



GE Free New Zealand In Food and Environment Newsletter - June 2002

National GE Awareness Day, June 22nd 2002

Do New Zealanders want GE commercial releases next year?

Many New Zealanders don't want GE in their food or environment yet the government seems to have decided NZ's GE future **by allowing commercial GE releases next year.** This makes no sense and goes against the Royal Commission recommendations to 'preserve all opportunities and proceed cautiously with GE.' Promised research needs to be completed prior to release to ensure there are no grave risks to the environment. The liability report from the Law Commission is yet to be released, but at present the risks are 'socialised' which means the public will pay in case GE related accidents should occur.

The government has cleverly manipulated the public. Initially by opting for a Royal Commission where polluting corporations gave evidence without being bound by oath. The public were then told that 'the Government's decisions will keep New Zealand's environment and agriculture GM free (See P5) while ensuring that research can continue within strict containment.'

It was stated that 'all material was to be removable from the site.' They have now reneged on this promise. The government also admitted 'unresolved issues about whether it could manage the co-existence of GM and non-GM crops and animals.' These are still unresolved.

The Bio Ethics council also has yet to be established and should be involved in any decision on the use of human, mice, etc. genes in GE cows. The Royal Commission recommended that "food animals" were not genetically engineered which has been overlooked completely.

The public have been sold out by a government, which does not represent their best interests.



ELECTION 2002

GE will be a major issue again at this election, which may be July 27th, the anniversary of the day people in 42 towns and cities across the country gathered to show the government they wanted a GE-Free nation.

The Greens continue to support a GE Free New Zealand and have made it their bottom line policy.

MAKE YOUR VOTE GE FREE !

It is crystal clear that both Labour and National will continue to deny consumer rights to choose GE Free food and New Zealanders intentions to conserve a clean green New Zealand with conventional quality agricultural exports and support for our rapidly growing organic industry.

Instead all parties but the Greens continue to back GE in a scramble to support business and US led initiatives to force us all to eat and grow GE foods.

National GE Awareness day will involve visibility in different actions around the country with a focus on group, personal actions & signage. Make it plain that you want a GE Free New Zealand and/or GE Free food.

3 years ago we were promised GE food labelling and we are still waiting...

You can hardly find any foods labelled (GE) on our supermarket shelves. After 2 years of postponing GE labelling, sufficient loopholes and exceptions have been put in place to allow producers of foods containing GE ingredients to hide this fact from the consumer.

Is this what you want for your family's future?

Public submissions ...

1. Public submissions due again on GE Cows with Human Genes:

The Environmental Risk Management Authority (ERMA) has a new application from **AgResearch for a GE cattle development with human, mice, goat, deer and sheep genes experiment over 10 years.**

People who made a submission to the prior GE cattle application can transfer it to the new one by notifying ERMA. The prior application has been pulled due to a "technicality over how much of the entire process of making a transgenic cow needed ERMA approval," **We are enclosing a tick sheet for you to complete.**

Please photocopy to encourage others to make submissions to this controversial research. ERMA received over 375 submissions to the last one most "overwhelmingly" opposed. We'd like to see thousands this time. AgResearch's last trial resulted in only 4 live calves with human genes from 50+ cloned embryos.

2. Public Submission due on seed imports:

Seed is coming in contaminated.

Enclosed is also a tick sheet for your submission. Please photocopy and encourage others to make a submission. The deadline is 28th June 2002. The policy document is on www.maf.govt.nz/gmseeds

Hazardous Substances & New Organisms Amendment Bill - Comments

This amendment to the main HSNO Act 1996 is the government's response to the Royal Commissions report last year. There are three main components to the Bill.

The first puts extra requirements on ERMA to take into account when making decisions on GE field trials. ERMA will need to take into account horizontal gene transfer (HGT) and ensure that there is monitoring of environmental effects carried out. However, ERMA has already taken into account HGT in the past and always approved every application. Biological material from plants that cannot directly regenerate themselves will still be allowed to remain in the environment, as will the waste products from GE animals.

The second main part is putting in place a moratorium on commercial release of GE organisms until the end of October 2003. This is set to run out automatically and will require a new amendment to HSNO to stop commercial releases.

The third main part to the Bill is that it allows for xenotransplantation and the genetic engineering of human beings. The Bill gives scientists the power to apply to the Minister of Health for a permit to carry out either of these activities. Xenotransplantation is where animal material or organs are placed directly into humans. While the genetic engineering of human beings is touted as helping those with genetic defects, the reality is that it opens the door to GE designer babies. Even the Select Committee who considered the Bill stated that this will only make the creation of genetically engineered designer babies for non-health reasons as "less likely".

