



GE Free New Zealand In Food and Environment Newsletter -May 2014

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

Keep NZ GE Free - world wants more GE Free food now

With an election soon, it is up to us to preserve a GE Free environment and good quality food production. **All political parties should be protecting our GE-free food exports and environment. This election year please ask party leaders and MPs to support a moratorium on any release of GE/GMOs in New Zealand.**

Steffan Browning, Green MP, is asking for a moratorium on GMOs in our environment and for all foods produced using GE to be labelled (Bumper sticker included & petition available) Steffan has negotiated with Food Ministers to get genetic engineering into the new Food Bill, but unfortunately Country of Origin labelling has been voted down. This puts us out of step with Australia and many other countries around the world, consumers there are able to make choices on agricultural production methods.

After last years Monsanto marches raised the profile of GE around the world, GE is a again significant issue. The biotech industry want the upper hand with ownership of patented GE seeds (76%) to be sprayed with increasingly toxic chemicals like Round-Up & 2-4,D.

Myths Revealed About Safety of Genetically Engineered Food
press.gefree.org.nz/press/20140403.htm
A debate with Kim Hill at Lincoln Uni, supported by Crown Research Institutes entitled "Should genetic engineering play a part in New Zealand's future" favoured the status quo to keep New Zealand GE Free for now.

Tony Conner, of GE potato fame, now working on forage for AgResearch; says he aims to field trial GE forage crops in the next couple of years. John Key, it is said, completely supports this.

Yet there are still no safeguards for farmers and councils. A recent article (see P6) shows a 1/3rd of U.S. organic farmers have experienced problems in their fields due to nearby use of GM crops, and over 1/2 of those growers have had loads of grain rejected due to unwitting GMO contamination.

For New Zealand's economy to survive, local longterm strategies must be implemented. The Environment Court case in the Bay of Plenty has confirmed that a precautionary approach by our local bodies is an acceptable way forward. See P3 Approaches by communities to their councils over the years have maintained that the HSNO Act is not sufficient to ensure protection to our food security and local environment.

Hawkes Bay growers want a GE Free zone, supported by Mayor Lawrence Yule (also Chair of Local Govt NZ). Amy Adams National Minister for the Environment, against any local initiatives, describes growers legitimate concerns as 'populist and ill informed demands.'

The GE issue needs your help over the election period to maintain a GE Free NZ both locally and nationally.

GE Free NZ AGM

Sun 29 June 2014 10am-3pm
The Arts Centre, Abel Smith St
Wellington.

More details: susie@tasman.net

Our economy is still reeling from the botulism fiasco, and recently both China and Russia have banned GE imports.

We need to ensure our clean green image is preserved. Changing New Zealand's policy of zero-tolerance is not an option unless our present government intends economic suicide.

This was made very clear by Jeffrey Smith, US speaker on GMOs and director of the Inst. for Responsible Technology; visiting NZ last December . He met with NZ Food safety (FSANZ) and discussed our need to avoid GE and an increasing use of Round-Up. See P2

2 short videos were also made See vimeo.com/87651353
vimeo.com/82810923

2015 - GE Free NZ will host international speakers for conference / workshops in 3 centres around NZ in February
www.foodconference.co.nz P5

The US Non GMO project has led to companies scrambling to audit their supplies ensuring they are GE Free to try and gain consumer trust in their products. There is a rising increase in gastric related diseases, allergies and other health problems are linked to GMOs, thousands of consumers now buying the labelled "non GM" project foods.

The backlash is causing draconian laws from governments, via agreements like the TPPA, intent on maintaining overseas sales of GE food. At the same time biotech companies are pushing for new US laws and terminator seeds. The US Grocery Council is threatening to sue Vermont for

enacting labelling laws for GE foods. Food Bill submissions pointed out that although GE food products are now included in the Bill, a total lack of sovereignty by New Zealand over its food safety is evident particularly in relation to GE.

The Regulatory Review Committee returned a verdict that due process had been followed regarding the approval and subsequent appeal on 2,4-D resistant corn and soy. Any further appeal will have to be made through the courts.

This means it is all the more important to focus on and retain GE labelling to ensure a choice. In our supermarkets sprayed, unlabelled, imported, GE foodstuffs are used in processed foods from the following crops:- corn, canola, sugarbeet, cotton and soy. These are in the form of oils, high fructose syrups, sugars, starches, soya lecithin, cotton linters, processing aids & additives.

