

GENETIX CRIME UNIT



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Monsanto exposed

Ninety percent of genetically engineered (GE) seed is made and owned by one US company called Monsanto, and they don't want us to know when GE is in our food. Many consumers around the world are against GE foods and crops, because genetic engineering has been associated with health risks, loss of biodiversity, increased use of toxic weed killers (herbicides) and other environmental problems.¹

Monsanto's battle to force GE foods and crops onto the world

Monsanto's agenda is to turn the world's agriculture and food production into one big genetic experiment. However, their success has been very limited so far. Only one percent of the world's farmers are growing GE crops. Furthermore, eighty-five percent of GE crops are concentrated in just three countries: the United States, Argentina and Canada, and so far only four GE crops (cotton, oilseed rape/canola, soya and maize/corn) have been grown on a commercial scale.

In most parts of the world (e.g. in Europe, Russia, Africa and most Latin American and Asian countries) major food companies and retailers are refusing to sell GE foods. There are also many governments who have banned the growing of GE crops or are refusing to import them.

In response to mounting criticism, Monsanto has been making an effort to green up its public image. On the surface their 2007 annual report "Growth for a better world" almost reads as if Monsanto has turned into a philanthropic organization.

But this is a facade. The real Monsanto is in the business of making money - first and last. Their evident strategy is to make farmers worldwide dependent on their patented seeds, herbicides and pesticides. The record, as we demonstrate below, shows that Monsanto does not hesitate to sweep aside everything else...sustainable agriculture, the environment, farmer's livelihoods and consumer's interests... if this is required to achieve their goal of market domination.

1 <http://www.greenpeace.org/international/press/reports/genetic-engineering-exposed>

Monsanto's seven deadly sins

Agro-chemical companies like Monsanto systematically conceal the truth about how much is understood about the risks and benefits of genetic engineering to farmers and consumers. Below we deconstruct Monsanto's 'pledge' to the world (copied from their website), and expose the reality.²

MONSANTOS PLEDGE

Dialogue: We will listen carefully to diverse points of view and engage in thoughtful dialogue to broaden our understanding of issues in order to better address the needs and concerns of society and each other.

TRUTH REVEALED

Monsanto balks at UN-led study because it doesn't produce favourable outcomes

In January 2008 Monsanto - together with two other GE companies - resigned from the International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD), a UN led global multi-stakeholder initiative engaging over 4000 experts over three years. The IAASTD intends to map how science, technology and accumulated good-farming practice can be used to reduce hunger and improve quality of life for rural people in developing countries. But when Monsanto found out that the draft report did not uncritically promote GE crops, it decided to pull out. Apparently the company is not interested in sound science when it doesn't fit their business plans.³

TRUTH REVEALED

INDONESIA: Monsanto bribery ends in court

January 2005 Monsanto, the US agro-chemical company, had to pay 1.5 million US dollars in penalties to the US government over a bribe paid in Indonesia in a bid to bypass controls on the screening of new genetically engineered cotton crops.⁴

MONSANTOS PLEDGE

Transparency: We will ensure that information is available, accessible and understandable.

TRUTH REVEALED

US: Monsanto campaigns to undermine consumer's right to know

In the US, several large dairy producers and food companies have been getting rid of Monsanto's recombinant bovine growth hormone, also known as rBGH or rBST, from their milk supply. This is great news for consumers, since this growth hormone produced from GE bacteria is known to cause harm to cows⁵ and may pose health risks to humans. However, in an attack on consumers' right to know, Monsanto has sued the Oakhurst dairy company in the state of Maine (US) and tried to force them, and other dairies, to stop the use of labels identifying "rBGH-free" or "rBST-free" dairy products.⁶

TRUTH REVEALED

Germany: Court hearing only way to get Monsanto information

In June 2005, a German law court ordered Monsanto to disclose a suppressed report on rat feeding trials related to the company's genetically engineered maize MON863. The decision follows a request by Greenpeace to gain access to the document under European Union law. Monsanto has consistently tried to prevent the publication of the 1000 page document. After the documents were finally accessible for everybody, it soon became clear why Monsanto had tried to suppress the results. Independent scientists who studied the Monsanto feeding trials came to the conclusion that the rats that had been fed GE maize MON863 showed "signs of toxicity" in kidney and liver.⁷



Spraying of genetically engineered soya in Argentina
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2 http://www.monsanto.com/pdf/pubs/2007/pledge_report.pdf

3 Deserting the hungry? Nature editorial 451: 223-224, 17 January 2008.

4 Financial Times. Jonathan Birchall. 6 January 2005

5 Dohoo, I., Leslie, K., Descôteaux, L. Shewfelt, W. 2003. A meta-analysis review of the effects of recombinant bovine somatotropin 1 and 2. Canadian Journal of Veterinary Research 67: 241-251 and 252-264

6 see: <http://www.gene.ch/genet/2003/Jul/msg00073.html>

7 http://www.greenpeace.org/international/press/releases/seralini_study_MON863

MONSANTOS PLEDGE

Sharing: We will share knowledge and technology to advance scientific understanding, to improve agriculture and the environment, to improve crops, and to help farmers in developing countries.

TRUTH REVEALED

"We strongly object that the image of the poor and hungry from our countries is being used by giant multinational corporations to push a technology that is neither safe, environmentally friendly nor economically beneficial..."

Delegates from 20 African Countries to the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN meeting on Plant Genetic Resources⁸

Hunger is a problem of food distribution, lack of access to land, water and income, not the availability of food, as has been pointed out by people such as the Indian economist and Nobel Prize winner Amartya Sen. These problems are not solved by introducing GE seeds. On the contrary - GE crops are likely to aggravate the hunger problem and indebtedness of small farmers, because they require high investments in expensive seeds and huge amounts of pesticides and fertilizers.

