



GE Free New Zealand

In Food and Environment

Newsletter July 2012

** Please note that some articles have been abbreviated in order to meet size constraints **

New Zealand must stay GE Free - our future depends on it

NEW ZEALAND TOUR

GE, the failed Australian

Experiment A country-wide tour initiated by Green Mp Steffan Browning will expose the problems of farmers from Australia affected by GE crops.

See Page 3 The speakers will be: Australian farmer Julie Newman of the Network of Concerned Farmers is well known for her excellent understanding of the GE issue. She was a member of a parliamentary advisory committee under former Labour Food and Agriculture Minister Kim Chance and will be challenging Food and Terry Redman Agriculture Minister standing as an independent candidate against him next year. Terry Redman has literally asked the GM companies to control plant breeding and seed industry, and as a result Monsanto and the Department of Agriculture and Food now share the same South Perth address.

She is widely supported in her region in her fight to prevent negative impacts from multinationals, whose primary concerns are corporate profits, not the future of our rural communities.

Bob Mackley is a farmer from Victoria directly affected by contamination from his neighbouring grower. He has been growing canola for many years and knows the benefit of growing GE Free canola and the higher prices it commands.

To date New Zealand has avoided the worst excesses of contamination.

New Zealand is free from commercial GE crops, and our economic interest is to remain so, rather than to join a race to the bottom for environmental contamination and degradation

Recent Regional Success

In our last newsletter Whangarei District Council unanimously voted to reject outdoor use of (GE) crops and animals in the District.

More excellent news this June came when Hastings District Council voted unanimously in support of declaring the district GE free.

Pure Hawke's Bay presented to the Hastings Council's long-term plan for a GE-free district. The council keen to join Napier in declaring itself GE-free, wants to take the concept a step further. It intends writing it into its district plan to give it some legal clout. It aims to protect the Heretaunga Plains which is the region's prime growing region.

The council is also keen to become a national leader of the GE-free movement rather than wait for the Government to come up with a national policy. Currently only Whangarei is moving in the GE-free direction.

The status would give food producers a point of difference when marketing overseas and put tighter rules around applications for GE crops to be grown in the district.

Hawkes Bay growers can now reap the significant branding benefits of being able to market their food as GE free.

All New Zealand growers should have this marketing advantage, which is why it's so important to keep New Zealand GE free.

More local news Page 8

Auckland Action

Please contact your local councillors and local community board, The Mayor Len Brown and Deputy Mayor Penny Hulse and ask that they **URGENTLY** take action to ensure funding for Auckland to work with other councils to protect ratepayers from the risks of GMOs.

This policy is agreed and stated in the Long Term Plan but they have cut the budget to zero! This is not good enough, so please call or email now. Contact details on website :Mayor len.brown@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz Deputy mayor penny.hulse@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz Deputy Exec. assistant: 09 354-8701 See website for Ph. No.s and emails for councillors and community boards www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/AboutCouncil/representativesbodies/Pages/Wardcouncillors.aspx

Man on a mission to inform on GE

A survivor of L-Tryptophan , Dr Bob Marshall was a man whose life was dedicated to health and fitness - yet he was nearly killed by taking a natural supplement tainted by genetic engineering. www.biotrace.co.nz

Now he is on a mission to warn others about the potential dangerous of many natural health supplements. Bruce Mason Theatre Auckland August 30th

GE Free NZ AGM 9th Sept
10 am Toi Poneke Arts Centre
61 - 69 Abel Smith Street, Te Aro, Wellington

See you there

Higher Levels of Toxins in GE Foods. www.gefree.org.nz 13/07/2012

Ever increasing levels of pesticides are being used on GE crops, and while authorities quietly rubber-stamp an even wider range of chemical tolerant GE crops for entry into the food chain; residue levels on foods are increasing.

US data shows that the use of herbicidal and insecticidal chemical toxins are increasing as more GE foods enter the food chain. US-based scientist Dr. Charles Benbrook spoke to an international forum detailing the changes in chemical use with GE crops from 1996-2011. After 15 years the use of toxic herbicides on GE crops has increased whilst non-GE crops have had a reduction in chemical applications.

Now a second wave of new herbicide tolerant GE crops; resistant to chemicals such as 2,4-D, are being added to the mix.

