

PRESS RELEASE

European Seed Growers Group-Members that held their Annual Meeting in Blankenberge in Belgium this week urges the coming European Commission to allow European farmers access to varieties bred by mutagenesis techniques (part of NBT, New Breeding Techniques).

European farmers can assist in many of the society challenges we face but we definitely need access to the right tools like mutagenesis or use of glyphosate says ESGG Chairman Mr. Thor Gunnar Kofoed.

The Farmers of Europe are expected by society to find sustainable solutions to climatic issues; to achieve better resistance to pests and diseases; to reduce pesticide use; to produce good, healthy and affordable food, and to take care of the environment and biodiversity.

It is unethical not to make use for example the new mutagenesis techniques (NBT) that can assist us without being hazardous to either humans or the environment. The mutagenesis techniques cannot be compared with GMO due to the fact that this technique is only mimicking and accelerating natural processes.

ESGG fully support the outcome of the Agricultural Ministers Farm Council (May 14) called for clarity over the EU approval process for products developed using new breeding techniques such as gene editing, The European Court of Justice ruling from July 25th, 2018 does not comply with the urgent need of access to mutagenesis techniques and we therefore expect the legislators to agree on mutagenesis as one the tools to reach sustainable solutions.

Glyphosate has a crucial role in specific aspects of seed production for weed control when other possibilities are not available says ESGG Chairman Mr. Thor Gunnar Kofoed. ESGG points out that the seed production is specialized and the basis for all other production of food and feed and is representing only a small proportion of agricultural land use.

Nevertheless, we believe the application of glyphosate should comply with the needs of the particular crop and in respect of the environment.

Consequently, ESGG urges farmers only to make use of glyphosate when necessary and in the lowest possible quantity.
