South Korean protesters demand labeling of GMO foods

Hundreds of farmers, consumers and environmental activists gathered in front of the Government Complex in Seoul [April 10] to demand that food labeling list genetically modified organisms (GMO).

About 500 protesters from across the nation criticized the central government for not changing the regulations.

They were concerned that GMOs could be harmful to health and demanded the right to know whether their purchases contained any GMO.

Cooperative group Farmer's COOP said the government imports an average of 2.28 million tons of GMO as ingredients for food products a year and each person consumes 40 kilograms. But a survey by Farmer's COOP, the Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice and consumer group Consumers Korea revealed that none of 438 market products containing GMOs that it searched listed the ingredients on labels.

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South Korean President Moon Jae-in promised during his presidential campaign in 2017 to list GMO ingredients in domestic food products. The food ministry showed the same intention. But authorities have so far failed to act.

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Protesters demanded "GMO's exodus out of the country to prevent humanity's extinction" and asked the food ministry to "stop giving in to heavyweight conglomerates and start working on approving the transparent GMO ingredient indication."

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