"FSANZ appears to have no concerns for the impact on public health, especially on vulnerable groups including infants, pregnant women, and the immune-suppressed."

The world's first application for 2,4-D corn and soy was approved late last year by FSANZ despite a complete absence of data to ensure its safety.

GE Free NZ appealed its approval and is awaiting a response from the Ombudsmen's Office detailing any pathway available to New Zealand citizens who want a review of previous GE decisions by FSANZ. New Zealanders have no jurisdiction in the Australian courts as defined in the FSANZ legislation; therefore no right of appeal against safety decisions taken in Australia regarding the foods in our supermarkets.

US Government continue their dirty tricks campaign to contaminate

The White House has refused to release an email sent from a Monsanto-linked lobbyist to top Obama administration policy analyst Peter Schmeissner, requested by the Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER) in a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request. PEER believes the email could reveal the White House is colluding with lobbyists to defend the planting of genetically modified crops in wildlife refuges.

EPA Hears GE Promise But Not All Facts 22/06/2012 geefree.org.nz

The EPA-Environmental Protection Agency held its first GE hearing to consider a plan to leave company managers overseeing their own biosecurity compliance, but some applicants were irresponsible – failing to mention their previous serious breaches of biosecurity.

A group of ten organizations, Crown Research Institutes (CRI) and private businesses, applied to import and develop GE thale cress (*Arabidopsis thaliana*).

The EPA has taken over the role of ERMA. It discussed how just 3 biosecurity officers from the Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) would secure, monitor and inspect the 170 containment facilities covered by the application. It is concerning that the discussion was on promoting GE development, and that the evidence of harm from GE plants to the environment, health of animals and possibly humans was not mentioned in any of the presentations.

"The EPA must implement stringent controls on the management in all GE facilities" said Claire Bleakley president of GE-Free NZ in food and environment. "The EPA cannot ignore the past breaches or the failures of GE."

From 2007 -2010 there was a series of major breaches in security of GE facilities, this has resulted in the closure of all horticultural field trials in New Zealand.

Mistakes at containment labs and GE trials could cost New Zealand's economy, since it is reliant on the integrity of our biosecurity.

"We hope that the constructive debate that was had today at the EPA hearing was not for show and does not repeat the pretense that has gone on previously in 'consultation'."

Dow's 'Stacked' Chemical-Resistant Soy Coming to NZ

01/06/2012 www.gefree.org.nz

New Zealand public health is once again under threat from Dow Chemicals- Dow Agrosiences.

In a new application to Food Standards Australia NZ, Dow will introduce GE soy 'stacked' to survive spraying with 3 different toxic chemicals, including 2,4-D, previously considered too toxic for use in food. FSANZ is supposed to protect public health, but like its equivalent agency in the US, appears to be hijacked by the chemical industry, to the point where a new GE patented food, containing 3 toxic chemicals is considered safe for consumers.

Follows approvals of GE corn and soy resistant to 2,4-D to enter the food chain, GE Free NZ challenged the decision through the Australian Appeals Tribunal but organisations in NZ appear to have no jurisdiction to have their concerns heard. This leaves New Zealand in limbo with no ability to challenge what has become a scientifically corrupt process of approval governed by Aussie rules.

Harm to Mothers from GE-Soy Must be Investigated 06/05/2012

<http://gmwatch.eu/latest-listing/1-news-items/13882>

GE-Free NZ is calling for urgent follow-up on animal evidence that points to a strong link to adverse effects in unborn children from GE soya in the maternal diet.

An article by Anne Wolfenberg, in the Danish Effektivt Landbrug farming Journal, published a story about a Danish Farmer who noticed that his pigs were suffering reproductive disorders and digestive problems after having a diet rich in GE soya. He decided to go back to a traditional GE Free soya diet and immediately noticed that the severe health problems disappeared, and the health of the sows and piglets reverted to normal.

"This report indicates consumption of GE soya is likely to be harmful to humans," says Claire Bleakley from GE-Free NZ

GE, the failed Australian

Experiment Australian farmers tour to warn New Zealand off GE farming.

Green Party GE free tour

Two Australian farmers with first-hand experience of Genetically Engineered (GE) crops in their communities are touring New Zealand with Green Party MP Steffan Browning, to share their stories and warn New Zealand farmers about the risks of GE crops.

