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Approved By:
Kelly Stange
Prepared By:
Roswitha Krautgartner

Report Highlights:
Austria continues to be one of the leading forces in Europe opposed to the use of agricultural biotechnology. Austria was an initiator and always a supporter of the "opt-out" legislation for cultivation of biotech crops. The Austrian implementation of a nation-wide biotech cultivation ban (according to EU directive 2015/412) has been published in August 2015. Austrian opposition to biotech crops is a major controversial factor during the negotiations on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (T-TIP). All major political parties have enshrined anti-biotech policies. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), farmer organizations, the food-processing sector, and the retail sector all have marketing campaigns promoting genetically engineered (GE)-free foods. Soybeans are the only major GE product imported by Austria. Furthermore, Austria is promoting the local production of non-biotech soybeans in the Danube region.

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Acronyms

AGES	Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety (Agentur fuer Gesundheit und Ernaerhungssicherheit)
BAES	Austrian Federal Office for Food Safety (Bundesamt fuer Ernaehrungssicherheit)
EPPO	European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FAS	Foreign Agricultural Service
GE	Genetically Engineered
GMO	Genetically Modified Organism
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
LLP	Low Level Presence
LMO	Living Modified Organism
MS	Member States (EU Member States)
NBT	New Breeding Technique
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OeVP	Austrian people's party (Oesterreichische Volkspartei)
OIE	World Organization for Animal Health
SPOe	Austrian social democratic party (Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs)
T-TIP	Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership

Section I: Executive Summary

Austria continues to be one of the leading forces within Europe opposed to the use of biotechnology in agriculture. Austrian politicians, governmental decision makers, farmer organizations and consumers share the opinion that green, or agricultural, biotechnology carries incalculable risks. These parties fail to see any benefits or need for biotech crops and have even supported the implementation of ordinances that effectively ban the planting of EU-approved biotech crops, such as insect resistant corn.

After the release of EU Directive 2015/412, which allows Member States to restrict or ban the cultivation of GE plants in their territory, the Austrian government issued the so called "Biotech Cultivation Framework Law" (Gentechnik-Anbauverbots-Rahmengesetz) which has been published on August 3, 2015.

Austrian opposition to biotech crops is a major controversial factor with the ongoing negotiations on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (T-TIP).

Austria's regulations have effectively kept labeled biotech foods off the shelves in supermarkets and grocery stores. Because of consumer anti-biotech sentiment, the Austrian retail sector refrains from stocking or selling foods containing ingredients that require EU GE labeling.

With the goal of maintaining anti-biotech sentiment among consumers, NGOs and farmer's organizations, the food-processing sector, and the retail sector all have steady marketing campaigns promoting GE-free foods.

Despite this widespread opposition towards GE products, the Austrian animal sector is highly dependent on imports of soybean meal. A large majority of the 600,000 metric tons of soybean meal used in Austria is GE. Soybean meal is currently the only major agricultural biotech commodity found on the Austrian market.

With an increased demand among consumers and retailers, Austria is now promoting the local production of non-biotech soybeans in the Danube region within the so-called Danube Soy Initiative. As of November 2013, Austrian egg producers agreed on the only use of GE-free soybeans certified under the Danube Soy Initiative in their laying hens' feed rations. This is a result of pressure from the Austrian retail sector that to promote its products uses a label stating it is free of "genetically modified organisms" or 'GMO-Free.'

For more information on the European Union (EU) biotech situation please see the current EU Agricultural Biotechnology Annual Report, which can be found at the FAS GAIN Report Data Base.