Lack of Responsible Oversight Leaves Everyone at Risk

GE Free NZ PR 23.2.14

Parliament's Regulatory Review committee's report has dismissed the GE Free NZ complaint over FSANZ approval of a GE soybean resistant to 2,4-D leaving no further avenues for scrutiny of risk to public health.

This decision reveals a systemic gap in oversight that puts all consumers at risk, leaving no-one responsible for any potentially serious harm and denies NZ sovereignty over decisions surrounding GE foods.

The soybeans, engineered to tolerate the chemical 2,4-D, were approved by our Food Safety Minister despite a total absence of scientific studies to show if the beans are safe to eat. Furthermore, the USDA has declined any plantings of this GE soybean due to a lack of safety evidence.

Australia has banned 2,4-D in agriculture due to high dioxin levels. Agent Orange, made of 45% 2,4-D, has had long lasting deleterious effects on health.

"Food safety is the responsibility of FSANZ in Australia, and the MPI" said Claire Bleakley, of GE-Free NZ. "This is a dereliction of duty of care to protect public health. Safety studies are vital to assure consumers it is safe to eat."

Jeffrey Smith on FSANZ meeting and GE crops and approvals.

Q - FSANZ do not evaluate chemicals in GE food- only novel DNA. Can you explain why there could be dangers in this method?

A study came showed that in samples tested there were extremely high levels of glyphosate in the Argentinian soy - nearly 5 times the approved levels. One of the incredibly weak arguments that I faced in my meeting with FSANZ was that we should not be worried about the toxicity of RoundUp residue in RoundUp Ready (RR) GE crops because it may be the same as the residues in a non-GM crop. Saying that we don't need to be worrying about toxicity; because other things might also be toxic; demonstrates a level of care that is at the very least wanting.

RoundUp is being used as a ripening agent sprayed a few days to 2 weeks before harvest and the glyphosate can accumulate in the food portion because that is the only live portion remaining. It is possible that non-GM crops might have higher levels of herbicide than GE crops. What's a shame, more ... actually tragic is that there hasn't been any proper monitoring of the food composition in all cases - if it's a poison and its affecting people's health - it matters!

Glyphosate is linked to endocrine disruption, birth defects, Parkinson's, cancer and more recently from a biochemical standpoint leaky gut, diabetes, aggression, depression obesity, Alzheimer's MS and anorexia. You cannot simply say because of the judicious use of Round Up on certain products there is no need to worry about the amount definitely going to be used on GMO's.

The GE RR cropping technology is a system that is designed to be sprayed with RoundUp of which 80% remains in the crop much of it in the food portion. Therefore to isolate the evaluation process to just the inserted gene is entirely unscientific and does not support of public health.

If you look at the products as a whole, the massive collateral damage that happens to the DNA; the application of herbicides; the interaction between the gene product and the other gene products and the other unknown

different aspects - then there is no justification for the approval system. You still have to stretch the science in order to approve a GMO application. It's only with narrow assumptions that they can get away with the confidence they claim.

Q - There are now GMOs being engineered to tolerate 2,4-D, and Mesotrione do these impose the same dangers?

RoundUp has been described by Anthony Samsel and Stephanie Seneff as likely to be the most chronically toxic chemical in the world because of its overuse and its long term chronic toxicity.

I don't have a list of the dangers of the other pesticides as they are new on the market, I have concentrated on glufosinate (BUSTA) and Round Up (Glyphosate). Herbicide tolerant crops have resulted in much higher spray use, and it is obvious it will occur in other cases. Where instead of judiciously applying toxic herbicides in specific areas, GE crops allow spraying of the entire field so the quantity goes up dramatically.

The bigger picture is that the industrial agriculture model has established pesticide use largely in a manner to serve their interests, forcing use of their inputs, and the purchasing of their products year after year. Experiences in non-pesticide management; a million acres in India of non-pesticide and organic cotton demonstrates that there is equivalent to higher yield and stronger crops.

A clean green country like New Zealand should certainly have organic and non-GM available. Today it's the non-GM conventional foods that are increasing in sales around the world. China has captured a huge market in US organics and New Zealand has opportunities to protect its citizens, environment and increase its economy by looking beyond the Ag industries' artificial framework of conventional vs. GMO.

