

Submission Cover Sheet

Review of the Moratorium on GM Canola

Submission Number: 113

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Attachments Submitted with this Submission:

To obtain copies of these attachments please call the Review Panel Secretariat on
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Submission 113
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Additional important relative information to the economic impacts faxed last Friday 17th August: being the submission made by David R Brain to the panel review.

PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE:

It is important to have safe, healthy, progressive regional development without unsavoury centralized decisions being forced on us. It is vital to have the knowledge and practical onground grassroots experience in all types of agricultural methods of growing food and fibre, in making the decisions on the release of genetically modified organisms eg seeds.

I wrote this submission mainly because it is important to take note of experienced food growers like myself who have farmed for many years both ways.

1. Practising chemical input reliant type farming to a degree 1967-1987
2. Practising farming without reliance on toxic, synthetic herbicides, pesticides, fungicides or synthetic fertilizers 1987-2007.

Growers and farmers have grown Brassica crops for centuries without the need for Gly phosphate Herbicide Resistant. Any weed control can be carried out by proper assessment and evaluation methods, that being:

1. Health of the soil and why the weed is growing. Weeds are an indicator, quite often, of a deficiency in the soil.
2. Proper annual and bi-annual planning to stop weed seed set.
3. The easy process is thoughtful assessment and planning ahead for healthy rotations.

ECONOMICS:

There are two ways you can interpret the word (economic).

1. Economic growth at any cost—short term.
2. Safe cautionary short term and long term economic growth.

The reference review has to take into consideration all aspects which affect the economic equation eg efficient, sustainable communities. The basic principle of economics is a safe healthy society and community without any unnecessary insidious toxic inputs.

THE MORATORIUM MUST BE KEPT IN PLACE.

1. Because of major economic reasons, risks and health impacts.
2. Overall economic impacts and connected relative economic consequences: we cannot have a sustainable healthy economy without safe and healthy sustenance, food and the environment. This must always be part of the majors factors in making economic decisions. Of course, our leading edge G.M. free processors, exporters, industries and overseas markets require a G.M. free, clean and green image. This will be lost if we go down the unsustainable track of G.M. manipulated, monopolised food. Its detrimental effect to Victorian Communities as a whole would be catastrophic to the long term safety and well being of us all.

HEALTH:

Taking into careful consideration the important quality values especially for human consumption and their sustenance, major flaws in this technology and every varying type of genetic modification has to be properly analysed. Rushing to release has no place in any new technology. G.M. canola should be completely removed from any food items or processed food.

For progress without pollution, we must encourage and support efficient. Local, clean and green, G.M. food and fibre growers and processors. There is no justification for releasing any more G.M. seeds us and the environment because of major health safety and ethical and contamination problems and other issues not properly addressed.

All health, safety, environmental and ecological consequences will be felt. Consequences are directly related to future healthy economic growth and ethical standards and our part of sustainable healthy economic growth. Processors markets domestically and overseas wish to stay G.M. free, because of economic health and safety concerns with G.M. fast tracked releases.

State governments administer health services and are also responsible for prevention of ill health, sickness and overall wellbeing. There are no benefits to G.M. technology, it is actually detrimental to us and the total environment. Not all technology is safe.

The Moratorium must be extended till at least 2013. What sort of legacy are we leaving our children and following generations in releasing this unsafe technology. Better to be safe than sorry. Please acknowledge this cautionary principle rather than pursue risky scenarios.

Very Concerned
For healthy Food Growing
5th Generation Australian Farmer
Family and Community Farmers
Certified Organic Growers for 17 years
No need for toxic petro chemicals, they are actually detrimental to health overall.
David R. Brain

D. R. Brain

DR &SD Brain

* See attachments for further information

5. International News

GREECE EXTENDS BIOTECH BAN

Greece has extended for two more years a ban on GM maize seed MON810
<http://www.gmwatch.org/archive2.asp?arcid=8057>

CYPRUS WANTS TO BE DECLARED GM-FREE

Cyprus wants to declare itself a GM-free zone, its agriculture minister said. The country has just passed legislation to place GM food on separate supermarket shelves. A previous attempt to introduce such legislation led the US to threaten Cyprus with the WTO.
<http://www.gmwatch.org/archive2.asp?arcid=7974>
<http://www.gmwatch.org/archive2.asp?arcid=8017>

