

EVIRA REMOVES GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORANGE PETUNIAS FROM SALE

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Finnish Food Safety Authority Evira has decided to remove from sale seeds and planting stock of the ornamental plant petunia characterised by the orange colour of the flowers which has been produced by means of genetic engineering. Genetically modified varieties of petunia are not authorised for cultivation in the EU. As a result of this, the petunia plants and the seed lot will be destroyed and any plants delivered for further growing on will be recalled from production. GM petunias do not cause any risk to people or the environment

In Evira's analyses, one lot of petunia seeds (African Sunset) as well as eight petunia varieties that had already been planted were found to be genetically modified: Pegasus Orange Morn, Pegasus Orange, Pegasus Table Orange, Potunia Plus Papay, Go!Tunia Orange, Bonnie Orange, Sanguna Patio Salmon and Sanguna Salmon.

The cuttings and seeds of the GM petunias have been imported to Finland from Germany and the Netherlands. Investigations are ongoing in EU member states to establish if GM petunia plants have been placed more widely on the market.

No risk to people or the environment

The orange petunias do not cause any risk to people or the environment. They are incapable of spreading into the wild in Finland. They are annuals, which means that petunia shoots cannot withstand frost. Petunia seeds are not winter-hardy either.

Petunia is an ornamental plant rich in blossoms, common in the summer. Petunia flowers are not naturally orange, but the new colour of the flower has been produced through genetic engineering.

A specific authorisation procedure is required before genetically modified plants are allowed to be cultivated and marketed in the EU. No application has been submitted for authorisation of genetically modified petunias in the EU and they have not been authorised to be imported, cultivated or marketed in any of the member states.

Only one genetically modified maize variety is authorised for cultivation in the EU. Some GM blue carnation varieties have been authorised for use as a cut flower only in the EU, but may not be cultivated in the EU countries. Genetically modified maize, soy and rape with EU authorisation may be imported into the EU for use in feed and food.

All genetically modified products shall be labelled with indications of genetic engineering to enable the consumer to identify the products.

For more information, please contact:

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Read more:

Genetically modified products (/en/shared-topics/genetically-modified-products/)(Evira.fi)

Board for Gene Technology: Current issues (http://geenitekniikanlautakunta.fi/en/article/-/asset_publisher/luvattomia-gm-petunioita-suomen-markkinoilla)

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