The last Green Party GE tour was in 1999, during the time of the Royal Commission into Genetic Engineering. Horticulturalist and Green Party spokesperson on GE, Steffan Browning says that there is growing pressure to begin growing GE crops in New Zealand.

The farmers will share their personal stories of moving from being pro or neutral on GE crops to experiencing the negative impact their introduction has on their businesses and communities. They will cover the issues of liability and co-existence and the contamination problems already occurring in Victoria and Western Australia.

One farmer, Bob Mackley, has had his canola field contaminated with his neighbor's GE canola, which is threatening the viability of his canola business as the price he can get collapses, and affects community relationships.

The second farmer, Julie Newman, now advocates against GE and argues that GE crops are the biggest threat to food and agriculture we have ever faced.

This tour has been organised by the Green Party in the context of intended applications for releases of GE pasture plants such as GE rye grass and clover, AgResearch's investment in GE research, and especially the upcoming agriculture biotechnology conference which is being touted as "the World Cup of biotech".

With the pressure on to release the first GE crops in New Zealand, it's time to examine what impact they could have on our clean, green economy and marketing advantage.

What can we learn from the experience of our Australian neighbours about how the introduction of GE crops will affect our agricultural industry and New Zealand's economy?

Bios of speakers

Julie Newman

Julie was a conventional farmer on a 10,000ha mixed farming property, and owned one of the largest seed grading factories in West Australia.

She has a strong agricultural background including being Vice President of Western Australian Farmers Grain Council for many years, and representing Western Australia on the Grains Council of Australia policy council and seeds subcommittee.

Julie has come to the conclusion that GE crops are harming farmers. She is the National Spokesperson for the Australian Network of Concerned Farmers, an alliance of Australian farmers lobbying to prevent non-GE farmers being adversely impacted by GE crops.

Bob Mackley

Bob Mackley is a canola farmer in Victoria. He is a strong community figure; a past District Council Chairman and a member of the Victorian Farmers Federation.

He has experience as a convener of a grain marketing group formed to empower local small farmers to get their crops to market, and is past president of the Wimmera Conservation Farming Association.

His crops have been contaminated by his neighbour's GE canola crops and he is very concerned about the impact of this on his business. He is also concerned about the divisive effect the introduction of GE crops has had on community relationships.

Details of the Tour

DATE	PLACE
2 August	Dunedin
3 August	Canterbury
4 August	Amberley, Kaikoura
5 August	Blenheim, Nelson
6 August	Wellington
7 August	Palmerston North, Hawkes Bay
8 August	Bay of Plenty
9 August	Waikato
10 August	Auckland
11 August	Northland

Details of venues & times see Greens website

www.greens.org.nz

GE-Weeds Costing Farmers Dearly
02/05/2012 gefree.org.nz

The emergence of herbicide-resistant weeds as a result of planting GE crops, GE herbicide resistant technology is severely damaging farm incomes and the environment

Scion may soon replant their GE-tree experiments –herbicide resistant pines trees with changed reproductive function. "It's time for a re-direction of science funding away from herbicide resistant GE trees that will harm our environment and may cause weedy populations in areas already suffering wilding pines"

A survey of farmers by BASF has revealed damage from 'GE-weeds' has cost millions of dollars. Farmers were shocked at the negative impact of herbicide tolerant weeds on the economic performance and GE crop yields. Just one resistant weed type has a significant impacts on yield.

New Zealand farmers are learning from problems in the Australian market - in its second year of commercial GE canola cropping, this year there is a \$57 price premium for GE-free canola. To prop up the market Cargill is giving GE-canola farmers a 50% subsidy (\$12 NZ) for their crop. For the second year running GE canola is not wanted on the international market.

www.basf.com/group/corporate/en/news-and-media-relations/news-releases/news-releases-usa/P-12-087

www.theaustralian.com.au/news/health-science/monsanto-props-up-weak-gm-crop-price/story-e6frg8y6-1226335724205

Report: GMO Myths and Truths - An evidence-based examination of the claims made for the safety and efficacy of genetically modified crops,

June 2012 Michael Antoniou, Claire Robinson, John Fagan
www.earthopensource.org
http://earthopensource.org/files/pdfs/GMO_Myths_and_Truths/GMO_Myths_Truths_press-final_EU.pdf

UK scientists who are themselves genetic engineers, have published a review of research into GMOs and warned against believing claims made for their benefits and safety. The warning comes just days after it was revealed that biotechnology company Syngenta had deliberately hidden the death of animals that had been fed one of its GE products. The findings are further evidence that the scientific establishment's uncritical support for GE foods is based on out-dated understanding of the complex systems underpinning genetics and living systems.