Section II: Plant and Animal Biotechnology

Chapter 1: Plant Biotechnology

Part A: Production and Trade

a. Product Development:

There is no GE plant product development for commercialization in the next five years. There is only some small-scale research at the university level on grapes and fruit trees in contained areas.

b. Commercial Production:

There is no biotech crop production in Austria. Austrian legislation including national bans successfully prevents the planting of EU-approved biotech crops. Austria has adopted the so-called "opt-out" EU legislation to restrict or ban the cultivation of GE plants on its territory. The Austrian federal states have either issued or drafted amendments to their "biotech precautionary bills" to implement that particular legislation. National bans of biotech crops are still in place but are only relevant for earlier approved biotech crops (MON 810). In the case of biotech crops newly approved for cultivation Austria will apply for an amendment of the geographical scope to exclude Austria. For more details please see chapter "Austrian Federal Law". In addition, all Austrian federal states are members of the "European Network of GMO-Free Regions."

Non-GM Seed Corn

Austria is an important corn seed producer and the Austrian seed industry actively promotes non-GM seed corn. In 2015, Austria planted almost 8,500 ha seed corn and more than half is exported. In August 2011, Pioneer Seeds opened a corn parent seed production facility in northeastern Austria. Austria's 'GMO-Free' status was a factor in the plant's location choice.

c. Exports:

Since there is no commercial GE plant production, Austria does not export GE crops to the United States or other countries.

d. Imports:

The livestock and poultry industries are important components of Austrian agriculture and account for about 45 percent of total agricultural output. Animal production is highly dependent on imports of soybean meal. Austria imports an average 500,000 MT of soybean meal per year for feed, the majority of which is GE. Those imports are mainly transshipments from Germany and the Netherlands, where soybeans from North and South America are processed into soybean meal. Soybean meal is the only agricultural biotech product that can be found on the Austrian market.

e. Food Aid Recipient Countries:

Austria is not a food recipient. Normally, Austria only provides direct food aid for disaster relief of which mostly is sourced locally or close to the disaster site. Austria does not source GE products for food aid. The majority of the Austrian food security support includes provisions for sustainable food production systems (which in terms of Austria does not include GE plantings).

f. Trade Barriers:

All EU trade barriers related to GE crops apply to Austria. Most importantly, the EU mandatory labeling of the presence of GE ingredients in food causes traders, processors and retailers to avoid GE ingredients including GE soybeans or corn used for processing of oil. In addition, Austria has implemented its own cultivation and marketing bans on EU approved GE crops (see chapter 'Regulatory Framework').

Part B: Policy

a. Regulatory Framework:

As a member of the EU, generally EU regulations on biotech products also applies to Austria, (see current EU Agricultural Biotechnology Annual Report which can be found at the FAS GAIN Report Data Base).

i. Responsible Government Ministries

Federal Ministry of Health ("Bundesministerium fuer Gesundheit und Frauen")
Responsible for contained use and deliberate release applications from industry and research institutions except universities.

Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy ("Bundesministerium fuer Wissenschaft, Forschung und Wirtschaft")
Responsible for contained use and deliberate release applications from universities.

Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management ("Bundesministerium fuer Land- und Forstwirtschaft, Umwelt und Wasserwirtschaft") / Federal Environment Agency ("Umweltbundesamt").
Responsible for cultivation of biotech crops and provides comments in cases of deliberate release and of placing products on the market.

ii. Biosafety Committee

The Committee for Gene Technology ("Gentechnik-Kommission") is an advisory body consisting of representatives from science, industry, government, NGOs and trade unions. This committee gives comments on regulations and ordinances, establishes technical guidelines and gives periodic reports to the Parliament. Its scientific subcommittees give advice on actual applications of contained use and deliberate release. The Austrian Gene Technology Act lays out the rules for the installation and work of this commission and its three standing scientific committees.

The Austrian Ministry of Agriculture initiated the "Task Force on Gene Technology in Agriculture" (Arbeitsgruppe Gentechnik in der Landwirtschaft) with the aim to achieve a coordinated approach for managing the coexistence of biotechnological crops, conventional crops and organically produced crops in all nine Federal States. Since there is no GE production in Austria currently, the task force develops possible scenarios of coexistence for the unlikely event of GE production in the future and for coexistence issues with neighboring countries. This task force consists of members of the Agriculture Ministry, the Health Ministry, representatives of the nine Federal States, the Chambers of Agriculture, and representatives of the organic farmers association.

iii. Political Factors

All major Austrian political parties consistently vote against the use of agricultural biotechnology. The latest Austrian government policy plan (2013) by the two coalition parties, the social democratic party (SPOe) and the people's party (OeVP), includes a commitment to ensure GE-free agricultural cultivation. The policy plan is valid through 2018.