Green Party

The Greens despite having voted for this Bill all the way to end choose to abstain on the last vote. This abstention was of no consequence in itself, as it was passed anyway. It is the post election stand the Greens have taken, however, that has really turned the election heat up by saying the Greens would not go into coalition with Labour unless the GE commercial moratorium was extended and if

this was not possible then they would bring down the government at the end of the moratorium in October 2003 if they hold the balance of power. This stance was unanimously supported by Green party delegates at their AGM in the weekend.

However, the Greens have reversed their earlier opposition to GE field trials and will not make the stopping of these trials a condition of any coalition deal or support to help Labour remain in power. The Press reported on the 4th of June that Greens "Members at the Green Party's conference in Auckland at the weekend believed the party had already given away too much by accepting that it could not stop GE field trials, co-leader Jeanette Fitzsimons said. "No further compromise is now possible. We could have asked for a lot more on GE than we have," Ms Fitzsimons said. "We have only asked for the absolute minimum that is necessary to protect New Zealand."

The Greens are also not prepared to make a stand on banning the possibility of GE designer babies as part of a coalition deal or support for Labour.

Opinion Polls

It is claimed that the Greens are the tail that are trying to wag the dog. However, the Royal Commissions own opinion poll on GE showed that in questioning just over 1,000 members of the public on their attitudes towards GE 56% disapproved of commercial crops, 70% disapproved of GE farm animals and 73% disapproved of GE processed foods. While GE use for medical research was approved by 65% and for medicines and vaccines had a 64% approval rating. This shows support for keeping GMOs out of our environment and food, while allowing for research to continue in labs. The most encouraging result was a question where people were asked to state which one of the main GE areas they approved of. **25% stated that they do not approve of GE at all in any of the areas mentioned in the survey.** While a One Network News survey in late 2001, showed 62 per cent of people were opposed to the release of GMOs outside the laboratory. Overall the opinion of the majority of the

public is that they are supportive of the general idea of keeping GE out of our environment and food, while receptive to its potential ethical uses in contained laboratories.

Vote Green

The reality is that it is the pro-GE lobby who are the tail trying to wag the public dog. Despite the Greens not making an election stand against field trials and GE designer babies this still only leaves us with one choice – **Vote Green.** It's not the GE Free NZ we campaigned and hoped for, but at least the Greens have made the choice clear. NZ's GE free future is now in the hands of the voters and we need to promote the party vote for the Greens otherwise we will not even have the possibility of them stopping commercial GE releases into the environment.

Tremane Barr

Why I am backing the Green Party

For the last 4 years I have spoken out publicly for a moderate approach on Genetic Engineering, without any wish to see the issue become a political football. I have urged all our politicians to regulate GE despite the opposition of the biotechnology industry who continue to have the ear of those in power. New Zealand must find a middle path to use gene technology ethically, rather than have it imposed on our people and our environment by corporate greed and shonky (commercialised) science. I support The Green Party but want people to choose to vote for them, rather than because other political parties leave us no choice. I will be working right up to election day to have the Labour Party and other political parties support the "middle path" for GE, which I believe the Green Party policy reflects. GE should never have become a political issue when release threatens our farming sector, environment, tourism image, and our basic rights to choose. If the politicians will not listen, it will then be left to the voting public to make our wish for a GE-Free food and environment known at the ballot box.

Jon Carapiet

Public submissions due on contaminated seed imports. 7.5.02

Proposals to check only one-third of imported seed shipments likely to be contaminated by GE are far too lax, says the Green Party. The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) have released a discussion document setting out new border controls for testing seeds for GE contamination, including a proposal to audit only one in three consignments. "This season, every shipment of sweet corn seed was audited, and one contaminated shipment was found and destroyed," said Green Party co-leader Jeanette Fitzsimons. "If these new rules had been in place, there is a two-thirds chance that the seed would have slipped through and been planted. **It's like playing Russian Roulette with our GE Free environment.**"

New maize and pop corn protocols are to be in place by 1.8.2002 and canola by 1.1.2003. This year of 25 consignments most seed maize imports were tested offshore (17). 8 were tested at the border and 7 found free from GE. In January 2002, one 2.7 kg consignment from the USA was found to contain genetically modified material and refused biosecurity clearance. The seeds were incinerated.

Public submissions have been called for, deadline 28th June 2002
The policy document is on www.maf.govt.nz/gmseeds

Regional exclusion zones.

Work is apparently being carried out on conditional release as part of the HSNO (New Organisms) Amendment Bill. It was stated a public discussion paper is to be released by MfE shortly, if the government agrees. It covers amongst other things the concept of conditional release, which could be used lead to limit the areas in which an organism could be released.

The Bioethics Council

MAF 30.4.02

The Bioethics Council appears unlikely to be established before the election.

