

Neither environmentalists nor industry happy with EU rules on GMOs

Campaign groups and the biotech industry are digging in for a new round of conflict, following the European Union's decision to allow member states to set their own rules on growing genetically modified organisms.

Environmentalists who favor a GMO ban say the crops have not been properly tested – posing health risks for consumers and giving a small group of corporations too much control over food supplies. The biotech industry says farmers should be free to grow whatever crops they want, and GMOs are a safe way to boost food production and feed the planet's growing population.

Brandon Mitchener, a spokesman for Monsanto, the world's largest seed company and a big producer of genetically altered crops, said the EU decision was misguided.

It would allow "some member states to torpedo a proven, safe technology for helping farmers produce more with less even as U.S. farmers are setting new records with the same technology", he said in an email.

But the proposed legislation does not satisfy environmental campaigners either.

"The main problem we have with this law is it prevents member states from using environmental concerns to justify their bans," Marco Contiero, a spokesman for Greenpeace, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Read full, original article: Europe's food fight shifts after GM crop vote