Jeffrey Smith is director of the Institute for Responsible Technology

GMO decision 'sets precedent'

www.radionz.co.nz/news/rural/235780/gmo-decision-%27sets-precedent%27

An Environment Court decision has set a precedent which will give local bodies the right to set policies on genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in their regions.

Crown Research Institute Scion, conducting field trials on GE pine trees near Rotorua, took the Bay of Plenty Regional Council to court seeking to prevent the regional council from advising caution over the use of GMOs. The Environment Court has allowed the council to keep the reference in its policy statement and the appeal period has now lapsed.

The ruling will help other local bodies and communities also seeking to limit the use of GMOs.

".. this ruling has mandated that councils have a right, on land use issues, with GMOs as a significant issue of concern and to put policies and rules around them if the community sees fit," Claire Bleakley from GE Free NZ says. "Scion, and the Government, have tried to say that no way could councils put policy in place as it is a central government issue. The Environment Court decision has shown that it is also a community decision."

Giving councils the right to place policies and rules around GMO land use activities, councils can now be proactive in identifying emerging issues that require a precautionary approach to protect people, local environment, economic well being, and public health.

"It is critical that farmers and other ratepayers around NZ are able to have a say on land-use issues in their region" said Zelka Grammer from GE Free Northland.

Our sincere thanks go to Soil & Health, which has advocated for a GE-Free New Zealand on behalf of its members and supporters for many years. They took the lead role among five section 274 (interested) parties to the court case as well as funding most of the case. **Thanks too, go to all those involved for their hard work.**

News on GE Free regions – 'a defining election issue.'

Taking action on a local level protects existing non GM primary producers working to farm sustainably and producing the finest quality, safe and clean GM free food for discerning customers, both domestic and international, preserving our economic advantages. **For an action pack to help get your council to go GE Free Contact us info@gefree.co.nz**

Submissions close on draft Auckland Annual Plan

Auckland Council is a full member of Inter Council Working Party (ICWP) on GMOs and has excellent GE provisions in the proposed Unitary Plan. Now they must ensure there is adequate funding for its obligations to the collaborative work programme.

Auckland Council will need to undertake a section 32 review on the GMO issue and action the proposed Plan change to ban all GMO releases. If EPA approved outdoor GE field trials are made a discretionary activity there is an additional tier of local council precaution. This proposed collaborative Plan change will align with Whangarei District Council & Far North District Council's plan changes.

Ruakura GMO experimental station due to be housing estate?

The Ruakura Plan Change hearing has refused to hear the GE Free NZ submission which appears to have 'gone missing'. The EPA is considering a Tainui application for a re zoning plan change on and around the AgResearch GE cattle compound. A 100m strip where the carcass pits are situated and GE cattle buried is on the plans as a designated part of a residential lifestyle and industrial estate. ERMA placed end of trial conditions on the experiments mandating that the GE sites should be remediated and that no heritable material should remain. Yet there has been no notification to the EPA for closure of the area. No tests have been done to see if prions or other pathogens are still in situ.

GE Free New Zealand has concerns that the process is overlooking public health and that fast tracking of this approval will lead to inherent dangers to families living there from pathogens in the soil resulting from the effluent and GE carcasses. The first remit of good science is to do the testing and the track record of AgResearch is not good in this respect. We urge extreme caution by those conducting the assessment process.

PUBLIC APPEAL FOR FUNDS BY GE FREE NORTHLAND 9 April 2014

GE Free Northland has put out a Public Appeal for Funds to help pay costs of upcoming Environment Court mediation (& court costs) to protect the new Northland Regional Policy Statements precautionary GE provisions for the next 10 years.

Background: Northland Regional Council (NRC) has, as a result of numerous submissions from ratepayers, local Councils & mana whenua reinstated the precautionary GE policy and identified the GE issue as an Issue of Significance for Northland tangata whenua and an issue of concern for Northland communities in the Northland new Regional Policy Statement.

Federated Farmers of NZ has lodged an appeal with the Environment Court, opposing both the precautionary GE provisions and GE being listed as an Issue of Significance for Northland tangata whenua.

With your help we can protect and strengthen the precautionary GE provisions. Any financial support/ donations to help cover the costs of Environment Court mediation and possible court action would be greatly appreciated.