Austrian opposition to biotech crops is a major controversial factor with the ongoing negotiations on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (T-TIP). Some media and political forces are spreading the fear that Europe could be "flooded" with GE food.

All five significant political parties in the Austrian national assembly passed a resolution in the agricultural committee confirming the Austrian cultivation ban of biotechnology in agricultural production.

Within the Austrian agricultural community, many maintain that biotech crops pose a hazard to both organic and conventional farming. Austrians, and the vast majority of farmers, think that coexistence of biotech crops and conventional crops is impossible in Austria due to its small-scale farm structure.

Austrian ordinances still effectively ban the planting of all EU-approved biotech crops and the marketing of EU-approved oilseed rape and potato. The EU Commission has long criticized these ordinances.

Austria has always voted against the EU approval of any type of biotech variety, whether for import or for cultivation. It is not expected that this will change in the near future.

To help support demand for meat from animals produced with non-biotech feeds, Austria is promoting the local production of soybeans and supports the "Danube Soya Association," to increase the production and processing of non-biotech soybeans in the Danube region. Austrian dairy, egg and most of the broiler producers agreed on the only use of GE-free soybean products in feed rations. The Austrian egg industry agreed on only using soybeans certified under the Danube Soy Initiative in their laying hen's feed rations. This is a result of pressure from the Austrian retail sector that uses the label 'GMO-Free' for promoting its products.

Austrian Federal Law

As a member of the European Union, Austria has fully implemented the EU directives, decisions, regulations and guidelines of the pertaining to Living Modified Organisms (LMOs) through federal laws and ordinances (see current EU Agricultural Biotechnology Annual Report which can be found at the FAS GAIN Report Data Base) Austrian Gene Technology Act ('Gentechnikgesetz') and its amendments represent the core of Austrian regulations. It regulates the main aspects of biotechnology and genetic engineering: contained use of LMOs, deliberate release of LMOs into the environment, the placing on the market of products that contain LMOs, and the application of biotechnology in human medicine such as gene analysis and gene therapy. Several ordinances to the gene technology act specify detailed requirements. The Austrian regulations on biotechnology can be found at the website of the Federal Ministry of Health (only available in German).

After the release of EU Directive 2015/412, which allows Member States to restrict or ban the cultivation of GE plants in their territory, the Austrian government issued the Biotech Cultivation Framework Law ('Gentechnik-Anbauverbots-Rahmengesetz' in German) which has been published on August 3, 2015. Since the cultivation of plants is regulated by federal state laws (not federal laws), the "Biotech Cultivation Framework Law", which is a federal law, has the aim to establish a common coordinated legal basis for all nine Austrian federal states to ban the cultivation of biotech crops. The law foresees the introduction of a Committee including federal and states governments to work out general biotech precautionary measures. It also introduces a Biotech Advisory Council and lays down principles of measures, the federal states have to implement. Some of the federal states have already issued amendments to their biotechnology precautionary bills (in German); the rest of the federal states have drafted amendments to implement "opt out" legislation and prevent their territories from biotech crop cultivation. In addition, Austria implemented the option of asking to amend the geographical scope of the application of a biotech crop to exclude all of its territory. This provision required an amendment of the Austrian Gene Technology Act ('Aenderung des Gentechnikgesetz' in German) which also came into force on August 3, 2015. Austria still maintains its earlier issued cultivation bans - of which only corn MON 810 is of relevance - and may ask for an amendment of the geographical scope of the application if necessary to ban earlier approved biotech crops (MON 810). New biotech crop cultivation applications will be handled with restricted geographical scope.

