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Italian Court Rules in Favor of GE Maize MON810 Cultivation

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Report Highlights:

On April 19, 2018, the Italian District Court of Udine acquitted Giorgio Fidenato, President of the Federated Farmers Association of the charge of having cultivated GE maize MON810 in 2015 (in breach of a national decree issued July 12, 2013 prohibiting its cultivation in the Italian territory), “because the act is not provided for by law as a crime”. Mr. Fidenato expressed satisfaction with the ruling and is planning to plant again GE maize MON810 in the Friuli region.

Italian Court Rules in Favor of GE Maize MON810 Cultivation

On April 19, 2018, the Italian District Court of Udine acquitted Giorgio Fidenato, President of the Federated Farmers Association, of the charge of having cultivated GE maize MON810 in 2015 (in breach of a national decree issued July 12, 2013 prohibiting its cultivation in the Italian territory), “because the act is not provided for by law as a crime”. In addition, the Court acquitted Leandro Taboga, owner of the field in Colloredo di Monte Albano (Udine). For more information, see [GAIN Italian Farmer Fights for Right to Cultivate GE Maize MON810](#).

This is the fourth ruling in a row in favor of Mr. Fidenato since September 13, 2017, when the European Court of Justice (CJEU) [ruled](#) in his favor. The CJEU concluded that Member States cannot adopt emergency measures concerning genetically modified food and feed “as long as it is not evident that products authorized by Regulation No. 2003/1829 or in accordance with that regulation are likely to constitute a serious risk for human, animal health, and the environment.”

Mr. Fidenato expressed satisfaction with the Court of Udine ruling and is planning to plant again GE maize MON810 in the Friuli region. Italy is a strong opponent of genetically engineered products, but has expressed support for innovative biotechnologies, such as cisgenesis and genome editing. In October 2017, the Italian Ministry of Agriculture approved a decree for the allocation of €21 million in Italy’s budget for a three-year sustainable agriculture research plan to be implemented by the Italian Council for Agricultural Research and Analysis of Agrarian Economy (CREA). The research focuses on genome editing and cisgenesis for grapevine, olive, apple, citrus fruit, apricot, peach, cherry, strawberry, kiwifruit, eggplant, tomato, basil, artichoke, wheat, rice, and poplar trees.