

Case Study Austria

Initiatives on GMO-free Zones

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Overview

- 1. GMO debate in Austria**
- 2. Upper Austrian approach**
- 3. Regional anti-contamination laws**
- 4. Other supporting initiatives**

1. GMO debate in Austria

- **1997: GE referendum**
- **Many municipalities and regions against GMOs**
- **National bans of GMOs**
- **Support of the moratorium**
- **Strong market rejection**

2. Upper Austrian approach

- **Study of W. Mueller (2002) “GE free cultivation areas“ proposed 4 km minimum distance**
- **High density of organic farms -> GE free Zone only proper solution**
- **Draft law to ban GMOs for three years**
- **Notification: EU Commission says ban is illegal**
- **Nullity complaint to the ECJ submitted**

3. Regional anti-contamination laws

- **Laws to protect nature and farmland from GMO contamination**
- **Mandatory approval or notification procedure**
- **Refusal or approval on conditions**



**Upper Austria:
Ban/ECJ**

**Lower Austria:
Draft ready**

**Vienna:
Notification**

**Salzburg:
In force**

**Styria: Draft
in committee**

**Tirol: Redrafting
after notification**

**Carinthia:
In force**

**Burgenland:
Notification**

**Vorarlberg: No
initiative**

4. Other supporting initiatives

- **“Lebensviertel – Waldviertel”**: Farmers should renounce GMOs on a voluntary basis
- **GMO provisions in nature protection laws and laws on fisheries**
- **Upper Austria and Tuscany: Network of GMO-free regional governments**
- **Cross-border initiatives: Carinthia/Italy/Slovenia (“Bio-Alpe-Adria”) and Burgenland/Hungary**
- **Austrian Seed Purity Regulation and „Closed Cultivation Areas“ for clean seed production**

Summary

**Mixture of several initiatives is best strategy
to keep Austria a GMO-free Zone**