Syngenta charged with lying over cattle deaths, GM Watch, 25.5.12
<http://www.gmwatch.org/latest-listing/1-news-items/13926-syngenta-charged-with-lying-over-cattle-deaths>

Michael Antoniou of Kings College London School of Medicine in the UK, uses genetic engineering for medical applications but warns against its use in developing crops for human food and animal feed.

Dr Antoniou said: "GM crops are promoted on the basis of ambitious claims - that they are safe to eat, environmentally beneficial, increase yields, reduce reliance on pesticides, and can help solve world hunger. I felt what was needed was a collation of the evidence that addresses the technology from a scientific point of view.

"Research studies show that genetically modified crops have harmful effects on laboratory animals in feeding trials and the environment during cultivation. They have increased the use of pesticides and have failed to increase yields. Our report concludes that there are safer and more effective alternatives to meeting the world's food needs."

Another author of the report, Dr John Fagan, is a former genetic engineer who in 1994 returned to the National Institutes of Health \$614,000 in grant money due to concerns about the safety and ethics of the technology. He subsequently founded a GMO testing company.

Dr Fagan said: "Crop genetic engineering as practiced today is a crude, imprecise, and outmoded technology. It can create unexpected toxins or allergens in foods and affect their nutritional value. Recent advances point to better ways of using our knowledge of genomics to improve food crops, that do not involve GM.

"Over 75% of all GM crops are engineered to tolerate being sprayed with herbicide. This has led to the spread of herbicide-resistant superweeds and has resulted in massively increased exposure of farmers and communities to these toxic chemicals. Epidemiological studies suggest a link between herbicide use and birth defects and cancer.

"These findings fundamentally challenge the utility and safety of GM crops, but the biotech industry uses its influence to block research by independent scientists and uses its powerful PR machine to discredit independent scientists whose findings challenge this approach."

The third author of the report, Claire Robinson, research director of Earth Open Source, said, "The GM industry is trying to change our food supply in far-reaching and potentially dangerous ways. We all need to inform ourselves about what is going on and ensure that we - not biotechnology companies - keep control of our food system and crop seeds.

News points from the report

1. Genetic engineering as used in crop development is not precise or predictable and has not been shown to be safe. The technique can result in the unexpected production of toxins or allergens in food that are unlikely to be spotted in current regulatory checks.

2. GM crops, including some that are already in our food and animal feed supply, have shown clear signs of toxicity in animal feeding trials - notably disturbances in liver and kidney function and immune responses.

3. GM proponents have dismissed these statistically significant findings as "not biologically relevant/significant," based on scientifically indefensible arguments.

4. Certain EU-commissioned animal feeding trials with GM foods and crops are often claimed by GM proponents to show they are safe. In fact, examination of these studies shows significant differences between the GM-fed and control animals that give cause for concern.

5. GM foods have not been properly tested in humans, but the few studies that have been carried out in humans give cause for concern.

6. The US FDA does not require mandatory safety testing of GM crops, and does not even assess the safety of GM crops but only "deregulates" them, based on assurances from biotech companies that they are "substantially equivalent" to their non-GM counterparts. This is like claiming that a cow with BSE is substantially equivalent to a cow that does not have BSE and is thus safe to eat! Claims of substantial equivalence cannot be justified on scientific grounds.

7. The regulatory regime for GM foods is weakest in the US, where GM foods do not even have to be assessed for safety or labelled in the marketplace, but in most regions of the world regulations are inadequate to protect people's health from the potential adverse effects of GM foods.

8. In the EU, where the regulatory system is often claimed to be strict, minimal pre-market testing is required for a GMO and the tests are commissioned by the same companies that stand to profit from the GMO if it is approved - a clear conflict of interest.