BRAZIL: JUDGE BANS BAYER'S GM CORN

A federal judge has banned the use of Bayer's GM corn 506285.BY a month after federal biosafety agents approved the product for retail sale. The judge also blocked the official biosafety agency, CTNBio, from approving Monsanto and Syngenta GM corn.
<http://www.gmwatch.org/archive2.asp?arcid=8029>
<http://www.gmwatch.org/archive2.asp?arcid=8065>

RUSSIA'S DUMA DRAFTS GM FOOD BAN BILL

The Security Committee of the Russian Duma (the lower house of the Federal Assembly) has drafted a bill banning the production and sale of GM food
<http://www.gmwatch.org/archive2.asp?arcid=8031>

CANADA: GM FOOD - NO MORE SECRETS

A Canadian MP has tabled a bill that calls for mandatory labelling of GMOs in food
<http://www.gmwatch.org/archive2.asp?arcid=8014>

U.S. DAIRIES TO REQUIRE FARMERS TO QUIT rbST

Swiss Premium Dairy (formerly Wengert's) and Rutter's Dairy now require all farmers to supply milk without using Monsanto's GM hormone rbST. Rutter's and Swiss Premium cited pressure from retailers as their reason for going rbST-free.
<http://www.gmwatch.org/archive2.asp?arcid=8048>

MORE EU STATES WARY ON GM MAIZE

Germany's government is introducing a de facto ban on MON 810. Austria banned the Monsanto maize back in 1999. Hungary outlawed the planting of MON810 seeds in January 2005. The same year, Greece and Poland put restrictions in place against MON 810. Bulgaria's parliament has also indicated support for national restrictions on growing MON 810 maize.
<http://www.gmwatch.org/archive2.asp?arcid=7971>

Scientists challenge Genetic Engineering

EXAMPLE OF JUST 5 SCIENTISTS CONCERNS



"Many scientifically valid concerns are raised by independent

scientists worldwide about the safety of these foods. GM foods were initially approved as safe as a result of a political directive which overrode the warnings of the US Food and Drug Administration's own experts."

— *Epidemiologist Dr Judy Carman, and medical practitioner Dr Kate Clinch-Jones*



"The number of scientists who are not convinced about the safety of

genetically engineered foods is substantial enough to prevent the existence of a general recognition of safety. I am not aware of any study in the peer-reviewed scientific literature that establishes the safety of even one specific genetically engineered food let alone the safety of these foods as a general class."

— *Geneticist and Emeritus Professor Richard Lacey, M.D., Ph.D.*



"Genes exist in networks, interactive networks which have a logic of their

own. And the fact that the industry folks don't deal with these networks is what makes their science incomplete and dangerous. If you send these new genetic structures out into the world, into hundreds of thousands of acres, you're going into the world with a premature application of a scientific principle."

— *Emeritus Professor Richard Strohman, Department of Molecular and Cell Biology, University of California at Berkeley*



"The real threat to the future is the irresponsible and premature

releases of the first generation of GMOs that are full of unsound scientific assumptions, rife with careless science, and arrogantly dismissive of valid concerns. The technology is inadequately developed to ensure its safety."

— *Professor Patrick Brown, College of Agriculture & Environmental Science, University of California*



"I view the Food and Drug Administration's policy and practices

regarding genetically engineered food to be irresponsible and the consequent risk posed for public health to be substantial."

— *Professor Philip J. Regal, College of Biological Sciences, University of Minnesota (St. Paul)*

***** JUST ONE EXAMPLE OF SCIENTISTS BEING SACKED FOR SPEAKING OUT. Scientist Sacked for Querying Food Safety

by
Caroline Milburn
of AAP

Reprinted from The Age 15th February

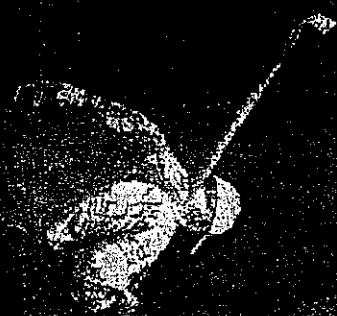
London : Debate over the safety of genetically engineered food has flared again, with the sacking of a scientist in Britain. Moves by the Blair government to assure the British public that genetically modified food is safe were dealt blow that report that the scientist was sacked from a state funded institute for questioning the food's safety.

In Australia it is estimated that many supermarket-packaged food may contain some genetically modified ingredients usually imported foodstuffs such as soya beans, maize and cotten seed oils.