The Ordinance on Work with LMOs in Contained Use ('Systemverordnung' in German) defines the Gene Technology Act in more detail, such as risk assessment, the classification of LMOs, the

necessary equipment of laboratories according to classification and scale, qualification of staff, safety aspects, and the measures to be taken in case of accidents.

The Ordinance on the Deliberate Release of LMOs into the Environment ('Freisetzungsverordnung' in German) is also based on the Gene Technology Act and contains the requirements in more detail that have to be considered by applicants for the approval of a deliberate release of a LMO in Austria.

The Ordinance on Public Hearings ('Anhörungsverordnung' in German) prescribes in more detail the administrative procedures that have to be considered in those cases where the Austrian Gene Technology Act requires a mandatory public hearing. These cases are: applications for deliberate release of LMOs into the environment and contained use of LMOs in higher risk classes and on a large scale.

The chapters of the Book of Biotechnology ('Gentechnikbuch' in German) are put out by the Advisory Board on Gene Technology and outline the current "state of technology" in the field of biotechnology and genetic engineering and are meant to keep pace with biotech advances. The book has the legal status of an objectified expert opinion. If necessary chapters of the book can be published as an ordinance and thus enter into force like a law.

The Register of Products Containing LMOs ('Gentechnikregister' in German) continuously lists up those products that have been approved under Directive 90/220/EEC following the procedures of Article 13.

Austria adopted the "opt-out" for cultivation legislation on a federal and a federal state level (For more details please see chapter "Austrian Federal Law"). This legislation prevents the Austrian territory from cultivation of GE crops. However, Austria still maintains its earlier issued cultivation bans (of which only corn MON 810 is of relevance -the only cultivated GE crop within the EU) and may ask the EU for an amendment of the geographical scope of the application if that is what is necessary to ban earlier approved biotech crops (MON 810). New biotech crop cultivation applications will be handled with restricted geographical scope.

Following safeguard clauses are still in effect:

Event banned	Scope	Date of Ban
Bayer T25 corn	Cultivation	2000 (Amended 2008)
Monsanto MON 810 corn	Cultivation	1999 (Amended 2008)
Monsanto GT73 rapeseed	Import/Processing	2007 (Amended 2008)
Monsanto MON 863 corn	Import/Processing	2008
Bayer Ms8 rapeseed	Import/Processing	2008
Bayer Rf3 rapeseed	Import/Processing	2008
Bayer Ms8XRf3 rapeseed	Import/Processing	2008
BASF EH92-527-1 potato	Cultivation	2010

The Ordinance on Labeling of Products that Contain LMOs ('Gentechnik-Kennzeichnungsverordnung' in German) prescribes the mandatory labeling for products that contain LMOs or consist of mixtures of both modified and non-modified organisms. This regulation does not apply to "novel foods", pharmaceuticals and products that are only destined for contained use or scientific purposes.

The Ordinance on Genetically Modified Seed ('Saatgut-Gentechnik-Verordnung' in German) prescribes the mandatory labeling for all genetically modified seed varieties covered by Directive 90/220/EEC. Furthermore the ordinance sets up a threshold for an accidental low-level presence of a GE event in of conventional and organic seed with genetically modified seed (0,1% for subsequent controls).

The Ordinance on Thresholds of Certain Genetically Modified Organisms in Feed ('Futtermittel-GVO-Schwellenwert-Verordnung' in German) sets up a threshold of 1% for accidental or technically unavoidable contamination of feed with certain (approved) LMOs.

The Ordinance on Seed Production Areas ('Saatgut-Anbaugebiete-Verordnung' in German) lays down requirements for seed production.

The Ordinance to Limit Emissions in Waste Water Resulting from Work with LMOs ('AEV Gentechnik - Verordnung zur Begrenzung von Abwasseremissionen aus Arbeiten mit gentechnisch veraenderten Organismen' in German) regulates the limitation for emissions in waste water resulting from work with LMOs in containment.

