity Potrehitelei. Please see below for the recently translated English version as well as the original version in Russian.

The introduction of GM labelling in Belarus follows on from action taken by the Russia government in January 2005 to tighten their law on GM = labelling.

Previously, all products in Russia containing more than 5% of GMOs had to be labelled but since January this year all products containing GMOs must be labelled. This amendment was the result of campaigning by Greenpeace and CI member KonfOP, which has become a leading voice in Russia for regulation on GMOs.

The Belarus decree explicitly forbids the production or trade in children's food prepared using GM constituents. This decree, and amendments in Russian law on GM labelling, are encouraging for consumers who have a right safety, and a right to make informed choices. Labelling allows concerned consumers to avoid GM foods.

=46or more information please contact

Julia Crosfield
Communications Officer - GM campaign
Consumers International
24 Highbury Crescent
London N5 1RX, UK
Tel: + 44 20 7226 6663
Ext: 212
=46ax: + 44 20 7354 0607

Consumers International is a federation of consumer organisations dedicated to the protection and promotion of consumers' rights worldwide through empowering national consumer groups and campaigning at the international level. It currently represents over 234 organisations in 113 countries. For more information, see: www.consumersinternational.org [5]
**DECREE OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS**

28 April 2005 no. 434

**ON SEVERAL QUESTIONS REGARDING CONSUMER INFORMATION ON FOOD RAW MATERIALS AND FOOD PRODUCTS**

In accordance with article 10 of the Law of the Republic of Belarus of 29 June 2003 "On the quality and safety of food raw materials and food products for human life and health", with the aim of informing consumers of the presence in food raw materials and food products of genetically modified constituents (components) and food additives, the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus DECREES:

1. In order to establish that:

1.1 legal and natural persons, including individual business people, who produce and trade in food raw materials and food products, produced using genetically modified constituents (components) and food additives, will:
   1.1.1 provide, on every unit of consumer packaging (label, back label, tag) or other source of information, information:
   - that the food raw material or food product is genetically modified or contains genetically modified constituents (components);
   - of the presence of food additives in food raw materials and food products (as compared (in accordance) with the information required concerning the quality and safety of food raw materials and food products, set out by normative documents);
   1.1.2 present at the request of bodies carrying out State inspection and supervision in the field of quality and safety of food raw materials and food products, and also at the request of consumers, documents certifying the quality and safety of food raw materials and food products, including information on the content of genetically modified constituents (components) and the presence of food additives (the original State hygiene registration certificates and (or) certificates of conformity or their copies, completed in the required manner, or details of these documents, as shown in accompanying documents, which confirm the registration of the good);

1.2 as part of State hygiene regulatory activities and registration and the obligatory certification of food raw materials and food products, a verification will take place for the presence within them of genetically modified constituents (components) and food additives;

1.3 producing and trading in children's food prepared using genetically modified constituents (components) is forbidden;

1.4 trading in food raw materials and food products, produced using genetically modified constituents (components) and food additives, in the absence of the information and documents which are listed in sub-point 1.1 of this point, is not allowed;

1.5 certificates of State hygiene registration and certificates of conformity issued for food raw materials and food products until this decree comes into force will be considered valid until their expiry date.

2. The Ministry of Health and the Committee for Standardisation,
Metrology and Certification under the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus will:

2.1 by 1 July 2005 work out and confirm the list of food raw materials and food products which will be subject to checks for the presence of genetically modified constituents (components);

2.2 within the limits of its competences ensure control and monitoring of the reliability of information concerning the presence of genetically modified constituents (components) and food additives, presented by legal and physical persons, including individual business people, who produce and trade in food raw materials and food products.

3. The Committee for Standardisation, Metrology and Certification under the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus will:

3.1 by 15 September 2005 accredit laboratories to carry out tests on food raw materials and food products in order to determine the presence of genetically modified constituents (components) and draw up a list of these laboratories;

3.2 by 1 September 2005 together with other Republic-level bodies of State administration concerned present proposals in the required form to the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus on additions to be made to the legal Codex of the Republic of Belarus regarding administrative offences concerning the responsibility of legal and physical persons, including individual business people, who provide consumers with unreliable information about food raw materials and food products produced using genetically modified constituents (components) and food additives, and also who produce or trade in children's food prepared using genetically modified constituents (components) in the Republic of Belarus.

4. This decree will come into force six months after the day of its formal publication, apart from sub-point 1.4 of point 1, sub-point 2.1 of point 2, and point 3, which will come into force on 1 May 2005.

The Prime Minister of the Republic of Belarus=09
S. Sidorsky

Source URL: http://nwrage.org/content/belarus-decrees-gm-food-must-be-labelled

Links:
[2] mailto:dcuming@consint.org
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