

**Question for written answer P-003194/2014
to the Commission
Rule 117
Peter van Dalen (ECR)**

Subject: Cisgenesis

On 11 March, the European Parliament adopted a report on the future of Europe's horticulture sector – strategies for growth (2013/2100(INI)). Paragraph 31 includes the passage: 'Calls on the Commission to differentiate between cisgenic and transgenic plants and to create a different approvals process for cisgenic plants'.

1. How does the Commission intend to comply with this request by the European Parliament?
2. Within what timeframe does the Commission intend to comply with this request by the European Parliament?
3. Does the Commission endorse the conclusions reached in 2012 by the Scientific Panel on Genetically Modified Organisms of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) in its 'Scientific opinion addressing the safety assessment of plants developed through cisgenesis and intragenesis', when it states that cisgenesis is just as safe as conventional plant breeding?
4. Does the Commission endorse the conclusions reached in 2012 by the Scientific Panel on Genetically Modified Organisms of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) in its 'Scientific opinion addressing the safety assessment of plants developed through cisgenesis and intragenesis', when it states that, if only genes from one and the same species are used for plant breeding, the result is not a GMO?

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Answer given by Mr Borg
on behalf of the Commission
(22.4.2014)

1. The Commission is carrying out the analysis of the legal status of New Plant Breeding Techniques (NPBT), including cisgenesis, in order to decide if these new techniques are to be considered as falling under the existing GMO legislation. In parallel, the EFSA GMO Panel was requested by the Commission to deliver a scientific opinion on plants developed through cisgenesis and intragenesis, in terms of the risks they might pose and the applicability of the existing guidance documents on GM plants for their risk assessment.
2. The Commission intends to complete this analysis within the forthcoming months.
3. The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) Panel on GMOs in its scientific opinion concluded that similar hazards can be associated with cisgenic and conventionally bred plants, while novel hazards can be associated with intragenic and transgenic plants. This conclusion does however not impact on the legal analysis being currently performed by the Commission.
4. No legal assessment on whether the definition of GMO applies to the organisms obtained through the use of these NPBTs was either requested to or delivered by EFSA, since the Commission considers that it does not fall under the remits of EFSA to provide legal advice to the Commission.