

BILBAO CONFERENCE

24/25 April 2008

FINAL DECLARATION

At the very successful Bilbao Conference, the 44 members of the GMO free European Regions Network, mindful of the principles and aspirations of the "Florence Charter" signed on February 4th 2005, re-affirmed the objectives stated in the Turin Declaration issued on May 18th 2007. We further assert that:

- Every member of the GMO free European Regions Network has worked over many years to associate their name with quality production.
- The introduction of GM technology threatens this policy of differentiation by quality.
- GMOs should not be allowed to threaten the existence of conventional and organic agriculture.
- The European Commission admits that certain coexistence strategies only make sense at a regional level, but the current European legislative framework doesn't provide the necessary tools to do so.
- The European Commission must allow regions to take all necessary measures to prevent contamination of conventional and organic crops by GM crops in order to maintain consumer choice for non GM foods.
- Unless legally binding measures are put in place by regional governments, genetic contamination will eventually eliminate the consumer's right to choose non GMO products.
- Consumers have the right to be fully informed of the facts to make informed choices. The absence of adequate labelling to identify GMO free products infringes this basic consumer right.

In support of the above assertions and subject to the means and institutional competences of its members, the GMO Free European Regions Network will organise and promote activities to:

- Make sure that the future European Commission's Green Book on Agricultural Product Quality Policy will allow the exclusion of GMO's from quality productions.
- Propose measures to protect conventional and organic crops, such as:
 - legally binding coexistence rules that would foresee GM-free areas at regional level;
 - strict liability on GM producers;
 - and a crop specific moratorium.
- To work together with consumers, farmers and retailers in order to set up a common label to identify GM free production.
- To preserve natural and agricultural biodiversity, seeds and other propagating material from the contamination by GMOs.
- To guarantee a permanent, fair and safe GM-free feed supply for European producers.

Bilbao, April 25th 2008

Bilbao Declaration text: www.gmofree-euregions.net