

Chile's Agriculture and Livestock Service (SAG) has released a new computer system to let beekeepers know where genetically modified organism (GMO) crops are located. The move follows a European Union (E.U.) Court of Justice decision to enforce stricter honey trading laws in September, after a German beekeeper was forced to destroy his production when a trace of GM corn pollen was found.



Europe is the leading destination for Chilean honey exports, and the South American country is taking action to make sure the situation stays the way.

SAG's "National Geographic System for Apiculture Consultation" allows beekeepers to enter coordinates of where their apiaries are located, and keep a distance from catchment areas where GM seeds may be found.

"This system allows us to have our hives far away from GMO crops. This tool, and the related analysis, allows our honey not only to continue being traded in the European Union and the world, but they can also be more appreciated for being free of GMO pollen," said Federation of Beekeeping Cooperatives president Ítalo Bozzi.

National Beekeeping Network president Marcelo Rodríguez applauded SAG for its work in providing the technology.

"We appreciate the effort made by SAG which allows, in the short term, that beekeepers can know the status of possible contamination of their honey by transgenic pollen," he said.

He added work was also underway on other parallel projects that sought to boost the food safety of Chilean honey.

In a press release, SAG said any registered beekeeper may contact the service requesting a detailed report of their area's proximity to GM crops.

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