The Ordinance on the Protection of Employees Against Hazards Caused by Biological Agents (Verordnung biologische Arbeitsstoffe –VbA in German) prescribes measures to be taken to avoid risks and dangers resulting from work with biological agents such as equipment, hygiene, handling of agents, reduction of exposure, vaccination of employees etc. An annex contains a classification of organisms.

The Codex Alimentarius Austriacus (in German) contains guidance about the definition of GE-free products. ("Codexrichtlinie zur Definition der "Gentechnikfreiheit" in German) This guidance applies for foodstuffs that are labeled as "biotech-free".

Federal State Law

In Austria, natural conservation, water sheds, animal breeding, crop cultivation, and fisheries are covered by state laws. In principle, state laws on nature conservation lay down a prohibition of the deliberate release of LMOs into nature.

Biotechnology precautionary bills and biotech free zones (in German) have been established in all nine of Austria's federal states. State-level biotech precautionary bills generally include the authority to pass statutory coexistence measures that protect against "contamination" from biotech crops.

With the new Biotech Cultivation Framework Law, it is expected that federal state biotech precautionary bills will become even stricter.

b. Approvals:

Theoretically all EU approvals of GE crops apply to Austria but Austria bans all planting of biotech crops on its territory with measures explained in the section "Regulatory Framework".

c. Stacked or Pyramided Event Approvals:

Austria abides by the approvals of the EU which regulates stacked and pyramided events separate from single events. However, Austria is in principle against the approval of biotech events which means in consequence that Austria would not vote for the approval of stacked or pyramided events either.

d. Field Testing:

Austria does not carry out any type of biotech crop field trials. Theoretically, Austria has regulations on how to apply and how to approve biotech field trials. Since Austria opted out from planting biotech crops it is practically impossible to apply for field testing of biotech crops. In the past, there have been very limited confined trials, primarily on fruit trees.

e. Innovative Biotechnologies:

So far, there is no Austrian regulation on "New Breeding Techniques" in plant production and no official opinion on whether they should count as biotech or not. However, some Austrian officials express that anything created through biotech technologies should be treated as biotech product.

f. Coexistence:

Coexistence

Austria has no federal coexistence law but all nine provinces implemented precautionary bills that include coexistence regulations. The Austrian Agriculture Ministry commissioned an expert team consisting of representatives of the Federal States, the Chambers of Agriculture, the Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety, and the Agriculture Ministry. In addition, an enlarged team with representatives from breeders associations, the seed production sector and consumers was included to develop recommendations for a national strategy on coexistence. The expert group worked on developing uniform Austria-wide guidelines for coexistence management to help state authorities decide whether cultivation of biotech crops is possible in a given case and under which conditions such cultivation can be permitted (e.g. minimum isolation distances from non-biotech crops). These guidelines will be published if an actual need to establish a segregation distance for a proposed planting arises.

Liability

The Biotechnology Act also serves to makes producing biotech crops unattractive. Specifically, the Biotech Act foresees a) comprehensive compliance with the precautionary principle; b) “duty of care” against unintended mingling of biotech and non-biotech crops; c) the introduction of a “biotechnology register” to record dates and places of the release of biotech crops, and most important; d) liability and compensation rules regarding perceived damage from biotech crops neighboring conventional or organic farmers. The law considers the presence of biotech DNA to be a basis for harm, rather than physically demonstrable damage.

g. Labeling:

EU regulations for labeling GE food are fully implemented in Austrian law. The Austrian Ordinance on Labeling of Products that Contain LMOs (‘Gentechnik-Kennzeichnungsverordnung’ in German) prescribes the mandatory labeling for products that contain LMOs or consist of mixtures of both modified and non-modified organisms. This regulation does not apply to "novel foods", pharmaceuticals or products that are only destined for contained use or scientific purposes. Currently there are no food products in Austria which have to be labeled as biotech. However, regulations only require the labeling of food where GE crops are used as ingredients. Meat or dairy products deriving from animals fed with GE feed do not require GE labeling which Austrian NGOs constantly criticize. The Austrian GE-free labels may only be used for meat and dairy products deriving from animals only fed by GE -free feed.

