

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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POLICY

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Algeria

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Report Highlights:

The Ministry of Agriculture published an official Decree in 2000 prohibiting all import, production, distribution and use of genetically engineered (GE) plant materials. Currently there is no a policy for GE animals.

Section I. Executive Summary:

In 1980, Algeria started developing a strategy to implement a biotechnology policy adapted for local needs. This strategy included expanding research and education training for life sciences (to include biotechnology). In December 2000, the Ministry of Agriculture published a Decree prohibiting the development, commercialization, or importation GE products for agricultural plants. However, there continues limited GE research at the university level. There is no agricultural genetically engineered product development for commercialization purposes in Algeria.

United States food and agricultural exports to Algeria consist mainly of bulk commodities. The top U.S. agricultural exports are wheat, tree nuts, corn, vegetable oils, and dairy products, as well as planting seeds. In CY2017, U. S. market share accounted for 3.35 percent (\$315 million) of the \$9.4 billion of Algeria's total food imports, according to Algerian trade data. Challenges for U.S. exporters result from Algeria's geographic proximity to Europe, the lack of direct shipping lines between the United States and North Africa and transshipment of U.S. exports through Europe. These factors significantly increase shipping costs and makes U.S. bulk products less competitive.

Section II. Author Defined:

PLANT AND ANIMAL BIOTECHNOLOGY

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CHAPTER I: PLANT BIOTECHNOLOGY

PART A: PRODUCTION AND TRADE

a) **PRODUCTION DEVELOPMENT:** Per official Decree (see Regulatory Framework below), there is no agricultural GE product development for commercialization purposes in Algeria. The first biotechnology research program was adopted in 1997 for agribusiness, health, and environment with a focus on biodiversity, bioethics, and food bio security (Source: Presentation of Pr. Abdelhamid Djekoun (2005), University of Constantine).

The Biotechnology Institutions in Algeria promote and carry out applied research in biotechnology to address the needs of Algeria in the fields of health, environment, bio-industry, food, and agriculture and develop through their research programs biotech solutions to domestic agricultural concerns and

promote food security. In addition, these multidisciplinary biotechnology research institutions ensure continuous training and provide services and expertise in the field of biotechnology.

b) **COMMERCIAL PRODUCTION:** Per official Decree, there is no commercialization of GE plant material in Algeria.

c) **EXPORTS:** Not Applicable (N/A)

d) **IMPORTS:** Per official Decree, there are no imports of GE products.

e) **FOOD AID RECIPIENT COUNTRIES:** Algeria does not receive any food aid.

f) **TRADE BARRIERS:** Per official decree, Algeria does not allow imports of GE plant materials except for research purposes. Challenges for U.S. exporters result from Algeria's geographic proximity to Europe, the lack of direct shipping lines between the United States and North Africa, and transshipment of U.S. exports through Europe. These factors significantly increase shipping costs and make U.S. bulk products less competitive.

PART B: POLICY

a. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK:

Algeria started developing a strategy for the implementation of biotechnology policy adapted to local needs as early as 1980. Training and research programs were designed, and capacities were increased in a variety of sectors. Universities, higher education centers, and training programs were developed to focus on life sciences. Masters programs in biotechnology, plant genomics, genetics and bio-industry were also introduced during this period.

Algeria created the first national committee of biotechnology in 1983 to identify economic development needs related to biotechnology applications, to implement a national research and development program, develop proposals on policy to regulate biosecurity and bio-ethics and coordinate between education, research, and production sectors.

The first biotechnology research program was adopted in 1997 for agribusiness, health, and environment with a focus on biodiversity, bioethics, and food biosecurity. (Source: Presentation of Pr. Abdelhamid Djekoun (2005), University of Constantine).

However, the Ministry of Agriculture published a decree of December 24, 2000 (published in the Official Journal on January 7, 2001) that prohibits all imports, production, distribution, and commercialization as well as utilization of GE plant materials (live plants or pieces of live plants, including their dormant buds, tendrils, grafts, tubers, rhizomes, cuttings, shoots, and seeds intended for propagation and reproduction) except for research purposes. The decree can be found in French at: ([Decree of December 24, 2000 \(published in the Official Journal on January 7, 2001 – in French\)](#)).

The Ministry of Agriculture has legislative responsibility for domestic production of crops. It is also

responsible for the health and safety aspects of imported agricultural and food products along with Ministry of Commerce who regulates the quality aspects of imports. There is no regulatory framework to approve plant biotechnology products for cultivation or import.

The Phyto-sanitary Department of the Ministry of Agriculture is the only authority that can grant import authorizations under certain conditions to conduct scientific and research activities in biotechnology.

b. APPROVALS: No biotechnology authorizations have been provided to date.

c. STACKED EVENT APPROVALS: N/A

d. FIELD TESTING: N/A

e. INNOVATIVE BIOTECHNOLOGIES: N/A

f. COEXISTENCE: N/A

g. LABELING: The Ministry of Commerce, which has authority for quality control and fraud prevention, regulates labeling and laboratory inspection. Currently, there are no active laws directing the labeling of plant products derived from biotechnology.

h. MONITORING AND TESTING: N/A.

i. LOW LEVEL PRESENCE (LLP) POLICY: N/A

j. ADDITIONAL REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS: N/A

k. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (IPR): N/A

l. CARTAGENA PROTOCOL RATIFICATION: Algeria signed the Cartagena Protocol in May 2000 and ratified it in June 2004. Algeria was represented at the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol (ICCP) and the Conference of the Parties meetings of the Protocol (COP-MOP 1, Kuala Lumpur, February 2003; COP-MOP 2, Montreal, May 2005).

m. INTERNATIONAL TREATIES/FORUMS: Algeria has ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Algeria is member of IPPC, OIE, FAO and Codex. FAS Algiers is not aware of any discussions related to GE plants with these international organizations.

n. RELATED ISSUES: N/A

PART C: MARKETING:

a) PUBLIC/PRIVATE OPINIONS: Most Algerian consumers are made aware of biotechnology through media reports, which are usually unfavorable, especially in the food and agricultural sectors. Press reports always indicate that retailers and traders are unlikely to buy biotech products. Most would be

unwilling to take on the responsibility of introducing biotech products to the market.

b) **MARKET ACCEPTANCE / STUDIES:** Most Algerian agricultural scientists and officials are relatively open to biotechnology and interested in being able to utilize the technology to develop crops suited to the local environment and consumer. The media however, commonly report negatively on all GE products.

CHAPTER 2: ANIMAL BIOTECHNOLOGY

PART D: PRODUCTION AND TRADE

Animal cloning is not used in Algeria. FAS Algiers is not aware of any discussions related to regulatory or research policies regarding animal cloning or other animal biotechnology in Algeria.

- a. **PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT:** N/A
- b. **COMMERCIAL PRODUCTION:** N/A
- c. **EXPORTS:** N/A
- d. **IMPORTS:** N/A
- e. **TRADE BARRIERS:** N/A

PART E: POLICY

- a. **REGULATION FRAMEWORK:** N/A
- b. **APPROVALS:** N/A
- c. **INNOVATIVE BIOTECHNOLOGIES:** N/A
- d. **LABELING AND TRACEABILITY:** N/A
- e. **INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (IPR):** N/A
- f. **INTERNATIONAL TREATIES/FORUMS :** N/A
- g. **RELATED ISSUES:** N/A

PART F: MARKETING

- a. **PUBLIC/PRIVATE OPINIONS:** N/A
- b. **MARKET ACCEPTANCE/ STUDIES:** N/A