

## EU, Canada and GM Foods

**Course:** Canadian and International Law (CLN4U)

Briefing:

To help maintain sustainable food production, scientists have come up with ways, through biotechnology, to engineer genetically modified foods (GM foods). While biotechnology has the potential to relieve the stress people place on the environment, it also raises a set of ethical, environment, social and health issues. Much is still unknown about this technology, and it is unclear whether goods produced through this technology will have negative side effects on the environment and on our health.

It is therefore important that biotechnology is accompanied by adequate safety measures. This includes standards at the production level, but also proper methods of identification, so consumers are aware of existence of GM foods in their stores and can make conscious decisions in making their purchases. Because biotechnology is a global industry - GM foods are produced around the world for export to other countries - it needs to be regulated through international law.

Discover how international law affects trade in GM foods between Canada and EU countries.

Questions related to this topic:

- How much of Canada and the EU's trade in foods involve GM products?
- What international standards are in place for the import and export of GM products?

Links

EU:

- [From Farm to Fork: Safe Foods for Europe's Consumers](#) - European Commission brochure
- [Food Safety - European Commission](#)
- [European Food Safety Authority](#)
- [New Directive on the release of genetically modified organisms](#)
- [Transboundary movement of genetically modified organisms](#)
- [Traceability and labelling of GMOs](#) (Genetically Modified Organisms)
- [Consumer Voice: Special edition on GMOs](#) - Directorate General for Health and Consumers

Canada:

- [Agri-Food Canada Trade Policy](#)
- [Agri-Food Agricultural Policy Framework](#)
- [CBC News In-Depth: GM foods](#)

- [Canadian Health Coalition GM food archives](#)

International:

- [Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety](#)
- [Views on GMOs](#) - from the Sierra Club of Canada web site
- [Organic Consumers' Association](#)
- [World Trade Organization](#)

Documents:

- [Directive 2001/18/EC](#) - European Commission Directive on the placing on the market of GMOs (products containing or consisting of GMOs), e.g. for cultivation, import or processing into industrial products
- [European Commission Trade I-Centre](#) - search this database for EU policies on the trade of GMOs

Articles:

- Anderson, Kym and Chantal Pohl Nielsen. ["GMOs, Food Safety and the Environment: What Role for Trade Policy and the WTO?"](#) Centre for International Economic Studies, Adelaide University, Australia. Policy Discussion Paper No. 0034. September 2000.
- Gaskell, George, et al. ["Worlds Apart? The Reception of Genetically Modified Foods in Europe and the US."](#) Science Vol 285, 16 July 1999.
- Sheldon, Ian M. ["Regulation of biotechnology: Will we ever "freely" trade GMOs?"](#) 77<sup>th</sup>EAAE Seminar / NJF Seminar No. 325, August 17-18, 2001, Helsinki.