9. No long-term toxicological testing of GMOs on animals or testing on humans is required by any regulatory agency in the world.

10. Biotech companies have used patent claims and intellectual property protection laws to restrict access of independent researchers to GM crops for research purposes. As a result, limited research has been conducted on GM foods and crops by scientists who are independent of the GM industry. Scientists whose work has raised concerns about the safety of GMOs have been attacked and discredited in orchestrated campaigns by GM crop promoters.

11. Most GM crops (over 75%) are engineered to tolerate applications of herbicides. Where such GM crops have been adopted, they have led to massive increases in herbicide use.

12. Roundup, the herbicide that over 50% of all GM crops are engineered to tolerate, is not safe or benign as has been claimed but has been found to cause malformations (birth defects), reproductive problems, DNA damage, and cancer in test animals. Human epidemiological studies have found an association between Roundup exposure and miscarriage, birth defects, neurological development problems, DNA damage, and certain types of cancer.

13. A public health crisis has erupted in GM soy-producing regions of South America, where people exposed to spraying with Roundup and other agrochemicals sprayed on the crop report escalating rates of birth defects and cancer.

14. A large number of studies indicate that Roundup is associated with increased crop diseases, especially infection with Fusarium, a fungus that causes wilt disease in soy and can have toxic effects on humans and livestock.

15. Bt insecticidal GM crops do not sustainably reduce pesticide use but change the way in which pesticides are used: from sprayed on, to built in.

16. Bt technology is proving unsustainable as pests evolve resistance to the toxin and secondary

pest infestations are becoming common.

17. GM proponents claim that the Bt toxin engineered into GM plants is safe because the natural form of Bt, long used as a spray by conventional and organic farmers, has a history of safe use. But the GM forms of Bt toxins are different from the natural forms and could have different toxic and allergenic effects.

18. GM Bt toxin is not limited in its toxicity to insect pests. GM Bt crops have been found to have toxic effects on laboratory animals in feeding trials.

19. GM Bt crops have been found to have toxic effects on non-target organisms in the environment.

20. Bt toxin is not fully broken down in digestion and has been found circulating in the blood of pregnant women in Canada and in the blood supply to their fetuses.

21. The no-till method of farming promoted with GM herbicide-tolerant crops, which avoids ploughing and uses herbicides to control weeds, is not more climate-friendly than ploughing. No-till fields do not store more carbon in the soil than ploughed fields when deeper levels of soil are measured.

22. No-till increases the negative environmental impacts of soy cultivation, because of the herbicides used.

23. Golden Rice, a beta-carotene-enriched rice, is promoted as a GM crop that could help malnourished people overcome vitamin A deficiency. But Golden Rice has not been tested for toxicological safety, has been plagued by basic development problems, and, after more than 12 years and millions of dollars of research funding, is still not ready for the market. Meanwhile, inexpensive and effective solutions to vitamin A deficiency are available but under-used due to lack of funding.

24. GM crops are often promoted as a “vital tool in the toolbox” to feed the world’s growing population, but many experts question the contribution

they could make, as they do not offer higher yields or cope better with drought than non-GM crops. Most GM crops are engineered to tolerate herbicides or to contain a pesticide - traits that are irrelevant to feeding the hungry.

25. High adoption of GM crops among farmers is not a sign that the GM crop is superior to non-GM varieties, as once GM companies gain control of the seed market, they withdraw non-GM seed varieties from the market. The notion of “farmer choice” does not apply in this situation.

26. GM contamination of non-GM and organic crops has resulted in massive financial losses by the food and feed industry, involving product recalls, lawsuits, and lost markets.

27. When many people read about high-yielding, pest- and disease-resistant, drought-tolerant, and nutritionally improved super-crops, they think of GM. In fact, these are all products of conventional breeding, which continues to outstrip GM in producing such crops. The report contains a long list of these conventional crop breeding successes.

28. Certain “supercrops” have been claimed to be GM successes when in fact they are products of conventional breeding, in some cases assisted by the non-GM biotechnology of marker assisted selection.

29. Conventional plant breeding, with the help of non-GM biotechnologies such as marker assisted selection, is a safer and more powerful method than GM to produce new crop varieties required to meet current and future needs of food production, especially in the face of rapid climate change.

