

FOOD AND DEMOCRACY

5TH EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON GMO-FREE REGIONS

CULTURE AND CONVENTION CENTRE LUCERNE
(KKL) – SWITZERLAND
APRIL 24TH – 25TH, 2009



The 5th European Conference on GMO-free Regions to be held in Lucerne in 2009 continues a series of annual meetings. The 2008 gathering took place in Bonn (Germany). The conferences serve as networking occasion for institutions and organisations within the European movement of GMO-free Regions.

The main theme at the heart of the 5th meeting in Lucerne is the clear demand coming from European citizens for GMO-free agriculture and GMO-free food. The event offers a platform for farmers organisations as well as consumers, environmental and animal welfare associations.

With a view to consolidating and expanding results and successes obtained in the past years, the 5th European Conference will further elaborate concepts and strategies to achieve a GMO-free European agriculture. The conference is committed to finding long-term solutions to ensure GMO-free food and animal feed supplies for Europe, today and tomorrow.



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CONFERENCE MESSAGE

FOOD AND DEMOCRACY – EUROPE'S FARMERS WISH TO PRODUCE ACCORDING TO EUROPEAN CONSUMERS' NEEDS

GM0-free: Europe's food supply today is predominantly GM0-free. Over 99% of cultivated land in European countries is free of genetically modified plants. The use of genetic engineering in livestock is insignificant in the European Union, and prohibited in Switzerland.

Food: Surveys show that an overwhelming majority of Europeans favour GM0-free agriculture and food. Europe's people nurture a highly diverse food culture. Europe's food production therefore adapts to Europeans' demand for quality essential to a healthy diet, for regional diversity, for taste and culinary delights, for sustainable production methods and social responsibility.

Democracy: The European movement of GM0-free Regions asks to be involved in democratic decision-making processes. Citizens in European countries and regions wish to give up altogether the commercial use of genetically modified animals, plants and other organisms in the environment. The conference will explore the range of action available within the EU legislative framework and develop strategies to obtain a pan-European moratorium via democratic processes such as referenda.



Pictures from the referendum campaign for a gene-tech moratorium in Switzerland (2005): Thanks to the successful result of this popular initiative, no GM plants can be cultivated for commercial use in this country until 2010.



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CONFERENCE GOAL 2009

THE COMMUNITY OF GMO-FREE REGIONS GROWS EACH YEAR

Aiming to add ever more GMO-free regions to Europe, the European Conference serves as platform for politics, science and the public at large.

Each European Conference on GMO-free Regions has a main thematic focus. Following **Planet Diversity 2008** in Bonn, the Lucerne Conference in 2009 will focus on «**food and democracy**». At its heart lies the question about how popular support for GMO-free food production can be implemented and how ecological methods in agriculture can be promoted.

A successful referendum in Switzerland in 2005 set in place a ban on the use of GMOs in agriculture. For this reason, the country represents an ideal platform for the 2009 meeting. The Culture and Convention Centre Lucerne (KKL) by Lake Lucerne is a suitable venue. About 400 participants from 30 European countries are expected to attend the gathering.



The Culture and Convention Centre Lucerne (KKL) – designed by renowned architect Jean Nouvel – is located in the city centre next to the main railway station, on the shores of Lake Lucerne.



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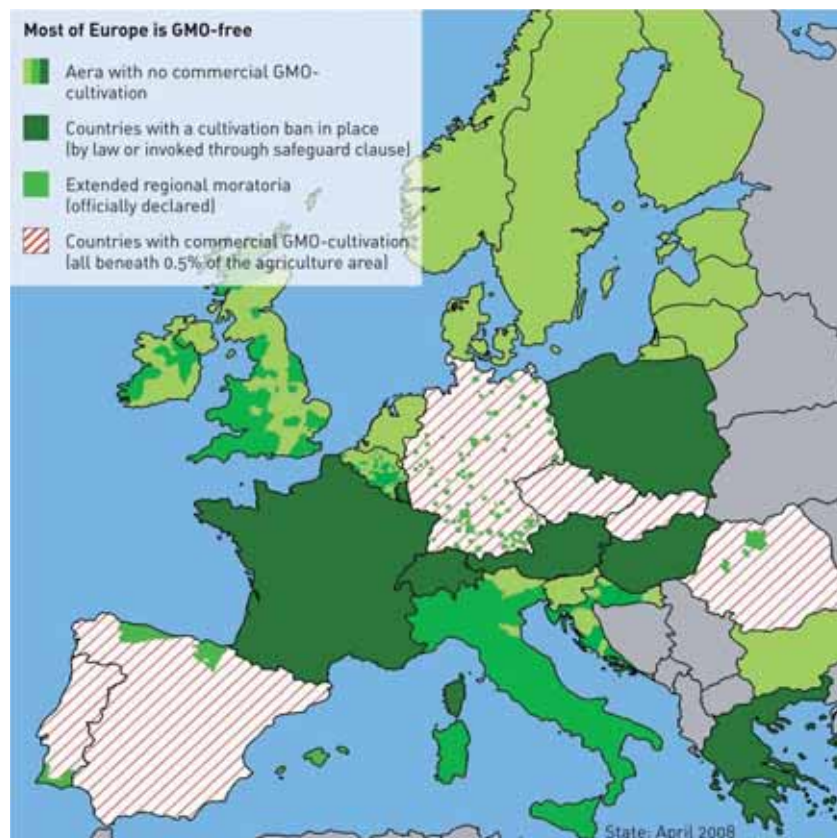
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HARDLY ANY GMO CULTIVATION IN EUROPE

THE SITUATION IN INDIVIDUAL EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

In 2007, 114 million hectares of GMO plants were cultivated worldwide. This represents less than 10% of the globally cultivated area of 1.5 billion hectares in total. Six countries (USA, 57.5 million hectares), Argentina (19.1), Brazil (15), Canada (7), India (6.2) and China (3.8) account for 95% of the GMO cultivated area in the world.

