

**GMO Working Meeting
GMO FREE European Regions Network
and
DG AGRI**

29. April 2009

Input AGES Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety

Austrian Cultivation and Seed Multiplication (2008, defined species)

	Cultivation area in ha	Seed multiplication in ha
Wheat	289 871	9 450
Barley	185 875	6 672
Rye	53 171	1 632
Triticale	46 309	1 640
Maize (Grain maize)	194 087	5 610
Peas	22 306	793
Soybean	18 419	1 211
Swede Rape	56 056	722
Sugar Beet	42 806	312

Austrian Legislation and National Measures

Austria by its constitution is a Federal State. Competences are divided between the Federal Government (Bund) and the nine Austrian provinces (Länder).



<http://europa.eu/abc/maps/images/members/austria>

Austrian Act on Seeds

- **“Regulation on GMO-Seeds”** (Saatgut-Gentechnik-Verordnung) and the **“Methods for Seed and Varieties”**

Absence of GMOs (tolerance level of 0,1 % in enforcement control) for impurities of conventional and organic certified seed

= Registration/Certification threshold instead of labelling threshold

Austrian Legislation and National Measures (seed specific)



“Regulation on cultivated areas for seed production”

Saatgut-Anbaugebiete-Verordnung

- In order to avoid unintended gene transfer, closed, geographically delimited areas are provided for the seed production of certain species of crops, which are likely to be effected by contamination
- The establishment of “closed seed production areas or regions” is proposed by means of legislation in the federal provinces based on the provision under Section 18, subs. 3 of the of the Austrian Seed Law 1997: “If it should be required in order to ensure the seed quality, the Federal Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, Environment and Water Management can by way of decree determine certain species for which closed cultivation areas are prerequisite for their approval.”

AGES - GMO related Studies



- I. Studies on Gene Transfer (2006, 2008)
- II. Feasibility study on “GMO-free” claims and the avoidance of GMOs in food from animal production (2005)
- III. Seed production in segregated production processes to avoid contamination with genetically modified organisms in the context of the coexistence of conventional farming with or without GMOs and organic farming

Ad II. Feasibility study on “GMO-free” claims and the avoidance of GMOs in food from animal production



- Analyses of cost differences when using feed rations in accordance with the Austrian Codex Alimentarius on “GMO-free” labelling or when using feeding stuffs that do not require labelling as genetically modified in accordance with EU Directive (1829/2003) in comparison with the use of feed rations labelled as genetically modified
- Results are published at <http://www.ages.at>

Ad III. Seed production in segregated production processes (extract of conclusions)

- Creation of “geographically closed seed production areas or region” and “defined closed production processes” for the species
 - Corn (*Zea mays*)
 - Oilseed rape (*Brassica napus*)
 - Sugar beet (*Beta vulgaris*)

- Creation of “defined closed production processes” for the species
 - Soybean (*Glycine max*)
 - Potato (*Solanum tuberosum*)

- Crop specific measures for single acreages and geographic defined areas -> Development of a Coexistence Index

Coexistence Index

Threshold Certified Seed (%)	Threshold Basic Seed (%)	Isolation distance (m)	Change of seeds (%)	Volunteers (year)	Cross pollination potential with relatives, farmed or wild plants (ves/no)	Farm size (ha)	Field size (ha)	Crop specific share (%)	Yield (dt/ha)	up to %GMO									
SW2	SW1	ME	SGW	DW	WR	BG	SG	KAA	E	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
I N P U T																			
0,7	0,1	0,4	100	0	0	Area 1	18	1,1	1,4	27									
0,7	0,1	0,4	100	0	0	Area 2	40	1,3	0,2	21									
0,7	0,1	0,4	100	0	0	Area 3	21	1,5	0,4	16									
0,7	0,1	0,4	100	0	0	Area 4	11	0,5	7,6	28									
0,7	0,7	0,4	100	0	0	Area 1	18	1,1	1,4	27									
0,7	0,7	0,4	100	0	0	Area 2	40	1,3	0,2	21									
0,7	0,7	0,4	100	0	0	Area 3	21	1,5	0,4	16									
0,7	0,7	0,4	100	0	0	Area 4	11	0,5	7,6	28									

Input criterias

Illustration of the Index

The Coexistence Index is a model and a tool to support the decision whether coexistence is possible or not by evaluation of the real natural and agricultural scenarios based on data of the previous planting season to forecast the coexistence in the current planting season.

- Primary economic domains of Agricultural production - seed production
 - No differentiation between conventional and organic farming
 - Compliance with the Saatgut-Gentechnik-Verordnung
 - Closed seed production areas for appropriate crops
 - Strategy of the Austrian Seed Industry -> no offer of GMO-seed in the next few years
 - No imminent or additional costs for Seed Industry arising from official law

National Strategies for Coexistence

- Subsequent economic domains of Agricultural production – food and feed production
 - Subsequent economic domains do not employ contract cultivation of GMO-crops
 - The demand of „GMO-free“ products is, if possible, met by Austrian agricultural production
 - Existing contracts according to civil law are carried on -> regarding to GMO- freedom
 - No imminent or additional costs for Seed Industry arising from official law

Follow Up – Council Conclusions on GMO Environment Council Meeting December 2008



- Study on socio-economic implications of the placing on the market of GMOs
(in planning – project draft completed)
 - Project partners: Umweltbundesamt, AGES
 - Scope:
 - Identification of socio-economic benefits and risks including agronomic sustainability
 - Development of assessment criteria for these factors
 - Calculation of contribution margin for model farms in three Austrian production regions (including seed production)