

EU court backs angry honeymaker in GM pollen row

September 6 2011



The presence of pollen from GM maize in honey, even in minuscule quantities, renders farm produce commercially void in the European Union, the bloc's top court said Tuesday.

The presence of pollen from GM maize in honey, even in minuscule quantities, renders farm produce commercially void in the European Union, the bloc's top court said Tuesday.

"Honey and [food supplements](#) containing pollen derived from a (genetically-modified organism) are foodstuffs produced from GMOs which cannot be marketed without prior authorisation," the Luxembourg-based European Court of Justice said in an eagerly-awaited judgment.

The decision, which surprised and delighted environmental campaigners steeled against the stealth march of so-called 'Frankenfoods,' stemmed

from a claim mounted by amateur German [beekeeper](#) Karl Heinz Bablok and the state of Bavaria.

Authorised [GM maize](#) was grown there by US industry giant Monsanto just hundreds of yards from Bablok's bees.

Judges crucially classed the pollen as a natural "ingredient" of honey, and therefore subject to the EU's authorisations regime.

"This is a victory for beekeepers, consumers and the movement for GM-free agriculture in Europe," said Mute Schimpf, food campaigner for Friends of the Earth Europe.

"This ruling re-writes the rule book and gives legal backing to stronger measures to prevent contamination from the likes of Monsanto."

"It's a scandal there's no Europe-wide liability regime to protect beekeepers or farmers affected by [GM crops](#)," Greenpeace EU agriculture [policy adviser](#) Stefanie Hundsdorfer added.

She called for Monsanto and the Bavarian state to be "held fully liable for this genetic pollution," including for compensation.

EU governments voted earlier this year to allow crops containing tiny traces of genetically-modified produce to enter the European food chain for the first time, but the honey ruling may see tightened rules re-introduced.

(c) 2011 AFP

Citation: EU court backs angry honeymaker in GM pollen row (2011, September 6) retrieved 22 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-09-eu-court-angry-honeymaker-gm.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.