

Brazil approves transgenic drought-tolerant wheat

The Brazilian government has approved the drought-tolerant transgenic wheat, HB4, developed by the Argentine firm Bioceres, for sale as flour. It is an advance introduced from a sunflower gene.

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Bioceres had obtained conditional approval in Argentina last year pending authorization from Brazil, the largest individual buyer of the cereal. The neighboring country takes 45% of the wheat exported by Argentina.

In recent months, buyers from Brazil, such as mills and a sector of the food industry, had expressed their reservations about an eventual approval. However, the Brazilian government gave the green light. There were also objections in the Argentine commercial chain due to a fear of how external markets could react. Strictly speaking, some mills and exporters began to put requirements for the purchase of the cereal of the new harvest in order to avoid any contamination of the conventional wheat with the transgenic.

"It represents a leap in biotechnology, it is an auspicious fact," said sources from the Ministry of Agriculture.

[Editor's note: This article was originally published in Spanish and has been translated and edited for clarity.]

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