

SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS

176th GMO Panel Plenary meeting



4 February 2026

09:00-16:00

MINUTES - Agreed on 17 February 2026

Location: Teleconference

Attendees:

○ Panel Members:

Josep Casacuberta (chair), Francisco Barro, Albert Braeuning (up to item 6.1), Michelle M Epstein, Thomas Frenzel, Jean-Luc Gallois, Frits Koning (up to item 5.2), Ruud de Maagd, Antoine Messéan, F Javier Moreno, Fabien Nogué, Giovanni Savoini (up to item 6.1), Alan H Schulman and Christoph Tebbe

○ European Commission:

DG SANTE: Olga Orlova

○ EFSA:

NIF Unit: Ana Afonso, Michele Ardizzone, Martina Bonatti, Alice Branchi, Giacomo De Sanctis, Antonio Fernández Dumont, Arianna Ferrari, Andrea Gennaro, Tilemachos Goumperis, Sara Jacchia, Dafni Maria Kagkli, Paolo Lenzi, Aleksandra Lewandowska, Ana Martin Camargo, Aldo Mendoza, Franco Maria Neri, Nikoletta Papadopoulou, Tommaso Raffaello and Reinhilde Schoonjans

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants.

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

3. Declarations of Interest of Panel members

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence¹ and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management,² EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest filled out by the Panel members invited to the present meeting. No conflicts of interest related to the issues discussed in this meeting have been identified during the screening process.

Certain interests were declared orally by the members before the beginning of the meeting. For further details on the outcome of the screening of the Oral Declaration of Interest made at the beginning of the meeting, please refer to the Annex.

4. Report on written procedure since the 175th Plenary

- 4.1** The [minutes](#) of the 175th Panel plenary meeting were agreed by written procedure on 23 December 2025.

5. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion

¹ https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/independence-policy-2024.pdf

² https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/decision-ed-on-competing-interest-management-2024.pdf



5.1 GMFF-2025-35594 (RX050) Application for renewal of genetically modified maize Bt11 × MIR162 × MIR604 × GA21 and its sub-combinations in accordance with Regulation (EC) No. 1829/2003 [EFSA-Q-2025-00532](#)

Maize Bt11 × MIR162 × MIR604 × GA21 expresses the following proteins: Cry1Ab and Vip3Aa20 conferring protection against certain lepidopteran pests, mCry3A conferring protection against certain coleopteran pests, mEPSPS and PAT conferring tolerance glyphosate- to glufosinate-based herbicides, and PMI used as a selectable marker. Following the submission of application EFSA-GMO-DE-2009-66 and the publication of the EFSA scientific opinion, the placing on the market of maize Bt11 × MIR162 × MIR604 × GA21 and genetically modified maize combining two or three of the events Bt11, MIR162, MIR604 and GA21 for products containing, consisting of, or produced from this GM maize, excluding cultivation in the EU, was authorised by Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2016/1685³ with some specific conditions.

In 2025, the applicant asked the European Commission to renew the authorisation for the placing on the market of maize Bt11 × MIR162 × MIR604 × GA21 and its sub-combinations, submitting application GMFF-2025-35594 in support of their request. The GMO Panel had a preliminary discussion on how to progress with the assessment of the renewal application in accordance with Articles 11 and 23 of Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 and the relevant EFSA guidelines.

The GMO Panel defined the next steps to progress the risk assessment of the renewal application of maize Bt11 × MIR162 × MIR604 × GA21. Further discussion is needed.

5.2 Mandate on oilseed rape MS11 [EFSA-Q-2024-00691](#)

On 2 April 2020, the GMO Panel adopted a scientific opinion⁴ on application EFSA-GMO-BE-2016-138 for the placing on the market of oilseed rape MS11, import and processing under Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003. The MS11 event expresses a male sterility trait to facilitate hybrid seed production and the PAT protein to confer tolerance to glufosinate-ammonium-based herbicides. In the scientific opinion, the GMO Panel noted that the characteristics of the intended traits of oilseed rape MS11 challenge the comparative analysis to the extent that it is not possible to produce the materials and collect the data for the comparative analysis without deviating from the legal requirements as per Regulation (EU) No 503/2013. For this reason, it was not possible for the GMO Panel to conclude on the compositional analysis of oilseed rape MS11 and on the toxicological, allergenicity and nutritional assessment in line with the intended scope.