30. Conventionally bred, locally adapted crops, used in combination with agroecological farming practices, offer a proven, sustainable approach to ensuring global food security.



Syngenta Charged Covering up Livestock Deaths from GM Corn

www.isis.org.uk/Syngenta_Charged.php
ISIS Report 13/06/12

Biotech giant Syngenta faces criminal charges for concealing its own study in which cows died after eating its GM Bt corn. Syngenta's Bt 176 corn variety expresses an insecticidal Bt toxin (Cry1Ab) derived from the bacterium, *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) and a gene conferring resistance to glufosinate herbicides. EU cultivation of Bt 176 was discontinued in 2007. Similar varieties including Bt 11 sweet corn are currently cultivated for human and animal consumption in the EU.

The charges follow a long struggle for justice by a German farmer whose dairy cattle suffered mysterious illnesses and deaths after eating Bt 176 corn grown on his farm as part of authorised field tests during 1997 to 2002

In 2009, the farmer learned of a feeding study allegedly commissioned by Syngenta in 1996 that resulted in four cows dying in two days. The trial was abruptly terminated. Gloeckner took Syngenta to the criminal court to face charges of withholding knowledge of the US trial, which makes the company liable for the destruction of the farmer's 65 cows. Syngenta is charged with the deaths of cattle in the US trial and on Gloeckner's farm, which should have been registered as "unexpected occurrences". The German head of Syngenta Hans-Theo Jahmann, is charged with withholding knowledge of the US study

Approval Process for Aqua Bounty's GE Salmon Bolstered by Georgian Investor

Aqua Bounty Technologies is seeking approval of their GE salmon. A U.S. Senate bill requiring further testing of GE salmon ahead of FDA approval failed in May by just 5 votes (45-50). The bill's author, Sen. Lisa Murkowski maintained FDA evaluation of scientific and biological risks of "Frankenfish" on the seafood industry and ocean ecosystem has not gone far enough to warrant approval of the product. Since 2010, \$8 million in funding to Aqua Bounty was provided by Kakha Bendukidze.

Day in court for organics

<http://blog.greens.org.nz/2012/07/10/day-in-court-for-organics/>

July 10, 7.2012 Steffan Browning
Organic farmers are hitting back at biotech by taking to the courts. In Western Australia, organic farmer Steve Marsh has [taken his neighbouring farmer to court](#) for contaminating Steve's crops with GE canola, leading him to lose his organic certification.

The Pastoralists and Graziers Association said about the case that the organic certifiers are at fault for having a zero tolerance for GE canola. They say that farms that use GE seeds "operate in nature" and so shouldn't be expected to contain their GE crops from contaminating neighbouring fields. [We've been saying for a long time](#) that contamination would occur. It is interesting to note the GE proponents' change in language from "GE won't contaminate" 10 years ago, to now saying "contamination is inevitable".

In the US a group representing 4,500 farms is [fighting a legal battle against Monsanto](#) to protect themselves from being sued if their crops are contaminated by Monsanto's GE crops. They say that every year Monsanto investigates over 500 farmers for patent infringement and so far 144 farmers have had lawsuits brought against them while another 700 farmers have had to settle out of court and pay up.

Behind the GM wheat trial

www.isis.org.uk/Behind_the_GM_Wheat_Trial.php
Isis Report 20.6.12

Rothamsted Institute in Hertfordshire, UK, has begun an open-air GM wheat trial that is re-energising the country's debate on genetically modified (GM) crops.

Hard-hitting interview highlights GMO dangers

Inst for Responsible Technology executive director **Jeffrey M. Smith** - Spilling the Beans 7.12:

"When I speak to doctors around the country, they report seeing an increase in the incidence and severity of certain diseases, which they believe are GMO-related. Moreover, when these doctors take people off of GMO diets, they report that the symptoms - of migraines, gastro-intestinal disorders, weight problems, and more - start to disappear."

"The animal feeding studies for reproductive dysfunctions are astounding. Rodents that eat GM soy had changes in young sperm cells. Their testicles turned from pink to blue. The DNA function in the embryo offspring changed. In one study where female rats were fed GM soy, more than half of their babies died within three weeks, compared to a ten percent death rate in those fed non-GMO soy. The survivors from the GMO-fed group were largely infertile. In another, most hamsters fed GMOs lost the ability to have babies by the third generation. Infant mortality was also at four to five times the rate of non-GMO eaters. Mice fed GMO corn had smaller and fewer babies.

