

## **EU seed regulation: Danger for the local biodiversity**

In May 2013, the European Commission proposed a draft regulation in order to harmonize the European seed market. The proposed regulation is not favourable to genetic diversity, farmers' rights, and the interests of small and organic farmers. Rather it was created to serve the needs of the multinational seed industry, which will further push farmers into industrial-scale agricultural systems.

A core aspect of the proposed regulation is the registration of seed varieties in the EU's official catalogue. This registration would determine whether a farmer can legally sell their seeds or not. But, to be registered in this catalogue is an expensive and bureaucratic procedure, which for many small farmers would be technically and financially impossible.

Furthermore, the proposed draft would endanger the local and historical diversity of fruits and vegetables. Although this regulation provides exemptions for historical varieties that were available on the market before the inception of the legislation, many local varieties have never been officially made available on the market before, which means that they could not be registered anymore.

The European Parliament's Agriculture Committee rejected the proposed seed regulation on 11th February 2014, which means that it has been returned to the Commission. Therefore, it is important to put pressure on the Commissioners in charge. **Citizens who want to get involved in the protection of local biodiversity can participate in an online petition initiated by the MEP Claude Turmes: [www.claudeturmes.lu/seed](http://www.claudeturmes.lu/seed).**