Hodgson names biotech boys already appointed to Government's new Biotechnology Taskforce to promote NZ's biotech sector. The list of 10 members reads like a who's

who in biotech, venture capital and corporate manipulation and includes Bill Falconer, chair of Biotenz, ex ERMA. Other members include Paul Tocker, CEO Crop and Food and Max Shepherd, Zenith Technology Ltd, director of Blis Technologies, BotryZen & PharmaZen 10.5.02

\$ 800,000 GE study starts 5.4.02

An \$ 800,000 study to explore views on genetic engineering starts July 1 by Lincoln University. It's 1 of 3 new research proposals on GM paid for by taxpayer funded Foundation for Research, Science & Technology. 2 other studies are a \$1.8 million project on "horizontal gene transfer" led by Institute of Environmental Science & Research and a 6 yr study on "vertical gene transfer" led by Landcare Research costing between \$400,000 - \$500,000 per yr using collaborators from the US, Australia and Massey Univ. **None will be complete before the moratorium is lifted.**

US would aim to get rid of GE labelling ... 18.4.02

The Green Party has released evidence that the US would aim to get rid of labelling of genetically engineered food as part of any new free trade deal. A new bill will give the Bush administration the authority it needs to negotiate new trade deals, stating the key objective for agriculture negotiations will include removing trade restrictions such as labelling affecting new technologies including biotechnology.

US Farm Bill contains GE propaganda ... 9.5.02

A US Farm Bill contains huge GE propaganda programme introducing not only a \$400 billion, 10 year subsidy programme for US farmers, but NZ\$180 million earmarked to convince overseas markets to accept genetically engineered crops and food, said Ian Ewen-Street, Green Agriculture Spokesperson. The Bill proposes to do this by 'education and outreach' and also 'rapid responses' to situations where US exporters are 'harmed by unwarranted, arbitrary trade barriers due to marketing of biotechnology, food safety'.

New booklets ...

www.gm.govt.nz

New booklets published by the Ministry for the Environment and written by ANZFA and ERMA are now

available free www.gm.govt.nz
Don't say we didn't warn you!

Report on GMO liability ...

17.5.02

Law Commission's report on Liability for Loss resulting from the Development, Supply or Use of GMOs was completed on time. Minister Margaret Wilson is due to release the report and findings about mid-June. 'The independence of the Law Commission will be an important factor when it comes to weighing up the various competing arguments,' Ms Wilson said. Sir Geoffrey Palmer, called on Government to make GE developers fully financially liable for the risks of GE, saying **GE developers should bear the full financial costs if damage results from GE experimentation, along 'polluter pays' lines.** The Law Commission report is expected to canvass associated issues such as personal injury, property damage and financial or economic loss due to genetic engineering.

GE food labelling system risked being sabotaged 10.5.02

New Zealand's and Australia's GE food labelling system is risked being sabotaged by Australian Federal Govt's moves to undermine it in Codex international negotiations. Australian Consumers' Assoc. say Aussie reps at Codex meetings in Canada on world food standards **'they deliberately voted against our own domestic labelling regime'**. GM labelling law, implemented last December, requires packaged food with measurable GM ingredients to carry an identifying label. They resisted a stringent GM labelling regime, decided by a majority of the New Zealand and state governments. 3 alternatives for labelling were considered, the weakest being pushed by the US, and would label only foods, which were hazardous. "Trade and industry interests have been busy trying to undermine Australia's (and New Zealand's) GM-labelling system since it was promised in 1999."

Biotechnology is the big winner ...

6.5.02 NZ Herald

Biotechnology is the big winner of \$110m research contracts by taxpayer funded FRST, allocating \$22m to gene technologies, and a mere \$1 million to studying the risks of GM genes infecting other organisms and NZers' attitudes.

Starving Zimbabwe shuns offer of GM maize

1.6.02 Guardian

Gripped by severe food shortages, with a potentially vast famine looming, the Zimbabwean authorities have rejected a US government donation of 10,000 tonnes of maize, worth \$6m, because it has not been certified as free from genetic modification. But the decision was not yet another example of President Robert Mugabe protesting at western imperialism. It was taken to protect Zimbabwe's own crop and its ability to export certified hybrid maize seed throughout Africa.

GMOs were acknowledged to have the potential of "invasive species".

Convention on Biological Diversity, Hague 18.4.02

"Of course, there is no reason that a LMO, like any other species, has the potential to behave as 'invasive alien species', and would in that case be treated as such. More generally, note that the Convention itself recognizes that LMOs may have potential adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity (Article 8g)."

GMOs in Nicaraguan food Aid ...