Our bank account details are as follows: GE Free (Northland) Inc account - ANZ Kerikeri 01 0382 0009202 00 Cheques can be made out to GE Free Northland and posted to: Secretary, GE Free Northland PO Box 1439 Whangarei 0140 **Thank you for your support.** Many thanks from the committee of GE Free Northland, for more info: web.gefreenorthland.org.nz or email: linda.grammer@gmail.com tel. 09 432 2155

Farming in New Zealand – The Year of the Small Farmer

Food production is essential to our economy, over 56% from primary production. Our food production systems are at risk. Water, fracking, land farming climate change, biosecurity, GE and agrochemicals all affect the production of nutritious food.

Headlines show government must support small farmers and insist on good agricultural practice.

Councils must engage with the community and enable more farmers to share their farms with keen younger people, who want to practice sustainable farming and produce healthy produce.

“Small is really beautiful” by Vandana Shiva.

commondreams.org/view/2014/01/03-7

“According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation, in spite of all subsidies going to large farms, and all policies promoting industrial agriculture, even today 72 % of food comes from small farms. If we add kitchen gardens and urban gardens, the majority of food people eat is grown on a small scale.

One project involving 1,000 farmers in Kenya, cultivating 2 ha each, crop yields rose by 2-4 tonnes per ha after an initial conversion to organic farming. In another project, incomes of some 30,000 smallholders in Thika, Kenya, rose by 50% in 3 years.

The International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science, Technology for Development has confirmed that **small ecological farms are a more effective solution to world hunger than GE or the Green Revolution.**

Who Knew Vegetable Gardens Could Be So Revolutionary?

Americans now tend 35 million acres of lawn (approximately 54,000 square miles). Lawns are the biggest “crop” in the U.S. **If only 10% of Americans turned their lawns into food-producing gardens, it could supply one third of the country’s fresh produce, based on current consumption rates.**

www.treehugger.com/lawn-garden/who-knew-vegetable-gardens-could-be-so-revolutionary.html

Chinese official lambastes GMOs, calls for immediate studies

www.examiner.com/article/chinese-official-lambastes-gmos-calls-for-immediate-studies May 11, 2014

Lieutenant General Mi Zhen-yu, former vice president of the Chinese Academy of Military Science, exhorts his government to “face up to reality” about the harm from GM food. His article, “We must face the harm caused by imported GM soybeans to 1.3 billion Chinese people,” which was published by the Science & Technology Abstracts Newspaper on April 25, 2014.

Prior to 1994, China was an exporter of soybeans. In 2012, 80% of China's soybeans were imported. Most of the imports are GM Roundup Ready soybeans. Seven out of 11 samples of soybeans from Argentina showed glyphosate residues exceeding 20 mg/kg, with the highest reaching 97.36 mg/kg. Using the value of 20 mg/kg, Mr. Mi estimates that the Chinese ingest an average of 2.74 mg/per person/day. Mr. Mi points to an alarming increase in the prevalence and incidence of disease in China over the last 20 years. He gives specific numbers for the increases in birth defects, severe depression, precocious puberty in girls, autism, childhood cancers, male sperm quality and infertility, Parkinson's disease, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and chronic kidney disease. He states unequivocally that it is the responsibility of his government to insure the safety of the food supply. Concerned departments should seriously carry out epidemiological investigations, face up to reality, control the risks, carry out the prevention priority principle, and adopt effective measures to ensure the bottom line of life and health safety of the people.”

Courts Disaster With GE Fodder Crops While Existing Solutions Ignored by AgResearch (GE Free NZ Press Release)

AgResearch want to field test GE fodder crops. “This is short sighted and poses a threat to farmers and exporters. It is alarming that AgResearch spends 25% of its funding on costly GE research instead of supporting alternatives.

Media in China are covering the spreading of drilling and hydraulic fracturing waste on farms in Taranaki. Radio NZ - 19 Dec 2013 An Xinhua agency report says Taranaki is home to both a thriving oil and dairy industry, and cites it as “...the source of future concerns for food exporters”.

Taranaki waste topic noted in China. 150,000 litres of milk in 14 tankers was contaminated with suspected mining waste at its Eltham Plant in Taranaki.

Taranaki Regional Council allows fracking waste to be spread on farms, deemed unsuitable for agricultural land in other parts of the world.

