



NATIONAL BIOSAFETY AUTHORITY

NBA COMMENTS ON SAFETY OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED MAIZE FOR NATIONAL PERFORMANCE TRIALS


The National Biosafety Authority (NBA) Board of Directors approved an application for environmental release of MON 810 event in Maize varieties on 15th January 2016. The purpose of this approval was to conduct National Performance Trials (NPTs) under supervision of Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS). This approval was granted with the following requirements:

- Prior to establishment of NPT sites, the applicant was to conduct an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of NPT sites and submit to NEMA for review and approval;
- Comply with all other existing national laws and policies relevant to this approval;
- Provide compositional analysis as per the guidelines for the conduct of food safety assessment of foods derived from GMO crops (KS CAC/GL 45-2003) on Kenyan MON 810 variety in maize varieties adapted to Kenya's agro-ecologies.

This approval was a culmination of food safety assessment, environmental risk assessment and socio-economic considerations based on international best practices on evaluation of GM crops. A thorough GM food and feed safety was carried out that involved independent experts and other Government agencies which entailed a comparative assessment of the genetically modified maize to conventional maize with the aim of determining any differences in compositional analysis, nutrition, agronomic characteristics like yield and likelihood of being toxic or allergenic. Based on the scientific evidence presented, the Authority arrived at a decision that there is evidence of safety to human and animal health and to the environment and therefore recommended the product to proceed to NPT.

It should be noted that allergenicity and toxicity assessment was conducted on the Bt maize and evidence to-date indicate the Bt maize under evaluation is not toxic nor does it possess allergenic properties that are different from the conventional maize. The only biosafety data requirement on the applicant during NPT testing was for the applicant to generate compositional data of locally generated maize varieties in different ecological zones and present this data to the Authority for further consideration before approval for commercialization. The NPT trials shall only be conducted in isolated and secure sites to ensure that there will be no cross-pollination with other maize varieties and the produce of the trial shall not be allowed to enter the food or feed chain at this stage. This measure is geared to ensuring that GM products will only be available in the market or openly cultivated after full authorization by the NBA. We wish to emphasize that GM products assessed and

approved by NBA are not harmful to humans, animals or environment. When such products are approved, they will be required to have a unique NBA approval number and a label on the packets for consumer information and ease of traceability.

Signed 
Willy K. Tonui, PhD, RBP, EBS
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
NATIONAL BIOSAFETY AUTHORITY

Dated: 5th April, 2017