Twenty scientists from 13 countries have endorsed the findings of Professor Arpad Pusztai, whose suggestion of the potential dangers from genetically modified crops led to his dismissal last year. Professor Pusztai, who worked in the government funded Rowat Institute in Aberdeen was suspended in August after proving that rats fed with genetically engineered potatoes suffered health problems, including a weakened immune system.

The Mail on Sunday said the institute also received \$325,000 from the world's biggest producer of genetically modified crops, the United States biotechnology giant Monsanto. Its public relations office the grant had nothing to do with genetically modified food.

2005



Executive Summary

In May 2007, the Center for Food Safety embarked on a project to determine the extent to which American farmers have been impacted by litigation arising from the use of patented genetically engineered crops. After extensive research and numerous interviews with farmers and lawyers, CFS found that Monsanto, the world's leading agricultural biotechnology company, has used heavy-handed investigations and ruthless prosecutions that have fundamentally changed the way many American farmers farm. The result has been nothing less than an assault on the foundations of farming practices and traditions that have endured for centuries in this country and millennia around the world, including one of the oldest, the right to save and replant crop seed.

Monsanto's position as a leader in the field of agricultural biotechnology and its success in contractually binding farmers to its genetically engineered seeds result from its concerted effort to control patents on genetic engineering technology, seed germination, and a farmer's use of its engineered seed. Monsanto begins the process of seizing control of farmers' practices by getting them to sign the company's technology agreement upon purchasing patented seeds. This agreement allows Monsanto to conduct property investigations, exposes the farmer to huge financial liability, binds the farmer to Monsanto's oversight for multiple years, and includes a variety of other conditions that have effectively defined what rights a farmer does and does not have in planting, harvesting, and selling genetically engineered seed.

In general, Monsanto's efforts to prosecute farmers can be divided into three stages: investigations of farmers, out-of-court settlements, and litigation against farmers. Monsanto believes are in breach of contract or engaged in patent infringement. Monsanto itself admits to aggressively investigating farmers it suspects of transgressions, and evidence suggests the numbers reach into the thousands. According to farmers interviewed by CFS, these thousands of investigations frequently lead to the second stage: Monsanto pressuring the farmer to settle out of court for an undisclosed sum and other terms agreed to in confidential settlements.

For some farmers, Monsanto's investigation of them will lead to the courtroom. To date, Monsanto has filed 90 lawsuits against American farmers. The lawsuits involve 147 farmers and 39 small businesses or farm companies, and have been directed at farmers residing in half of the states in the U.S. The odds are clearly stacked against the farmer: Monsanto has an annual budget of \$10 million dollars and a staff of 75 devoted solely to investigating and prosecuting farmers.

The largest recorded judgment made thus far in favor of Monsanto as a result of a farmer lawsuit is \$3,052,800.00. Total recorded judgments granted to Monsanto for lawsuits amount to \$15,253,602.82. Farmers have paid a mean of \$412,259.54 for cases with recorded judgments.

Startling though these numbers are, they do not begin to tell the whole story. Many farmers have to pay additional court and attorney fees and are sometimes even forced to pay the costs Monsanto incurs while investigating them. Final monetary awards are not available for a majority of the 90 lawsuits CFS researched due to the confidential nature of many of the settlements.

No farmer is safe from the long reach of Monsanto. Farmers have been sued after their field was contaminated by pollen or seed from someone else's genetically engineered crop; when genetically engineered seed from a previous year's crop has sprouted, or "volunteered," in fields planted with non-genetically engineered varieties the following year; and when they never signed Monsanto's technology agreement but still planted the patented crop seed. In all of these cases, because of the way patent law has been applied, farmers are technically liable. It does not appear to matter if the use was unwitting or a contract was never signed.

Since the introduction of genetically engineered crops, farming for thousands of America's farmers has been fundamentally altered; they have been forced into dangerous and uncharted territory and have found they are the worse for it. As growing numbers of farmers become subject to harassment, investigation, and prosecution by Monsanto over supposed infringement of its seed patents and technology agreements, there will have to be increased pressure to reverse the governmental policies that are allowing this persecution. Various policy options include passing local and state-wide bans or moratoriums on plantings of genetically engineered crops; amending the Patent Act so that genetically engineered plants will no longer be patentable subject matter and so that seed saving is not considered patent infringement; and legislating to prevent farmers from being liable for patent infringement through biological pollution. Implementation of these, and a variety of other options discussed in more detail in the report, is critical. Nothing less than the future of America's farmers and farming communities is at stake.