

Europe slowly but steadily recovering from GMO rejection

Klaus Ammann

klaus.ammann@ips.unibe.ch

Neuchâtel and Delft University of Technology

The strategic situation is difficult, but not desperate, particularly in Europe – this is an evaluation shared by lots of experts of the debate about agricultural biotechnology. We have reached in Europe the peak of hysteria since the introduction of the new technologies, We encounter the same dynamics as described for previous technology introductions by (Showalter, 1997). It is interesting to note, that despite of the ‘hystories’ on the introduction of new technologies described by Showalter, no real damage has been reported in their subsequent introductory phase – or – the benefits were so overwhelming that the debate was soon fading away. This demonstrates clearly that it is the socio-cultural environment ultimately steering the risk debate (Adams, 1994). It's the basic mistrust against new technologies where everybody feels it will change their own life, and this often happens in a phase where the benefits are not yet clearly visible, especially for the consumers / users. It is not appropriate to reduce those difficulties to a naive scheme of the so called ‘deficit model’ (Sturgis et al., 2005) where the opponents just have to be educated and then they would refrain from negative emotions. Latest developments strengthen the critical view of the ‘deficit model’: (Osseweijer, 2006a, b) and (Ammann, 2007; Ammann & Papazova Ammann, 2004). The contribution will offer some concrete measures on how to actively cope up with this situation in Europe: We are ready to start with activities with an ASK-FORCE <http://www.efb-central.org/index.php/forums/> and most important: to raise the voice of science within the international negotiations about the Cartagena Protocol by fostering an initiative of public researchers www.pubresreg.org with all its specialist groups and international workshops, including also a MYTH BUSTER, where we systematically will contradict the many false and pseudoscientific stories of the protest corporates.

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