GMO cultivation in the EU is comparatively marginal and lies at under 0.01% of the global GMO cultivated area. Since 1998, only one single GMO variety has been approved for agricultural cultivation in the EU (MON810 maize).





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CONFERENCE ORGANISATION

CONFERENCE ORGANISATION AT THE EUROPEAN, SWISS AND LOCAL LEVEL

To prepare for the 5th European Conference on GMO-free Regions, a structure will be set up for the European, Swiss and regional/local levels to be represented and connected, specifically:

- **European Conference on GMO-free Regions**
 - **GENET NGO Network on Genetic Engineering**
 - **Foundation on Future Farming/Zukunftsstiftung Landwirtschaft, D-10117 Berlin**
- These networks of national, regional and local movements and institutions coordinate thematic orientation and management of the yearly European conference. Information at: www.gmo-free-regions.org.

- **Swiss Working Group on Genetic Engineering – SAG, CH-8032 Zürich**
- **STOPOGM, CH-2000 Neuchâtel**

The SAG (supported by StopOGM for the French part of Switzerland) is the umbrella organisation of Swiss farmers, consumer, environmental, development cooperation and animal welfare associations. The SAG holds the overall responsibility for carrying out the 5th European Conference on GMO-free Regions in Lucerne. The SAG member organisations are participating actively in the preparations and in shaping the programme. Further information at: www.gentechnologie.ch and www.gentechfrei.ch.

- **Local and regional support**

Local and regional partners offer their support in organising the cultural programme and in ensuring a pleasant stay for conference participants in Lucerne.

- **Conference Management:**

from autumn 2008, the Conference management will be entrusted to an elected board of professionals.

- **Conference Financing:**

is currently in planning.



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CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME (APRIL 24TH AND 25TH, 2009)

The opening will be addressed to the wider public. Session 1 is open to the media. All other sessions are open to the conference participants. For all sessions, simultaneous translation will be offered in English, German, French, Italian and Spanish.

■ Friday, April 24th 2009, 9h30 – 11h30

Conference Opening

- addressed at participants, media and guests from business and politics.
- Speeches by Swiss and European business and political representatives.

■ Session 1: Friday, April 24th 2009, 13h – 15h15

Food and democracy – Europeans reject genetic engineering in agriculture

Speeches addressed at participants, media and guests

- Situation on the European food and animal feed market (input from field expert).
- GMO-free agriculture and EU guidelines – possibilities of democratic participation in decision-making processes at the national and regional level (input from EU policy expert).
- Agrofuels – a new gateway for genetic engineering in agriculture (input from a European environmental organisation representative).
- New scientific evidence favours rejection of genetic engineering in agriculture (input from GENET scientific network).

■ Session 2: Friday, April 24th 2009, 15h45–17h30

Where does the European GMO-free movement stand?

Overview of developments within the GMO-free movement in Europe.

- Presentation of overall European situation by GMO-free Regions.
- Presentation of selected countries and regions.
- Introduction to the «GMO-free Marketplace» (market place country presentations).

■ Workshops: Saturday, April 25th 2009, 9h – 15h15

6–8 Workshops for further development of GMO-free Regions.

During the workshops, key questions revolving around the conference's main theme «Food and Democracy» will be discussed, such as policy, legal framework,



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legal procedures, patents, food sovereignty, agrofuels, organisation of movements, etc. Groups will discuss current and future aspects related to food supply management and self-determination in Europe.

■ Session 3: Saturday, April 25th 2009, 15h30 – 17h

- Further development of GMO-free Regions of Europe (workshop reports).
- Resolution about a European Proposal on «Food and Democracy».
- Concluding farewell session.





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CULTURAL PROGRAMME

■ Cultural event 1: Friday, April 24th 2009, 18h30 – 22h30 (approx.)

Conference kick-off: Evening event on Lake Lucerne for conference participants and guests.

- Steamboat ride on Lake Lucerne under the Swiss GMO-free flag
- Abundant buffet of GM-free regional culinary delights from Central Switzerland, Valais, Grischun and Ticino.
- Performances, music, dance.

■ Cultural event 2: Saturday, April 25th 2009, 6h45 – 8h30

City tour and outdoor breakfast for conference participants

- Guided tour through the old town of Lucerne in German, English and French.
- «Lozärner Buurezmorge» («Lucerne farmers' breakfast») – breakfast buffet under the City Hall's arcades, along the shores of river Reuss, with a view on the world famous «Kappelenbrücke» (Chapel Bridge).

■ Cultural event 3: Saturday, April 25th 2009, evening

Lucerne is worth a visit – offered to those conference participants staying in Lucerne.

- City walk or visit of cultural events in Lucerne (individually according to day programme).
- «Uustrinkete» («Out for a drink») in one of the city's historical inns (22h – 0h30)

■ Cultural event 4: Sunday, April 26th 2009, 10h – 15h

Farm visit – offered to conference participants remaining in Lucerne (German with English, French and Italian translation).

- Visit to two organic farms in the surroundings of Lucerne.
- Small organic lunch.

Accommodation and catering

Preparations for accommodation and catering are underway.

For further information:

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