TRC cracking down hard on landfarms 12.2.14 The Taranaki Regional Council has told a drill waste ‘landfarm’ operator to clean up its act after its continued failure to follow the rules. Incidents included cows found grazing on drilling waste not fully treated and waste liquid leaking out of full storage pits.

A new report in Endocrinology journal shows a dozen chemicals used in fracking are suspected of being endocrine disrupting chemicals, or EDCs; linked to heightened risks of cancer, low fertility rates and decreased sperm quality.

Should NZ stay GE Free?

“There is no question that New Zealand enjoys a unique clean green healthy reputation around the world. When I mention that New Zealand is conducting GM field Trials to people in the US or elsewhere they are absolutely shocked. The whole image of New Zealand becomes challenged and the concept of the government, environment and life is questioned.

I would say you have an excellent opportunity to take advantage of an organic and non-GMO status in ways that are better than most other countries.

You have a lot more to lose than other countries so it's a no brainer!
Jeffrey Smith 21/12 /2013

UN Warns World Must Produce 60% More Food By 2050 To Avoid Mass Unrest

rt.com/news/world-food-security-2050-846/

Political turmoil, social unrest, civil war and terrorism could all be on the table unless the world boosts its food production by 60% come mid-century, the UN's main hunger fighting agency has warned.

A third of the world's food is never eaten. 28.2.14 NZ Herald

www.nzherald.co.nz/lifestyle/news/article.cfm?c_id=6&objectid=11211383

One 1/3rd of the food the world produces is never consumed, meaning that prices are being artificially inflated and resources wasted. A damning report from the World Bank chastises wealthy nations (UK & US) for throwing away far too much food and laments the woeful food handling and storage facilities in the developing world.

Emerging markets happy to pay more 23.2.14

www.stuff.co.nz/business/farming/agribusiness/9747293/Emerging-food-markets-happy-to-pay-more

Lincoln University research shows that environmental quality, animal welfare and recycling issues are more important for Chinese and Indian consumers of Kiwi food than the Brits. Research will examine if consumers in emerging markets will pay more for food they trust.

Incidents of low levels of GMOs

PR- United Nations 15.3.14

As a result of the increased production of GM crops worldwide, the United Nations food agency survey warns an increasing number of incidents of low levels of (GMOs) are being reported in traded food and feed.

"The incidents have led to trade disruptions between countries with shipments of grain, cereal and other crops being blocked by importing countries and destroyed or returned to the country of origin," says FAO. With no international agreement defining or quantifying "low levels", interpretation varies from country to country. FAO surveyed 75 States on low levels of GM crops in intl food and animal feed trade. 198 incidents 2002-12, accelerated after 2009.

Food Matters Aotearoa

Our farms, our food, our future conference - Ōku whenua, āku kai, ōku mō ake tonu atu

A new group, Food Matters Aotearoa, a coalition of NGOs concerned about food production, issues have invited guest speakers from Aotearoa and overseas to a series of events in February 2015. Speakers include **Dr Vandana Shiva**, who campaigns on seed issues, **Professor Gilles-Eric Séralini**, researcher on the effects of GE food and Roundup and **Professor Don Huber**, emeritus professor of plant pathology at Purdue University, USA .

'Our farms, our food, our future: Ōku whenua, āku kai, ōku mō ake tonu atu' is aimed at a wide range of people; from consumers, farmers, retailers and restaurateurs, to scientists, health professionals and policy makers interested in health and the production of nutritious, safe and GE Free food.

Safe food and how it is produced is a core value for all New Zealanders. Decisions made now regarding new technologies, chemical, indigenous, biological, GE Free or organic methods for future food production affect our economy, health and the environment our children will inherit.

The events will include workshops and talks and aim to discuss the issues and identify sustainable agro-ecological outcomes, including policy outlines and strategies for nutritious food production. Food Matters Aotearoa are hoping to hold events in Christchurch, Wellington, Hawkes Bay and Auckland making information accessible to more New Zealanders.

We will soon be updating our website www.foodconference.co.nz

Can mums sue over GM genes in their children's bodies? 14.2.14

Australian MADGE PR We should accept that all food, including organic, is contaminated with GM genes, says the defence in the Steve Marsh case. "It is outrageous that ordinary food is being contaminated by GM and we are supposed to just swallow it.

