

ACTION FACT SHEET for AUDITORS

Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) free

Goal	Avoid the use of GMOs (Genetically Modified Organisms).
Short description of the measure	A genetically modified organism (GMO) is the one in which at least one gene (called transgen) have been introduced into its genetic material from another organism using recombinant DNA technology. Despite the "Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 on genetically modified food and feed" lays down specific procedures for assessing and authorizing GMOs, there are strong arguments that have been put forward against the use of GMOs in agriculture not only for their potential negative effects on human health and socio-economic effects, but also for their potential negative effects on the environment and biodiversity.
Timeframe (When to start a measure and anticipated time for implementation)	Permanent action.
How auditors can assess if the measure has been implemented in a good quality?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The farmer is not using any GMO crop authorized in his/her country. ▪ The farmer can prove that some potentially related GMO-products (such as feedstuff) is GMO-free.
Additional information the auditor need for verification (if any)	The auditor shall ask for plant material certificates and documents for understanding the origin and composition of potentially related GMO-products.
Effects on biodiversity (ecosystems, species, soil biodiversity)	<p>There are several counterproductive environmental effects related to the use of GMOs such as:</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ herbicide-resistant genes inserted into other organisms' DNA (such as weeds), ▪ genes that mutate with harmful effect, ▪ development of resistance in insect populations exposed to the GM crops, ▪ "sleeping" genes could be accidentally switched on and ▪ active genes could become "silent", etc.
Indicator/key data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Total surface declared GMO free.
Reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ https://es.greenpeace.org/es/trabajamos-en/agricultura/transgenicos

Further information: [Knowledge Pool](#)

This Action Fact Sheet belongs to the training package for auditors of standard organisations and companies and was developed within the project LIFE Food & Biodiversity (Biodiversity in Standards and Labels of for the Food Industry). The main objective of the project is to improve the biodiversity performance of standards and sourcing requirements in the food industry by helping standard organisations to integrate efficient biodiversity criteria into their schemes and motivating food processing companies and retailers to include comprehensive biodiversity criteria into their sourcing guidelines.

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