MONSANTOS PLEDGE

Benefits: We will deliver high-quality products that are beneficial to our customers and to the environment, with sound and innovative science, and thoughtful and effective stewardship

TRUTH REVEALED

Monsanto's GE cotton fails Indian farmers

A subsidiary of Monsanto in India, Mahyco-Monsanto, has been promoting genetically engineered (GE) cotton since 2003. Monsanto claims that the GE cotton (also known as "Bt cotton") reduces pest damage, increases yields and raises farmer's incomes. But Monsanto's claims were never realised as the GE cotton failed to control the target pest⁹. A coalition of farmer organisations from Andhra Pradesh, one of India's biggest cotton growing states, published a statement saying that, "though Bt cotton was touted with the claim that it would reduce the total cost of cultivation by reducing the number of sprays and thereby the cost of pesticide consumption, it totally failed in fulfilling this promise. In fact it increased the costs of cultivation for all categories of farmers."¹⁰

Despite these apparent bad results, Monsanto did not acknowledge the failure of the crops, nor did the company offer compensation to farmers. On the contrary, they stepped up promotional activities for the use of Bt cotton in the coming season.¹¹

TRUTH REVEALED

GE maize too expensive for Philippino farmers

In 2004, Thomas Datinguinoo - a small scale farmer in the municipality of Naujan, on the island Mindoro in the Philippines - decided to grow Monsanto's GE maize (also known as Bt maize) after he had been lured by the company's promise that the maize would "guarantee yield increases". However, Datinguinoo found that the costs (including high seed prices and increased input of chemicals) associated with Bt corn were so high, that all the profit was lost. Datinguinoo: "When I first planted GE maize, the yield was good, but there were so many expenses that I did not earn anything. I was very disappointed with Monsanto's seeds and I will never plant them again."¹²



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MONSANTOS PLEDGE

Respect: We will respect the religious, cultural and ethical concerns of people throughout the world. The safety of our employees, the communities where we operate, consumers and the environment will be our highest priority.

TRUTH REVEALED

France and South Africa: Monsanto condemned for making false safety claims

In January 2007, a French court convicted Monsanto for falsely claiming that Roundup is a "biodegradable" toxin. Roundup is the company's best selling herbicide and is massively sprayed on GE crops. It is known to be harmful to the environment and human health. After the French court decision Monsanto was forced to remove the words "biodegradable" from its Roundup containers in France.¹³

Just a few months after the court ruling in France, Monsanto was told by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) in South Africa to withdraw an advert in which it was falsely claimed that "no substantiated scientific or medical negative reactions to GM foods have ever been reported"¹⁴.

8 www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/upload/assets/www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/strategy/gaiafoundation2.pdf
9 Kranthi, K.R., Naidu, S., Dhawad, C.S., et al 2005. Temporal and intra-plant variability of Cry1Ac expression in Bt-cotton and its influence on the survival of the cotton bollworm, *Helicoverpa armigera* (Hübner) (Noctuidae: Lepidoptera). Current Science 89:291-298.
10 http://www.grain.org/research/files/BT_Cotton_-_A_three_year_report.pdf
11 see: <http://www.monsantoindia.com/monsanto/layout/pressreleases/nanaapr2805.asp>
12 <http://www.greenpeace.org/seasia/en/press/reports/rpt-ge-bteconomics>
13 Agence France Presse, 26 January 2007
14 <http://www.asasa.org.za/ResultDetail.aspx?Ruling=3719>

MONSANTOS PLEDGE

Act as Owners to Achieve Results:

We will create clarity of direction, roles and accountability, build strong relationships with our customers and external partners; make wise decisions; steward our company resources; and take responsibility for achieving agreed upon results.

TRUTH REVEALED

Monsanto vs. US farmers

A 2007 report from the US based Center for Food Safety¹⁵ (CFS) documents Monsanto's lawsuits against American farmers, revealing thousands of investigations, nearly 100 lawsuits and numerous bankruptcies.

At issue: Monsanto owns its GE seeds, and the seeds from plants grown from these seeds. Farmers have been sued for saving seeds from one season to plant in the next (an age old practice), and even when Monsanto's GE crops have accidentally contaminated farmer's fields.

After extensive research and numerous interviews with farmers and lawyers, CFS found that Monsanto has used heavy-handed investigations and ruthless litigation. The largest recorded judgment made thus far in favour 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 an average of \$412,259.54 for cases with recorded judgments. The patents that rest on Monsanto's GE seeds have made US farmers almost defenceless when faced with litigations. It has led to a truly new era in which farmers are being sued and harassed for doing what they have always done: saving seeds.

No farmer is safe from the long reach of Monsanto. According to the CFS report, farmers have even 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-GE varieties the following year.

MONSANTOS PLEDGE

Creating a great place to work: We will ensure diversity of people and thought; foster innovation, creativity and learning; practice inclusive teamwork; and reward and recognize our people.

TRUTH REVEALED

Former Monsanto employee

"I left the company because I expressed my concerns regarding the introduction of GM [GE] technology in Romania. I believed that neither Romania nor the company were ready and able to monitor and control the GM [GE] technology."¹⁶

Dragos Dima, former general manager of Monsanto in Romania, who left the company in 1998.

CASE CLOSED

Monsanto guilty as charged for crimes against nature, crimes against the right of farmers to grow, and consumers to eat, GE-free crops and food.

SENTENCE

To stop the growing of GE crops and focus on GE-free crop and food production that is grounded in the principles of sustainability, protection of biodiversity and providing all people to have access to safe and nutritious food.

¹⁵ <http://www.centerforfoodsafety.org/Monsantovsusfarmersreport.cfm>
¹⁶ <http://www.greenpeace.org/international/news/gmo-lamy>



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