Vermont instigate GE Free labelling.

articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2014/05/06/vermont-gmo-labeling-bill.aspx

Vermont legislature passed the first no strings attached law to require labeling of GE foods. The House voted 114-30 to accept the Senate version of the bill, which would go into effect July 1, 2016

China destroys illegal trials of GM corn and cotton crops in 2013

Source: www.ecns.cn

The Hainan provincial agricultural department examined 107 crop samples, and destroyed nine corn and cotton GM crop trials. The department stressed that GM crop trials without prior permission are banned and those who conduct them will be punished. China is currently getting tougher on GM crops.

Russia will not import GMO products 6.4.14

rt.com/news/russia-import-gmo-products-621/

Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said Russia has no reason to import GMOs or encourage their production. "If the Americans like to eat GMO products, let them eat it then. We don't need to do that; we have enough space and opportunities to produce organic food". Widespread monitoring of the agricultural sector will go ahead since despite strict restrictions, a certain amount of GMO products and seeds have made it to the Russian market.

Steve Marsh case

adf.farmonline.com.au/news/nationalrural/general/opinion/activists-hijacked-gm-case/2690134.aspx

Marsh v Baxter court case has attracted worldwide coverage. Neighbouring W. Australia farmers, they have been in dispute since Baxter planted a crop of GM canola in 2010 failing to contain GM plant material to his property, and Marsh's organically certified farm was decertified. The ramifications of the case are enormous. If Baxter was negligent by planting and harvesting the GM crop on his property, this could have a significant impact upon the entire cropping community and farmers that share boundaries with certified organic properties.

US corn exports to China drop 85 percent after ban on GMO strains
rt.com/usa/china-gmo-corn-ban-120/
China's rejection of shipments since Nov of US corn containing traces of unapproved GM maize has cost US traders \$427 m in lost sales. 1.45 m tons of corn were barred due to a Syngenta MIR162 GM strain.

The French are preparing to restore a GMO maize ban

www.nationofchange.org/france-tell-gmos-au-revoir-restoring-gmo-ban-1392819957

Just as farmers prepare for spring planting. A Senator of the currently ruling socialist party is calling for a ban to counteract an anticipated swell of activist upset over GMOs.

US Grocery Manufacturers Assoc. (GMA) want GMOs labelled "natural."

The GMA intl trade organization representing over 300 businesses, intends to petition the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to allow foods containing GMOs to be labeled as "natural." 3.1.14

www.foodsafetynews.com/2014/01/grocery-manufacturers-want-foods-with-gmos-to-be-labeled-as-natural/?newsletter=1&utm_source=Salithru&utm_medium=email&utm_term=.RF%20eNews&utm_campaign=02.17.14%20RF#.UwWIPc45rzB

Meanwhile U.S. food companies are rushing to offer consumers products free of GM ingredients, but the effort is costly in a landscape dominated by the controversial biotech crops. The hurdles are so high that the growing "GMO-free" trend could result in a price spike for consumers, industry experts say.

www.reuters.com/article/2014/02/18/us-usa-food-gmo-analysis-idUSBREA1HIG420140218?feedType=RSS&feedName=businessNews

California's farmers have a drought to worry about but there's a larger threat: Wall Street.

400m acres of farmland could change hands from the families that have held it for generations to institutional investors over the next 20 years. Enthusiasm for agriculture "borders on speculative mania."

www.salon.com/2014/02/18/report_wall_street_is_taking_over_american_farms

U.S. Farmers Report Widespread GM Crop Contamination/ 1/3 US organic farmers 3.3.14

www.ipsnews.net/2014/03/farmers-address-u-s-data-gap-gm-crop-contamination/

A third of U.S. organic farmers have experienced problems in their fields due to the nearby use of GM crops, and over half of those growers have had loads of grain rejected because of unwitting GMO contamination. Over 80% reported being concerned over the impact of GM crops on their farms, with some 60% saying they're "very concerned".

The United States' two largest grocery chains have indicated that they would not sell GM salmon,

a product currently being weighed up by regulators. 9,000 stores countrywide have reportedly made similar pledges. At least 35 other species of GE fish are currently under development says Friends of the Earth. A 2013 poll showed 93% of U.S. respondents want GE ingredients or products to be labelled, despite strident pushback by industry.