Voluntary Label "GMO-Free"

There are two Austrian labels for biotech free products issued by "ARGE Gentechnik-frei" (Platform for 'GMO-Free' Food Products – in German) which follows the requirements for biotech-free food products laid down by the Austrian food codex. One label states "produced biotech-free" (gentechnikfrei erzeugt); the second label says, "produced without biotech" (ohne Gentechnik hergestellt). Currently more than 2,300 products are labeled under this program. Companies who want to use the GMO-Free labels on their products have to apply for each product with this platform and prove that the requirements for biotech-free production are met. Major products are milk and dairy products (cows must not be fed by GE feed), bread and bakery products, eggs (laying hens must not be fed by biotech feed), soybean products, meat, fruits and vegetables.

h. Monitoring And Testing:

The Austrian authority to ensure compliance with requirements regarding GE products in food and feed and related labeling regulations is with the Austrian federal states ("Bundeslaender"). Food inspectors of the federal states take food samples at processing and trading companies for analysis. The number of samples to be tested is risk based and laid down in a control plan. Either the food testing institutes of the federal states or the Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety (AGES – in German) carry out the actual testing. The competence for monitoring seeds and propagating material is with the Federal Office for Food Safety (BAES – in German).

i. Low Level Presence (LLP) Policy:

Austria does not have its own policy for LLP. It does follow the "technical solution" guidance that defines zero as an allowance of 0.1 percent, as outlined in EU Regulation 619/2011. This regulation lays down the methods of sampling and analysis of official control of feed regarding the presence of genetically modified for which an authorization procedure is pending or the authorization of which has expired.

j. Additional Regulatory Requirements:

None.

k. Intellectual Property Rights (IPR):

A range of laws safeguards the protection of intellectual property in Austria. Regulations for intellectual property are laid down in the Austrian Patent Act, the Copyright Act, the Industrial Design Act and the Trademark Protection Act.

l. Cartagena Protocol Ratification:

Biosafety Protocol

Austria signed the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety on May 24, 2000. It was ratified in August 2002 and entered into force on September 11, 2003.

National Focal Point – Biosafety Clearing House
The Federal Environment Agency ('Umweltbundesamt' – in German) acts as the National Focal Point and Biosafety Clearing House in the framework of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

m. International Treaties/Fora:

Austria is a member of several international organizations dealing with food and plants like most importantly the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, EPPO European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization, and Codex Alimentarius. Austria always takes an anti-biotech position in these organizations.

n. Related Issues:

The Austrian government supports the introduction of socio-economic criteria for GE products and was a leading driver for the introduction of the opt-out clause for member states to independently decide whether they want to use/plant GE crops or not.

Part C: Marketing

a. Public/Private Opinions:

Driven by a generation of NGOs and government messaging, the average Austrian consumer has a very negative attitude towards crops and food derived from biotech crops. Food products that must be labeled "biotech" do not sell in Austria.

Years of controversy have produced a large number of polling studies on Austrian and European attitudes toward GE crops. A very comprehensive study comes from the European Commission/Eurostat and is titled, "Europeans and Biotechnology – Winds of Change (2010)." Four findings from this study relative to the marketing of U.S. agricultural products are: 1) Opposition to GE foods is high and steady over time; 2) The level of support for GE foods is declining; 3) Familiarity with the technology or science does not improve attitudes; and 4) Educating consumers does not increase GE crop acceptance (implying that messaging is more important than facts).

b. Market Acceptance/Studies:

Because of the anti-biotech attitude of Austrian consumers the Austrian retail sector agreed to refrain from stocking or selling biotech foods. NGOs, farmer's organizations, the food-processing sector, and the retail sector are carrying out anti-biotech campaigns promoting GE-free food.