On 5 January 2021, the European Commission (EC) mandated EFSA to assess additional information received from the applicant on the comparative analysis of oilseed rape MS11 ([EFSA-Q-2021-00044](#)). The GMO Panel considered the information submitted (on the composition of the two-event stack MS11 × RF3) and concluded that it could not be used for a risk assessment of MS11 in line with the intended scope and with Regulation (EU) No 503/2013. The GMO Panel was not in the position to conclude on the compositional analysis nor on the toxicological, allergenicity or nutritional assessment of oilseed rape MS11 in line with the intended scope.⁵

On 2 December 2024, the EC mandated EFSA to assess additional information received from the applicant on the comparative analysis of oilseed rape MS11 ([EFSA-Q-2024-00691](#)). The information consists of the field trial studies that were requested by the GMO Panel⁵ for mandate EFSA-Q-2021-00044. EFSA was asked to complement its original scientific opinion on oilseed rape MS11 taking into consideration this additional information.

The progress made with the mandate was presented and discussed by the GMO Panel. Further discussion is needed.

³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32016D1685>

⁴ <https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.2903/j.efsa.2020.6112>

⁵ <https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.2903/j.efsa.2022.7190>



6. Other scientific topics for information/discussion

6.1 Revision of the templates for scientific opinions

The GMO Panel continued the discussion from the 172nd GMO Plenary⁶ on possible improvement of the length and readability of the scientific opinions. The task force reported on possible improvements that were identified after working on the text of one of recently adopted opinions. It was agreed to carry on working on the template for the single event application and to report at the upcoming GMO Plenary meeting.

7. Update on new Mandates

7.1 Applications

- o Application for authorisation of genetically modified DBN8205 soybean in accordance with Regulation (EC) No. 1829/2003 submitted by Beijing DaBeiNong Biotechnology Co., Ltd. (AP205) ([EFSA-Q-2026-00031](#))

7.2 New mandates

The GMO panel drafted a self-task mandate on the assessment of stack applications that was submitted to EFSA. The chair of the GMO panel and the NIF head of Unit agreed that there is no need to establish a new working group (WG), since the activities can be conducted within the Cross Cutting WG. The output will be a scientific statement to be completed by the end of June 2026.

The GMO Panel was also updated on the recent discussions that took place at the Cross cutting, FF and MC WGs.

8. Feedback from the Scientific Committee/ EC / Scientific Panels / EFSA

8.1 Scientific Committee

The Chair of the GMO Panel reported the discussions at the last Scientific Committee meeting⁷ and ongoing EFSA activities.

8.2 European Commission

The representatives of the EC informed the GMO Panel on their ongoing activities, including approval procedures for applications for which the GMO Panel has delivered a scientific opinion.

8.3 Scientific Panel (s) including their Working Group

The GMO Panel was updated on discussions of transversal relevance that took place in the last working groups molecular characterisation (MC), comparative risk assessment and ERA (CompERA), food and feed (FF) working group.

⁶ <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/172nd-plenary-meeting-gmo-panel>

⁷ <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2026-01/Minutes%20128th%20SC%20Open%20Plenary.pdf>



8.4 Unit

- GMO Network

A summary of the items discussed at the 20th GMO Network meeting held online on the 24th November 2025⁸ was presented

- Horizon scanning NGT

In addition, the GMO Panel was updated on a finalisation of the new scientific report in which EFSA was requested to provide scientific and technical assistance for a regular horizon scanning to assess new scientific data on plants, animals, microorganisms and products thereof obtained by new genomic techniques ([EFSA-Q-2025-00504](#)). The scientific report will be published soon on the EFSA website and in the EFSA Journal. EFSA thanked the experts of the Cross cutting working group of the GMO Panel that supported the activity.

9. Any other business

9.1 Calendar 2026

The date for the [OPEN Plenary 2026](#) has been changed to the 28-29 October 2026.⁹

10. Next meeting

The next meeting will be held on 11-12 March 2026 via teleconference.

⁸ <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/20th-meeting-gmo-network>

⁹ https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/advanced-search?topic%5B352%5D=352&event_type%5B154%5D=154



Annex

Interests and actions resulting from the Oral Declaration of Interest done at the beginning of the meeting

With regard to this meeting, Dr Jean-Luc Gallois declared the following interest: participation in a project funded by the French government (ANR) to study protein arginine methylation and its effects on plant development and resistance to virus. In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence¹⁰ and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management¹¹, and taking into account the specific matters discussed at the meeting in question, the interest above was not deemed to represent a conflict of interest for the expert concerned.

¹⁰ https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/independence-policy-2024.pdf

¹¹ https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/decision-ed-on-competing-interest-management-2024.pdf