Supermarket rejection of GM salmon is part of a growing trend of food co.s distancing themselves from GMO foods.

Chipotle is removing and labeling GMOs and Whole Foods will require GMO foods in its stores to be labeled by 2018. Cereal giant General Mills recently removed GMO ingredients from Cheerios and Post quickly followed suit, removing GMOs from Grape Nuts. and Gerber have said they have no plans to buy the GMO apple that is pending approval by USDA.

www.theecologist.org/News/news_roundup/2311453/largest_us_grocery_stores_say_no_to_gmo_salmon.html

Former USDA Official Katherine Merrigan Warns Farmers Against GE Contamination. 20.2.14

www.gefree.org.nz
Katherine Merrigan warns farmers to get involved with government policies affecting their industry, and fight the growing threat of GE contamination to protect their interests, way of life and democracy. It is increasingly difficult to preserve and segregate GE and non-GE seeds, coexistence is unachievable due to pollen drift, co-mingling and contamination.

A study, published in the journal *BioMed Research International*, also found that Monsanto's Roundup herbicide, whose key active ingredient is glyphosate, is by far the most toxic of herbicides and insecticides tested. It's also one of the most widely used in the world, liberally sprayed on lawns, gardens, grain fed to animals and your food.

New GMO Studies Demonstrate 'Substantial Non Equivalence'

19/02/14 Studies document substantial differences of GM maize and GM soybean from their conventional non-GM counterparts, exposing a permissive regulatory regime that has failed miserably in protecting public health and biodiversity Dr Eva Sirinathsinghji

In April 2013, Monsanto's 810 Corn modified to express the insecticidal Bt Cry1Ab gene, was found to have increased total protein, crude fat, crude fibre & total saccharides and decreased starch content compared with non-GM Ajeeb corn. Abnormal levels of certain amino acids, fatty acids and elements were recorded. These compositional differences gave a hint of the toxicity of the GM corn.

Hawaii's Big Island Leads the Way in Banning GMOs 10.2.14

www.i-sis.org.uk/Hawaii_Big_Island_Banning_GMOs.php

Agri-tech giants are already gearing up for a fight against GMO bans. Dr Eva Sirinathsinghji

The mayor of Hawaii County Billy Kenoi has signed Bill 113 into law, banning agri-tech companies and farmers from testing or growing GM crops; except for widely grown GM papayas. Hawaii is a testing ground for agri-tech corporations including Monsanto, Dow AgriSciences, Syngenta and Pioneer. "Our community has a deep connection and respect for our land, and we all understand we must protect our island and preserve our precious natural resources. We are determined to do what is right for the land." " Kenoi wrote.

Over half the people voting in a Australian farming poll think GE crops should be banned altogether. 20/2/14

30 percent of breast milk samples showed detectable levels of glyphosate.

www.naturalnews.com/044901_glyphosate_breast_milk_GMOs.html

The pilot study, conducted by Moms Across America and *Sustainable Pulse*, tested for glyphosate levels in American mothers' breast milk. What they found was startling by European standards -- **concentrations of glyphosate in breast milk at 760 to 1600 times higher than pesticide limits set by European Drinking Water Directives.**

In the small pilot study, 35 urine samples and 21 drinking water samples from across the US were measured. Results were compared with an EU study conducted by Friends of the Earth in 2013.

The urine samples of Americans were at least ten times more contaminated with glyphosate than Europeans. When samples of breast milk were analyzed, 30% showed detectable levels of glyphosate, theoretically passed on to newborns.

Glyphosate/Roundup and Human Male Infertility 19/03/14

www.issis.org.uk/Glyphosate_Roundup_and_Human_Male_Infertility.php

Steep decline in human male sperm count concomitant with a rise in testicular germcell cancer, congenital malformations of male reproductive tracts and drop in serum testosterone levels, all pointing to increasing exposure to glyphosate/Roundup herbicides during the past decades, now corroborated by lab findings. Dr Mae-Wan Ho "The infertility time bomb:- are men facing extinction?"

APVMA: Australia Bans Toxic Herbicide 2,4-D Products 24.8.13

sustainablepulse.com/2013/08/24/apvma-australia-bans-toxic-herbicide-24-d-products/

It has cancelled the registration of 11 high volatile ester products (HVE) products and 2 active constituent; the use of these products after 31 August 2014 will be illegal.