24.5.02

GMOs in Nicaraguan food Aid Centro Humboldt/Friends of the Earth, in alliance with 6 civil society organizations in Nicaragua denounced the introduction of GMOs in food aid after 2 years research. 4 samples of food aid for pregnant mother and schoolchildren were sent to Genetic ID, and revealed around 3% genetic contamination. Experimental seeds sent to Genetic ID, a US laboratory, indicated existence of GMOs at the detection level. They demanded the government verify and monitor whether "improved" corn seed, introduced by a program financed by USAID with Monsanto involvement is GE or not.

Poor nations lose out in gene crop trials-UN

www.planetark.org 17.4.02

Trials of GE crops will fail to help developing countries since the testing is more concerned with developing herbicide tolerance and pest resistance than improving yield, the U.N.

said. Research into GM crops is concentrated among a small number of firms and a small number of crops.

BT cotton fast contaminating India

Indian Express 6.5.02

<http://www.corpwatchindia.org>

Despite Bt cotton not being cleared for commercial use in the Punjab, and Government cautioning farmers against its use, farmers affected by American bollworm infestations are smuggling in Monsanto seed from owners of Bt cotton trial farms. "We know that a number of farmers are sowing Bt seeds which they have procured on their own. We're advising them against it," said a chief agriculture officer. "I don't have enough people, and the farmers won't listen to us either." The farmers haven't heard of guidelines stipulated after clearing Bt for commercial use, where Bt fields must be surrounded by a refuge area where the same non-Bt variety is sown, to slow resistant bollworms developing.

Saskatchewan organic growers are suing Monsanto

www.cropchoice.com

It's official, Saskatchewan organic growers are suing Monsanto, Aventis over GM contamination; after it's failure to take responsibility for the GE varieties it has patented.

Biotechnology's Third Generation aims to be consumer-friendly:

www.corpwatch.org/issues/PID.jsp?articleid=2228

GM plants and farm animals with extra nutritional content, or producing industrial/pharmaceutical chemicals. Products include antiviral tomatoes, rice producing human proteins for drugs, chickens producing pharmaceutical drugs in their eggs, cavity-fighting fruits, and slow-growing lawns. Critics worry that crops producing pharmaceuticals or industrial chemicals could get accidentally mixed up with the human food supply causing a potential threat to public health and increase potential hazards already faced by the public from currently existing GM crops. By the time the consequences are felt it could be too late to reverse the damage.

Theoretical human-mouse, may force limits on patenting human life.

11.5.02

Jeremy Rifkin offered Stuart Newman an intriguing challenge 10 years ago: To think up a new form of life that would be scientifically useful and patentable--yet so disturbing that the public would recoil? Newman, a NY medical school professor, proposed a "humouse", a part-human, part-mouse creature made with existing lab techniques to help companies test for the toxic effects of new drugs. The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office is now in the final stages of deciding whether he can patent his idea. Win or lose, the result may urge Congress and the courts to place new limits on manipulating and patenting human life. For the patent office, the humouse raises some awkward issues, it has excluded human embryos and human beings from patenting. The patent office says Congress infers the ban on these patents from such doctrines as the 13th Amendment ban of slavery. Other patent lawyers believe there is no legal authority to stop this controversial development. The courts may well decide whether patent rights to human life and to new methods of making human life can be owned and controlled.

NZ breaking its commitment to regulation based on science, says US trade rep.

Radio NZ 6.4.02

But Helen Clark doesn't believe the 2y ban on GE release is a breach of WTO rules. "It's already about 9 months done; we need the rest of the time to work out our regulatory regime". "The US suggests that a case-by-case review of the agronomic, health and environmental impact of bio-engineered products would enable New Zealand to ensure the security of its customers and environment," Mr Zoellick said, stopping short of threatening action. "The arbitrary imposition of a two-year moratorium on any release of bioengineered products marks a clear departure from New Zealand's avowed policy of regulating these products based on science," the US says.

UK Co-Op Bank spurned GM

2.5.02

Ethically-minded UK Co-Op Bank spurned GM saying it would not do business with biotech companies involved in genetic modification (GM) or cloning. After record annual profits reaping the rewards of ethical investment, the stance followed consultation with customers.

Cross-species embryos ...

www.nzherald.co.nz, 19.3.02

Protestors gathered outside a laboratory in S.Korea, which had launched a "top secret" project to create cross-species embryos combining human DNA with cow eggs to generate human embryonic stem cells for research or novel transplant treatments. In Asia and the U.S. researchers are turning to animal egg from cows and rabbits because they are easier to obtain than human ones.

Engineered Protein in Maize

12.4.02

Maize has been genetically engineered to contain a protein, which is found in the monkey form of HIV by US company ProdiGene. Medical experts believe it could be a cheap drug and be stored for a long time.