Halal Export Opportunity Makes GE-Free Policy Vital

GE Free NZ
6.6.12 Auckland University Business School highlights opportunity in the growing market for halal foods. But government policy promoting use of new organisms including GMOs, and trade deals made under the TPPA, could destroy this opportunity by not respecting the important cultural values around food. 2 criteria are: Free from GMOs & Free from Irradiated Raw Materials.

Tasmania & South Australia official GE Free food producing regions.

http://www.brandtasmania.com/show.php?ACT=Public&menu_code=600.300
Tasmania has prohibited the commercial production of GM crops for some years now, and has a branding programme to position the state as the home of gourmet foods. As it states, "global negatives" (such as GM foods) can be turned to the state's advantage. Tasmania has a reputation as Australia's gourmet island. Outstanding seafood, more than 100 specialty cheeses, world-famous honey, excellent meat and crisp, fresh vegetables. Because food is GM-free and artificial hormones and antibiotics are not used to promote livestock growth, it is as safe as it is delicious.

More complicity in US state agencies

www.pacc-news.com/5-2-12/heart_ingram5_2_12.html

For 15 years, Terrence Ingram from Illinois has been conducting research on effects of Round-Up on honeybees. He thinks he had the necessary data to document the fact that Round-Up was not only the cause of his bees dying, but also possibly the cause of Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD). His bees and hives were stolen by Illinois Dept of Agriculture, a state agency who entered his property and confiscated them saying they had foulbrood.

The "evidence" has disappeared, and the IDofA refuses to tell Ingram where they are. "I have been keeping bees for 58 years," Ingram said. "I am not a newcomer to beekeeping, and I know what I am doing. This was not foulbrood. CCD is a calamity that is affecting honeybee colonies across the nation.

New Monsanto Rider in the House Farm Bill

Organic Consumer Assoc. 13.7.12 Monsanto has launched a series of sneak attacks on organic and non-GMO farmers and consumers. They began by attaching a rider to the U.S. House of Representatives' 2013 Agriculture Appropriations bill that would allow new GE crops to be planted even when courts rule that the US Department of Agriculture has approved them illegally. This would result in, as one federal judge described it, "the potential elimination of a farmer's choice to grow non-genetically engineered crops, or a consumer's choice to eat non-genetically engineered food." Rep. Peter DeFazio is going to try to remove the appropriations rider through an amendment, with a vote expected the week of July 23rd. Now, Monsanto has slipped a similar provision into the House version of the Farm Bill.

In addition to eliminating judicial review, this even more dangerous provision would also stop the EPA from regulating new and expanded uses of pesticides (often caused by the introduction of new herbicide-resistant GMO crops) and require the USDA to make the approval of new GE crops easier and faster.

European Commission to Drop GMO Zero Tolerance Policy 10.7.12

<http://articles.mercola.com/sites/article/s/archive/2012/07/10/drop-gmo-zero-tolerance-policy.aspx>

The European Union (EU) has historically taken a strict, cautious stance regarding GM crops, banned in several European countries, all GM foods and ingredients have to be labelled, in stark contrast to the U.S. Recently Connecticut & Vermont were ready to pass statewide GMO labeling requirements but backed out as biotech giant Monsanto threatened to sue them if it was passed.

The U.S. has only recently begun passing legislation that protects the use of GM seeds and allows for unabated expansion, in addition to the fact that GM ingredients do not have to be labeled. U.S. diplomatic cables released by WikiLeaks, show US government conspired to find ways to retaliate against Europe for refusing to use GM seeds, mainly by engaging in aggressive trade wars against reluctant nations. The EU has been under heavy pressure to add some slack to their GM regulations - and it seems they are about to cave in.

EU to Drop Zero Tolerance Policy
The European Commission has issued a proposal to drop the policy of zero tolerance for unapproved and untested GMOs in food. The proposal suggests setting a threshold below which contaminated imports could enter Europe's food chain.

