

Choosing for not-genetically modified soy results in higher costs for livestock

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If the Netherlands together with Germany, France, Poland and Hungary would choose for an opt-out of the use of genetically modified (GM) soy in animal feed, then the current use of soy products in animal feed in these five countries must decrease by 40 to 50 percent to ensure that the demand for non-GM soy from the European Union (EU) does not exceed the available amount on the world market. Mid-term (3 to 5

years) additional costs for the Dutch animal husbandry due to more expensive non-GM soy and alternative protein sources, are estimated at €60 to €100m per year, of which about 80 percent for the poultry sector. The number of animals and productivity of the animals is assumed to be not affected.

To replace 1,557 thousand tonnes of GM soybean meal that is currently used in Dutch [animal feed](#) by a single alternative protein source, a similar amount of non-GM soybean meal is needed, or 2,985 thousand tonnes of rapeseed meal, or 4,268 thousand tonnes of sunflower meal, or 15,878 thousand tonnes of barley or 17,259 thousand tonnes of wheat. To produce this amount an additional 46 to 3,349 thousand hectares of cultivation area is needed above the current [soy](#) cultivation area, depending on the mix of non-GM soy and alternative protein sources that will be used in animal feed.

Trade flows of raw materials for animal feed are expected to partly shift from import in the West of the EU, for example through the seaport of Rotterdam, to intra-EU flows from the regions of cultivation to the final users, and import by road or rail from regions East of the EU, such as Ukraine. The amount of soy entering the EU through the Netherlands will decrease. This could be compensated by an increased need for alternative protein sources, if these products would be imported in the EU from overseas.

Consequences for seaports, transport sector and employment in the Netherlands depend on how trade flows will eventually shift. If the current trade in soy with Germany, France, Poland and Hungary would cease without replacement by alternatives, the traded volume of Dutch inland shipping will decrease by 0.6 percent.

Provided by Wageningen University

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