Jumping Genes ...

news.scotsman.com

San Francisco scientists claim they can now genetically modify a species, using 'jumping genes', which are found naturally in many organisms but have no function other than to hop in and out of DNA, just by injecting DNA into its bloodstream. Current techniques are hit and miss.

Tighter Regulations ...

GM food giant Monsanto has outraged environmentalists by proposing tighter regulations for GE trials in Eastern Europe than in Scotland. A zone of 200 metres will be used in the Czech Republic for tests on genetically-modified maize, compared to 50-80m in Scotland.

Belgium refuses licence for Aventis GMO crop test.

29.4.02

The Health Ministry was cited as saying that Belgium has refused to grant a licence to Aventis CropScience to conduct experimental field tests with a genetically modified herbicide re-

sistant strain of oilseed rape on Belgian sites

Terminator Tussle:

18.4.02,

<http://www.gene.ch/genet.html>

Controversial technology needed, US experts say Genetic plant sterilization technology; Terminator technology; is heralded by scientists as a possible solution to the ecological problem of gene drift. The UN Convention on Biological Diversity, examined the issue of whether plant sterility genes should be banned internationally. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) declared it an 'immoral technology'. Delta & Pine Land Company continue to develop trait protection technology."

The world's first GE tree

Genfor, a Chilean joint venture, is producing. Aiming to export the world's first GE tree, using *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt). The company predicts that its insect-resistant pine will be ready for the market in 2008. Weyerhaeuser, Washington, believes short-term scientific, economic, and political hurdles are so high and cannot justify embracing forest biotech. A Washington botanist was cited as saying that the ultimate goal is to redesign trees, creating super productive organisms that in many ways will not resemble today's trees.

Piglets Numbers fell ...

Farm Spokesman 29.4.02

A US farmer of 30 years was alarmed when piglet's numbers fell almost 80%. Checking suspect causes he found nothing. Later he found that 12 other producers had similar problems, all operations fed the same Bt corn. Laboratory tests revealed the corn contained high levels of *Fusarium* mould. One producer switched back to regular non-Bt corn, and no longer has a problem. An agronomist said a rotation of corn and soybeans might not get rid of genes contaminating the ground. The Iowa Farm Spokesman 29.4.02 article illustrates the fact that genetically engineered crops have been rushed to market without proper testing.

Australian scientists are planning to use genetically modified fish to wipe out a European species of carp that

has invaded its rivers. 8.5.02 New Scientist

GM could kill organic farms

Observer 26.2.02

Organic farming in Britain could be doomed if the Government approves cultivation of GM crops, a EU report warns saying that it is 'virtually impossible' to stop cross-contamination. The 145 page report (www.irc.cec.eu.int/GECrops/). Ministers are considering plans to declare swaths of countryside 'GM free' - reserving other regions for the controversial crops.

No room for GM crops in an "organic" Britain.

New Scientist. 18.5.02

Most British countryside may be off-limits to GM crops before the government even decides if they can be grown commercially. The reason is organic farming, which is becoming ever more popular in Britain. www.ngin.org.uk

UK campaigners ...

7.5.02

UK campaigners claimed new info revealed that government had cleared the way under EU law for the UK to turn down GM crop trials, justifying the Welsh Assembly's decision to forbid such trials.

Plans to stop GM safety ...

19.5.02

Secret plans are being prepared to stop Britons challenging the safety of GM crops at public hearings & to crack down on objections to GE crops.

GM crop pullers have scored a legal precedent:

as a result they should always be able to choose trial by jury (with a record of 100 per cent acquittals so far) 30.5.02

Cloned animal are defective !

28.4.02

Ian Wilmut, who helped create Dolly the sheep says every cloned animal is genetically and physically defective, publishing his findings with a warning to scientists over attempts to clone humans.

Fears about GE Mosquitoes

Washington Post 23.5.02

US Scientists have created GE mosquitoes with a reduced capacity to transmit malaria. However, some

scientists fear that they may trigger ecological disruption and ultimately increase, not decrease, the global burden of disease and are concerned the US has no regulations limiting environmental release of GE insects capable of transmitting human/animal diseases.

Mexico's vital gene reservoir polluted by modified maize

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/gmdebate/Story/0,2763,686955,00.html> - 19.4.02

The Mexican government has confirmed that despite its ban on genetically modified maize, there is massive contamination of crops in areas that act as the gene bank for one of the world's staple crops. The announcement of the worst ever contamination of crops by GM varieties was made at the biodiversity convention meeting in the Hague. In 95 percent of sites tested in Mexico corn crops have been contaminated by DNA from GM corn.

