



**NO PATENTS
ON SEEDS!**

**Securing the
future of
European plant
breeding**

The last 10 years have seen an increase in patents on traditionally bred plants such as broccoli, tomatoes, melons, spinach, lettuce, maize, wheat and barley. More than 1.400 plant varieties are already concerned by patents. These patents, often owned by international agrochemical companies, violate European patent law and threaten the freedom to operate of traditional breeders. The loopholes in the legal texts must finally be closed!

What is at stake?

Patents on genes, seeds, and food are among the greatest threats to global food security and regional food sovereignty. These patents can block the use of biological diversity for further breeding. Until now, the breeders have had unrestricted access to conventionally bred varieties in order to breed even better varieties. The freedom of conventional breeding that underpins biodiversity in the field may soon be a thing of the past.

If this development is not stopped, the majority of breeders will no longer be able to use existing varieties and natural plant populations for breeding without risking patent infringement. Breeders will thus either have to give up their activities or become dependent on licensing agreements with large corporations.

Recent developments will have an impact on the Global South where many countries have enacted laws permitting patents on seeds, often as a consequence of pressure from countries of the Global North. This would massively reduce food sovereignty, local food production, and seed exchange in the countries of the Global South.



What needs to be done?

We want to protect the independence of breeders, market gardeners and farmers who breed, plant and reproduce conventionally bred plants and animals in Europe and beyond. Access to biological diversity will be key to responding to climate change and species extinction. It must not be controlled, hindered or blocked by patents.

Therefore, patents on processes based on crossing, selection, the use of natural genetic variation or random mutation must be prohibited. Similarly, the extension of patents covering genetic engineering to conventionally bred plants and animals must be stopped.

The interpretation of patent law must be corrected by the member states in the Administrative Council of the European Patent Office, with the European Union playing a leading role. Governments should also enforce the correct interpretation of patent laws in national legislation.

Take Action Now!



Together, we can work to raise awareness about the risks of seed patents, mobilise policy makers and initiate solutions to protect food sovereignty and free access to seeds in Europe.



**Read about the
campaign and current
activities:**

www.no-patents-on-seeds.org/en/campaign



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