

EU rejects French scientist report linking GM corn to cancer

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM: The European Food Safety Authority on Thursday, 4 October 2012, said it cannot accept an "inadequate" report by a French scientist on a link between cancer and genetically modified corn when evaluating the risk.



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The EFSA said that after an initial review, it found the "design, reporting and analysis of the study ... are inadequate," meaning it could not "regard the authors' conclusions as scientifically sound."

Given these shortcomings, the EFSA called on the author of the study, French scientist Gilles-Eric Seralini, to provide additional information before a second, final review is completed by the end of this month.

Seralini's research team at France's University of Caen found last month that rats fed on US agribusiness giant Monsanto's NK603 corn, or exposed to one of the company's weedkillers used with the corn strain and containing glyphosate, developed tumours.

"The numerous issues relating to the design and methodology of the study as described in the paper mean that no conclusions can be made about the occurrence of tumours in the rats tested," EFSA said in a statement.

Last month, Seralini said he would not let the EFSA verify his findings because they had authorised the GM corn in question in the first place.

"It's out of the question that those who authorised NK603 carry out a counter-study of our findings as there'd be a conflict of interest."

NK603 was developed by Monsanto to make it resistant to the Monsanto herbicide Roundup, enabling farmers to use the weedkiller just once in the crop's life-cycle, enabling substantial savings.

Seralini and his team say their experiment in GM food is the first to follow rats through their lifespan, as opposed to just 90 days, but other experts have also questioned its methodology, results and relevance to humans.

Source: *AFP*

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