GE contamination in the EU

16.4.02

The EU faces problems over GE contamination of seed. "The survey found that seed producers were able to declare as GM-free only 14% of corn and 6% of soybean seeds sold in Italy. In July 23, 2001, the French food safety agency found that 74.1% of conventional corn in 2001 contained GM seeds..." Austria passed a law in Jan 2002 setting a 0.1% threshold (limit of current detection methods). It relies on self-certification from seed producers.

Transgenic wheat ban ...

Canadian and U.S. farm groups unite on transgenic wheat ban, announcing an effort to stop the introduction of transgenic wheat "Banning GM wheat is crucial to the survival of the North American farmers who grow wheat." Canadian Wheat Board estimates, 2/3rds of international buyers do not want to buy genetically modified wheat. GM corn and soybean products and we have learned our lessons well." U.S. corn producers have lost \$200 million in annual sales to markets in the EU alone. North Dakota research centres wishing to avoid potential genetic contamination of pure wheat seed, decided against hosting nursery trials for transgenic

GM wheat, including the Round-up Ready wheat that Monsanto wants to commercialise (6.5.02.) Whereas Du Pont ditches hybrid wheats (Farmers Weekly, 22.3.02) Chemical giant Du Pont has pulled out of its hybrid wheat programme, blaming limited market uptake.

JAPAN: Not only will they cease buying hard red spring wheat, but they won't purchase any US wheat.

EU, KOREA and THAILAND: Won't accept GM wheat. **TAIWAN:** Mandatory GE labelling 1.1.03. GM wheat won't be accepted without regulatory approval.

Eat What You're Given and No Arguments.

New Scientist Mar 2002

You have no right to know where the food you eat ultimately comes from. That's the ruling of an international body of food experts. It says governments cannot demand that consumers be told their food's genetic origins - whether a cooking oil comes from GE beans. The only exception would be when a food turns out to be dangerous-allergenic, Codex threw out calls from the EU to allow governments to demand full genetic "traceability" of GE food. 200 national delegates accepted a much less demanding rule sought by the US, Australia and others, where disclosure of GE ancestry will only be necessary "when a risk to human health has been identified".

* 90% of Americans said foods created through genetic engineering processes should have labels-Rutgers Univ Food Policy Inst Nov 2001

* 90% of American farmers support labels on biotech products if they are scientifically different from conventional foods and 61% support labels on biotech products even if not scientifically different- Kansas State Univ, & Farm Foundation, survey of farms throughout U.S., Sept 2001.

In (Seed) Bed Together

Tompaine.com/feature.cfm/ID/5116
Biotech companies are threatening our food supply says Stephen Jones, Washington State Univ. involved for 20 years in breeding wheat, by plundering public research programs, established to promote science in the public interest. The U.S. Supreme Court appears to back this trend, with its recent decision to protect the patent rights of Monsanto and Dupont's new varieties of seed. This has weak-

ened farmers' rights to save seed for future crops, forcing them to buy seed yearly.

NEED MORE INFO ON ACTION

Dozens of groups from small towns and cities throughout NZ are joining a new purely action-based network.

It won't bombard you with information! The current main aims include: 1) Providing a weekly 'action update' (a compilation to share resources, skills, strategic ideas, action ideas etc.)

2) Establishing a comprehensive and easily accessible database of groups and skills, materials and resources available.

3) Promoting more communication and support between Maori and other groups.

4) Generally being a point of contact for groups needing any kind of assistance.

If you do not have internet access they are happy to post you the weekly action update. They prefer to be contacted at melmaibpete@lycos.com Otherwise, contact GE Free NZ and we can forward your details.

Their weekly update is an excellent compilation of ideas, resources and important upcoming events. It is great to have new energy coordinating this to keep us enthused and in touch.

VICTORIES excerpt from Rachel's Environment & Health News #746

1) Local-First: There are local victories in which citizens tackle some problem, vanquish their adversaries, and thus improve or at least maintain the local environment.

2) Policy: The second kind of victory is the policy victory itself, which occurs when government changes its normal way of doing business. Policy victories are rarely permanent and usually must be defended again and again.

3) The third kind of victory - the most important kind - is changing the "climate of opinion". Once a "climate of opinion" victory has been achieved, it is much more difficult to reverse than a policy victory. The "climate of opinion" determines what kind of behaviour is unthinkable.

GE Free NZ Awareness Day - June 22, 2002 & area news and resources

GE FREE HAWKES BAY are organising a march in Napier on the 22nd June followed by a Mother Earth concert at the Napier cathedral at 12 pm, drums, dress up, face painting, banners to gather for the march in Clive Square, Napier from 10 am. we are calling on all Hawke's Bay people not only to come to the event, but to bring a friend and talk about the issue with them. **Poster campaign**: Volunteers are needed to place up posters around Hawke's Bay, you can place posters around your workplace or neighbourhood.