Last year the EU decided to allow contamination with up to 0.1 percent of such materials. Then Greenpeace EU agriculture policy adviser Stefanie Hundsdoerfer said: "If the safety of a GM crop has not been tested in Europe, it should not be allowed."

Urging the Dept for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, GM opponents say "Pressure to drop the zero tolerance policy comes from the US government, the WTO and the biotech industry."

EU Blocks France's Ban on GM Corn

France recently asked the European Commission to suspend Monsanto's authorization to plant GM MON 810 corn, citing "significant risks for the environment" shown in recent scientific studies (Germany has also banned this variant).

The EU blocked the ban. In a leaked cable from 2007, Craig Stapleton, then U.S. ambassador to France, stated that retaliation would occur if France went ahead.



UK Also Moving Full Steam Ahead with GMOs

The UK Agriculture Biotechnology Council (ABC) published a report calling "for GM to be put at the heart of agricultural development in the UK." ABC, a GM industry lobby, represents Monsanto, Bayer, DuPont, Syngenta and other biotech giants is meeting with key UK government officials and reportedly "the industry's push for GM is being welcomed."

Ironically, , a leading UK supporter of GM foods, George Freeman, touting a supposedly "healthier" broccoli that fights heart disease as GM, showing how "GM food can improve health," has been caught out. The broccoli, sold by Marks & Spencer is not GM but produced by natural plant breeding methods! Freeman, is in hot water with Marks & Spencer, who have banned GM foods for more than 10 years, and was one of the first UK retailers to put such a ban in place!

GOOD NEWS

Hastings District Council have given official support to the GE free movement in New Zealand, voting unanimously in support of a proposal to declare the district GE free.

This is an exciting move made by the Hastings District Council, whose ratepayers have brought to their councils attention to the innovative work of the Northland/Auckland "Inter Council Working Party on GMO Risk Evaluation & Management Options"

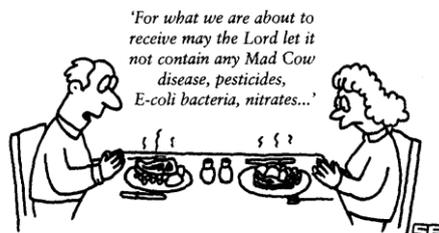
Congratulations are due to Pure Hawke's Bay (a consortium of primary producers) and all those GE Free folk who supported this push.

"The Northland/Auckland "Inter Council Working Party on GMO Risk Evaluation & Management Options" is commissioning an independent section 32 analysis on GMOs, as part of the councils investigation into local options for creating an additional tier of protection against GMOs for the wider region...in addition to national, minimal, grossly inadequate environmental standards for GMOs under the flawed HSNO Act" for more information contact Zelka Linda Grammer 09 4322155 email: linda.grammer@gmail.com

Claire Bleakley submitted to the South Wairarapa Long Term District Plan in relation to GMO's. The reply was:- In considering your submission, in regards to GMO's, Council position is aligned to Central Governments in that it is open to all options with a cautionary approach.

Council acknowledges the potential risks of their use with regards to New Zealand and the region image and environmental damage, but that the opportunities and possible advantages must also be considered.

Council will reserve the right to make submissions via the HSNO Act for any proposal to introduce or use any GMO. South Wairarapa District Council has no intention to declare the district a GMO Free region at this time.



Pro GE Tours

A marketing lecturer from Otago University is promoting his research showing GE foods sold cheaply and with a promise of 'less sprays' would be a success (so its a shame GE has increased toxic sprays!).

He also claims to have proved that Nuclear power, GE grass and intensive feed-lot farming would not harm the New Zealand brand!

6 pm Wednesday 29th August, Wellington with Department of Marketing's Assoc. Prof John Knight *Should we swallow it? Exploding the myth about perceptions of genetic modification*

6pm Thursday 30th August, same in Auckland - see website for details <http://www.otago.ac.nz/genetics/news/2012lectureseries/index.htm>



"The Future of Food"

Videos are available in NZ Price \$25 per DVD more info contact GE Free. A fantastic documentary, the film is an effective tool in educating people at all levels of awareness about GE food.

GE Free 2011 Foodguide from www.truefood.org.au/truefoodguide

This Aussie GE Free Food guide is to help kids eat GE Free – and to help mums. Also good is to buy local organic produce and grow your own fruit and veg.

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