Campaigning for Biotech-Free Food

NGOs, the Austrian government and, increasingly, the retail sector and the food industry are promoting biotech-free food products. According to the Austrian food codex, which provides criteria for labeling requirements for biotech free products, meat, eggs, and dairy can only be labeled "biotech-free" if produced from animals fed biotech-free feed. Several years ago, a few Austrian dairies began promoting biotech milk. Today, all milk produced in Austria meets the requirements for biotech free production. As of October 2010, most Austrian fresh egg production and as of January 2012, most Austrian broiler production use biotech free feeds.

Some Austrian related data can be found in the latest special Eurobarometer publication on GE food products. Austrian studies related to GE products (in German) can be found at the website of the Federal Ministry of Health.

Chapter 2: Animal Biotechnology

Part D: Production and Trade

a. Product Development:

There is no research on GE and cloned animals for the food market in Austria. However, GE- and cloned laboratory-animals are used for medical and pharmaceutical research mainly at universities. One focus of GE and cloned animal research is on 'gene farming' for cancer medication. Gene farming uses genetic engineering to insert genes that code for useful pharmaceuticals into host animals or plants. Those animals are partially cloned. All animal experiments have to be carried out in approved laboratories and have to be reported to the Austrian Ministry of Health.

b. Commercial Production:

There is no commercial production of GE and cloned animals in Austria

c. Exports:

There are no exports of GE and cloned animals from Austria.

d. Imports:

There are no imports of GE and cloned animals to Austria.

e. Trade Barriers:

Same as for all EU (please check the most recent EU Biotechnology Report in the GAIN report database)

Part E: Policy

a. Regulatory Framework:

As an EU member, EU regulations on animal biotechnology and cloning of animals apply to Austria. Austria does not have any further specific regulations on animal biotechnology and cloning of animals but public opinion towards those techniques is expected to be even more hostile than towards plant biotechnology. The Austrian government expressed that animal cloning should not be used for food production.

i. Responsible Government Ministries

Federal Ministry of Health ("Bundesministerium fuer Gesundheit und Frauen" – in German)
Responsible for contained use and deliberate release applications from industry and research institutions except universities.

Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy ("Bundesministerium fuer Wissenschaft, Forschung und Wirtschaft" – in German)
Responsible for contained use and deliberate release applications from universities.

Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management ("Bundesministerium fuer Land- und Forstwirtschaft, Umwelt und Wasserwirtschaft" – in German) / Federal Environment Agency ("Umweltbundesamt" – in German). Responsible for animal husbandry.

ii. Political Factors

All major Austrian political parties consistently vote against the use of agricultural biotechnology. The latest Austrian government policy plan (2013) by the two coalition parties, the social democratic party (SPOe) and the people's party (OeVP), includes a commitment to ensure GE-free agricultural cultivation. The policy plan is valid through 2018.

Biotech and cloned animals are an even more sensitive issue in the Austrian political environment. Currently there is no public discussion on biotech and cloned animals.

b. Innovative Biotechnologies:

So far, there is no Austrian regulation on “New Breeding Techniques” for use in animals and no official opinion on whether they should count as biotech or not. However, some Austrian officials express that anything created through biotech technologies should be treated as biotech product.

c. Labeling and Traceability:

There are no regulations on GE animals and animal clones. Government officials express the need for labeling and traceability of animal clones.

d. Intellectual Property Rights (IPR):

Regulations for intellectual property are laid down in the Austrian Patent Act, the Copyright Act, the Industrial Design Act and the Trademark Protection Act.

e. International Treaties/Fora:

Austria is a member of several international organizations dealing with animals and food deriving from animals like most importantly the OIE (World Organization for Animal Health, FAO Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations), and Codex Alimentarius.

f. Related Issues:

Part F: Marketing

a. Public/Private Opinions:

It can be expected that the acceptance of GE animals is even lower than the already very negative opinion towards GE plants.

b. Market Acceptance/Studies:

There is very little awareness of GE animals in the Austrian public.

There are no Austrian specific marketing studies regarding GE animals.