GE FREE NORTHLAND will have stalls in Whangarei and Kerikeri. Their network will wear GE FREE tshirt and would like folk to put signs up in cars/at work/schools.

GROUNDSWELL, Christchurch will have a stall in town and encourage people to put up big GE Free signs on their property, car and businesses. Contact Tremane

GE FREE HAWKES BAY :GE lectures a great success. Good attendance, & interesting speakers: Dr John Clearwater, Luke Anderson, Perry Spiller. Annette Sykes & Mereana Pitman April 30th talk at EIT marae was appreciated by all, and we felt that a step had been made to join forces with the Maori community. Several councillors came; we would like to see them all. If you know any personally, please ring them.

Next GE Lecture-June 28, 7.30pm, Angus Inn, Hastings. Prof. Peter Wills & MP Ian Ewen-Street. Greenpeace true food guides & info on meetings are available at Cornucopia in Hastings and Chantal in Napier. A community forum with Hastings District Council on GE will be held later this year, check Hawke's Bay Today. Keep lobbying city & regional councillors for Hawke's Bay to remain GE Free. More info: 835 0141 or 875 1234

WELLINGTON (MADGE) are planning 6-8pm, Sun 16 June: Get-together with Auckland speakers contact 387 8785 see above.

WELLINGTON (MADGE) 11-1pm Sat 22 June: Wgtn's Madge Media Launch - "Chalk the Boardwalk" on Oriental Parade Please contact capitalmadge@paradise.net.nz or ring 04 387 8785 for more info.

AUCKLAND GE-Free Coalition is active and brings together people from many groups incl. MAD GE, GE-Free NZ, Greens, Greenpeace & FoE Events planned for 22 June e-mail gefree_ak@yahoo.com or call MADGE on 09 309 3838

NELSON will be get together with the Nelson Environment Centre to inform shoppers and get subs signed. An informal Top of the South council forum is scheduled for the week before.

Forest & Bird AGM in Wellington is the same day- voting on GE remit!! (To endorse the Precautionary Principle and ban GE in the conservation estate)

Hui for GE Free campaigners June 15th /16th Details from Tremane Barr - 03 981 5235

GE FREE NORTHLAND Northland hui on GE - 27-28 July Te Rapunga Marae/ South of Kawakawa contact peter Harrison 09 408 3950 or Percy Tipene 09 401 4837

Regional forum on GE - 5th August, Forum North, Whangarei will include Whangarei, Kaipara, Far Northland Northland Councils and a panel of invited speakers incl. GE Free Northland. Come and support us! More info 09 432 2155

Email: arboreus@ihug.co.nz
Northland Conservation Board submission to Northland Regional Council's draft annual plan asks them to prohibit GE field trials/commercial crops due to region's environment and economy. Chair Derek Keene will also make a submission to MAF re seed testing.

GE Free Northland's new website:-
www.gefreenorthland.org.nz

RESOURCES

Poster campaign for the national awareness day. Kate White, Hawke's

Bay artist, has developed 7 thought provoking posters. The idea is to put up the posters one at a time and change them over once or twice a week to create a global picture of the issue.

To help with the GE Free campaign choose one or more spots around where you live or work and take responsibility with the poster campaign for this area.

Ideas for positioning posters: car & shop windows, notice boards everywhere, libraries, citizens, advice bureaux, schools, creches, coffee shops, pubs, clubs, yacht, rugby etc., doctors waiting rooms, hair dressing salons, industrial areas, workplace smoko room, dairies, churches, vineries, gym, youth clubs, city councils, airport, garages, etc More info and to receive posters. Donation to cover costs. GE Free HB, odile@xtra.co.nz 06 835 0141, 119 Milton Road, Napier

GE FREE NORTHLAND educational info packs for Northland Secondary schools are to be sent out late June, we will then focus on developing a suitable pack for intermediate and primary schools.

If you would like a kit (available at cost) please contact Zelka at arboreus@ihug.co.nz, 09 432 2155.

GE TAM SCAM GE Free Northland continues to seek govt. funding for independent scientific research at the contaminated HortResearch GE tamarillo site at Kerikeri. Despite the RCI findings (that the trial was shoddily contained and that public concern was 'fully justified' to date the government has failed to fund any independent testing of the site appearing bent on ignoring public concerns and that of both NZ and overseas scientists. We are all very disappointed that critical research by the NZ Inst. of Gene Ecology has not been funded by FRST.

