

Submission Cover Sheet

Review of the Moratorium on GM Canola

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Subject GE Moratoriums

Dear All,

We do not believe GE food to be safe or beneficial. It is only beneficial to those who are making money from it! Billions is at stake, so the push will be great. An EU review of GM crops in the US found Bayer and Monsanto got 94% of revenue, farmers 6% and public nil! The adoption of GM allows the monopoly on ownership and control of chemicals and seeds. I find it unthinkable that the world's food supply would then be in the hands of large corporations.

GE has not been proven to be safe. There have been no long term studies. We do have studies from the biotech companies themselves. They would never lie to us! What a joke. Large corporations have a long history of "fixing" or not reporting certain aspects of their studies. Basically, science has no idea of the consequences or risks.

The huge jump in childhood food allergies is in the news often. But most reports fail to consider a link to a recent radical change in our diet. Beginning in 1996, bacteria, virus and other genes have been artificially inserted to the DNA of soy, corn, cottonseed and canola plants.

Evidence collected over the past decade now suggests that they are contributing to higher allergy rates. Scientists have long known that GM crops might cause allergies, but there are no tests to prove in advance that a GM crop is safe. That's because people aren't usually allergic to a food until they have eaten it several times. This would seem to apply to all GM crops, canola included!

The UK is one of the few countries conducting a yearly evaluation of food allergies. In March 1999, researchers at the York Laboratory were alarmed to discover that reactions to soy have skyrocketed by 50% over the previous year.

Genetically modified soy had recently entered the UK from U.S. imports. So **the soy used in the study was largely GM**. John Graham, spokesman for the York laboratory, said, "We believe this raises serious new questions about the safety of GM foods."

Critics of GM foods often say that the population is being used as **guinea pigs** in an experiment. But experiments have the benefit of controls and measurement. In this case, there is neither. There have though, been animal studies done and other problems have been detected in the body, such as damage to the lining of the stomach.

GM food safety experts point out that even if someone tried to collect data about allergic reactions to GM foods, they would likely be unsuccessful. "The potential allergen is rarely identified. The number of allergy-related medical visits is not tabulated. Even repeated visits due to well-known allergens are not counted as part of any established surveillance system."

The classical understanding of why a GM crop might create new allergies is that the **imported genes produce a brand new protein. The novel protein may trigger reactions.**

This was demonstrated in the mid 1990s when soybeans were outfitted with a gene from the Brazil nut. Scientists attempted to produce a healthier soybean, but ended up with a potentially deadly one. Blood tests from people who were allergic to Brazil nuts showed reactions to the beans. Fortunately, this soy never went to market.

The GM variety that is planted in 89% of U.S. soy acres gets its foreign gene from bacteria (with parts of virus and petunia DNA as well). We can't know in advance if the protein produced by bacteria, never before part of the human food supply, will provoke a reaction.

Agreements between our State Governments and the biotech companies allow for confidentially protection. Why? Farmers contracted to GM must accept figures relating to yields, traits, consistency of product, quality and profits relating to them, as they are not privy. Kept in the dark and fed on ? perhaps. In addition, public money is going to the development of GM products. What about the organic or biodynamic industries?

Also, we will loose our competitive advantage in the supply of non GM canola. In 2006, the US, Canada and Australia were the only suppliers of GM free canola into world markets! There is great demand for GE free products. The public is waking up to the fact that we are what we eat and absorb.

The EU will not accept just any grain due to it's restrictions on GE products. This is huge revenue! Our GM free canola is in strong demand by the EU. We have earned premiums for it in Europe and Asia since early 2005. Let's keep ourselves ahead of the competition!

We should ask ourselves what will happen to the organic/biodynamic industry. It will disappear! Now that would suit the biotech companies! No competition or freedom of choice. Organics are healthier. No chemicals are used and the soil is managed naturally. The environment is a winner. We will not need to use even more pesticides and herbicides, and there will not be the problem of herbicide intolerant weeds. The use of these chemicals is destroying the balance of nature. Our health will then also be a winner. Our very existence is in the balance. This may sound dramatic, but isn't it merely fact?

The lifting of bans is short-sighted! We must not be lured by the dangerous instantiated promises made by the biotech companies.

Yours faithfully,

Ian & Lydia McNicol, David & Robyn Fitts, Colin Stear, Palma Smith, Geoff Brown & Rivka Frank