



Guidelines for the development of national strategies and best practices to ensure the co-existence of genetically modified crops with conventional and organic farming

These guidelines are intended to help Member States to develop workable measures for co-existence in conformity with EU legislation. They set out the general principles and the technical and procedural aspects to be taken into account, and provide a list of possible actions that could be tailored for implementation at national or regional or local level.

General principles of the Guidelines

Building on experience with existing segregation practices (e.g. in certified seed production), approaches to co-existence need to be developed in a transparent way, based on scientific evidence and in co-operation with all concerned. They should ensure an equitable balance between the interests of farmers of all production types. National strategies and best practices should refer to the legal labelling thresholds and purity standards for GM food, feed and seed.

Measures should be efficient and cost-effective, without going beyond what is necessary to comply with EU threshold levels for GMO labelling. They should be specific to different types of crop, since the probability of admixture varies greatly from one crop to another; while for some crops the probability is high (e.g. oil seed rape) for others the probability is fairly low (e.g. potatoes). In addition, local and regional aspects should be fully taken into account.

The need for strategies that ensure a fair balance between the interests of farmers of all types of production is underlined. Farmers should be able to choose the production type they prefer, without imposing the necessity to change already-established production patterns in the neighbourhood. As a general principle, during the phase of introduction of a new production type in a region, farmers who introduce the new production type should bear the responsibility of implementing the actions necessary to limit admixture. Finally, continuous monitoring and evaluation and the timely sharing of best practices are indicated as imperatives for improving measures over time.

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