GE Free NZ CONTACTS

We're on the Internet
www.gefree.org.nz

Head Office: PO Box 693, Nelson Ph
03 547 9383, Fax 03 547 9329
or email info@gefree.co.nz

GE Free Hawke's Bay
Odile Balas 06 835 0141
odile@xtra.co.nz

Central Hawkes' Bay
Warwick Mather 06 857 8080
mountview@paradise.net.nz

GE Aware Nelson GEAN
Don Murray 03 529 1395
don.murray@internet.co.nz

Auckland GE Free NZ (Coalition)
Dianna 09 378 8945.

Groundswell, Christchurch
Tremane Barr 03 981 5235
Tremane.barr@clear.net.nz

GE Free Northland
Zelka 09432 2155 or Barry
barry.considine@xtra.co.nz

GE Free Kapiti
Vicki McCaffrey 04 905 2526
or Barbara Mountier
n.mountier@clear.net.nz

GE Free Wellington
Jon Muller 04 589 0536
jmuller@xtra.co.nz

Central North Island
Allan Williams 07 349 6099

Review of the Patents Act - the focus is on what is patentable (e.g., living organisms) + Review of the Plant Variety Rights. Submissions due July 26th. Discussion documents are available at the MED site:
www.med.govt.nz.

QUOTE

"It now looks very doubtful that GM is going to be accepted in the EU in the next five, 10 or even 15 years,"
Du Pont's Robert Bird

Disclaimer-We are not liable for any error, omission, fact or misinterpretation in this publication, nor any action taken on the information given.

SUPPORT THE CAUSE

A4 corflute weather resistant signs showing monarch butterfly and message Proud to be GE Free The signs will cost \$2 each for order of 50 signs. Smaller orders contact Odile Balas 06 835 0141 odile@xtra.co.nz

T Shirts - natural unbleached cotton with rainbow GE Free NZ logo \$20.00 incl.P&P from Head office.

Cotton GE Free shopping bags with logo soon available contact Head Office for more details.

New GE Free Bumper Stickers available now: www.gefree.org.nz

VIDEOS

50 minute video - 'GM FOOD - The great debate.' recorded at a public debate in Auckland, the arguments about release of GM foods in New Zealand. Jon Carapiet-GE Free NZ and William Rolleston, Life Science Network. To order contact GE-free NZ Price \$20 (incl. p&p)

26 min, "HEARTBREAK IN THE HEARTLAND: The True Cost of GE Crops," frontline farmers discuss how GMOs threaten agriculture, consumer choice, and the environment. Order on-line www.thecampaign.org/store.htm.

Another World is Possible- Impressions of the 2002 World Social Forum 24 mins. What if 51,000 people from 131 countries put their heads together to discuss what is wrong with the world and how to work together to change it? Vandana Shiva, Naomi Klein and more \$35 incl. shipping, outside of the U.S. Other titles are available including one about patenting biological resources and global trade. www.bullfrogfilms.com

Mothers against GE - MAdGE Congratulations to Mad GE on their stylish pink accented newsletter and cool 'Pursepower' action at Auckland supermarkets. Go girlies, go! Great T-shirts also available. Contact Madge 09 309 3838 or email madge@paradise.net.nz

An excellent new Greenpeace GE Free food guide, now in a compact and easy to read form, will help people identify the companies they can and can't trust. To advertise the booklet (available on line) in your shop or local library you can obtain posters from Greenpeace. For your copy send a self-addressed envelope to Greenpeace, Private Bag 92507, Welle sley Street, Auckland 1 or from <http://www.greenpeace.org.nz/Truefood/index.html>

Some of the major shifts in the new GE Free Food Guide include: Unilever Australasia, Heinz Watties, Tegel and Arnotts /Campbells. Cerebos Greggs is in the final stages of removing GE from their food. 55,000 copies of the Guide have been distributed to the public including 15,000 downloaded from the web. Greenpeace managed to locate a first - a GE label in a supermarket. 21.5.02

Thanks Greenpeace for the hard work and excellent resource.

FACTS about the media

In 13 US newspapers & magazines out of 40 op-eds only 7 were critical of GE crops and foods with only 2 arguing for labelling. 29.4.2002

About 40% of all stories that appear in newspapers are planted there by PR firms on behalf of a specific paying client. Because most radio and TV news is simply re-written from newspaper stories, a substantial proportion of the public's "news" originates as PR propaganda. www.prwatch.org/cgi/spin.cgi.

The fake persuaders - Corporations are inventing people to rubbish their opponents on the internet. George Monbiot 14.5.2002 and Corporate phantoms- more spin exposed 29.5.02 www.guardian.co.uk/Columnists/Column/0,5673,715158,00.html
www.guardian.co.uk/Print/0,3858,4423550,00.html

Know any local journalists interested in the issue, let us know their name, paper & email address and we can keep them informed with shorts newsheets at regular intervals.