Bolivia accelerates GMO crop approvals to bolster national food supply, export industries

Interim President Jeanine Añez of Bolivia issued a Supreme Decree authorizing the National Biosafety Committee to speed up the evaluation of genetically modified (GM) events of five crops namely corn, sugarcane, cotton, wheat, and soybeans. The decree was made in response to the country’s current quarantine status due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Supreme Decree 4232 states that the National Biosafety Committee will establish an abbreviated evaluation procedure for the said GM crops to address the country’s internal food supply as well as agricultural products for export. The Committee was given 10 days to come up with the shortened evaluation procedure. The decree also states that during the evaluation, the Ministries of Environment and Water, and of Rural Development and Lands will consider the actions and measures taken by Bolivia’s neighboring countries when developing agricultural and food products using the GM technology.

Bolivia’s Association of Oilseed and Wheat Producers, or ANAPO, welcomed the decree saying that it will allow small producers to improve their production and become more competitive amidst the challenges caused by climate change.

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