Sri Lanka, El Salvador, Holland and Denmark have all banned Round-Up and France and Brazil are looking hopeful.

Noxious chemicals in our food!

Round Up, 2-4 D, dicamba, choline. Maximum residues? How much? Are they tested? As more GE crops resistant to chemicals are approved we need answers from our NZ government. They are charged with maintaining a safe food supply for us and our kids.

As GE crops from industrial farming and the commodity food supply reach our supermarkets the chemical residues on food are increasing exponentially. Yet no testing is done to investigate whether the levels are within the accepted limits. For some GE crops recently approved (those with 2,4-D and dicamba) no accepted levels have yet been established. And then there is the combination of these chemical mixtures and the very toxic surfactants used in the mix that are not taken into account at all.

Even glyphosate(Round-Up) levels are way above any permitted levels as farmers increase the recommended amounts by up to 24 times to try and kill resistant weeds. It is estimated that just one resistant weed every 10 sq. m can reduce the yields from productive plants by 50. Present production methods have huge implications for our health and the health of our animals and the environment and some countries are banning these chemicals.

EPA to Consider Comments on Registration of Enlist Duo Herbicide 1.5.14

farmfutures.com/story-epa-consider-comments-registration-enlist-duo-herbicide-0-111931

US Environmental Protection Agency say stakeholders have until May 30 to comment on its proposed registration of Dow Agrosiences' herbicide Enlist Duo, a mixture of 2,4-D choline and glyphosate. Intended for use in the Enlist cropping system, it requires EPA review due to the inclusion of choline form of 2,4-D. Pending regulatory approvals, Dow AgroSciences expects to launch Enlist corn and Enlist soybeans in 2015, with Enlist E3 soybeans and Enlist cotton to follow. Comments before May 30th www.regulations.gov.

76% of the seed market is now patented by corporations 8.5.14
www.nationofchange.org/over-76-seed-market-now-patented-corporations-1399558246?mc_cid=00be3887cf&mc_eid=0b498a493c

Just six companies in the world have patented most of the seeds grown in the entire global agricultural market. Decisions made in high courts in the 1980s have favored Monsanto, Dupont, Syngenta, Bayer & Dow and given away our food heritage, built around thousands of years of agricultural knowledge. The amounts and varieties of seeds are diminishing. Most scientists warn that food diversity, just like biodiversity, is critical to future food stores. However seed saving may just halt this corporate greed and degradation of our food -1.4 billion people still depend on farmer-saved seeds.

What is the number one trait that biotech seed has given the world? Herbicide resistance. One farm official in Arkansas has put it this way, "**herbicide resistant weeds are the single largest threat to the production of agriculture we have ever seen.**"

Climate Change Is Turning Your Produce Into Junk Food -Tom Philpott 14.5.14

www.motherjones.com/tom-philpott/2014/05/climate-change-will-eat-your-lunch?mc_cid=85a3c40227&mc_eid=0b498a493c

The report's agriculture section notes that "several weed species benefit more than crops from higher temperatures and CO₂ levels," meaning that climate change will likely intensify weed pressure on farmers. And then it adds a bombshell: glyphosate, the widely used herbicide marketed by Monsanto as Roundup, "loses its efficacy on weeds grown at CO₂ levels projected to occur in the coming decades." And that means "higher concentrations of the chemical and more frequent sprayings thus will be needed, increasing economic and environmental costs associated with chemical use."

The non GMO project in the US has been really successful. Companies go GE Free as consumers choose GE Free food thefreethoughtproject.com/400-companies-gmos-products/

Our GM free policy website lists some companies who have a policy of sourcing non GM ingredients. See www.gmfreepolicy.com/

Please help us to get a full list of GE Free foods. We hope to be able to put all of the companies on our site so you can choose too.

By ringing the 0800 No.s on your favourite food items and asking them if all their ingredients are GE Free, you can help us to find other food manufacturers to go on the list and tell your friends about the website so that they can shop for food free from GMOs too.

Email info@gefrees.co.nz and let us know your findings. We need your support to get a list of companies who are committed to being GE Free

STOP PRESS

Russian Lawmakers Want to Impose Criminal Liability for GMO-related activities 15.5.14 sustainablepulse.com/2014/05/15/russian-lawmakers-want-impose-criminal-liability-gmo-related-activities/#.U3U2NXY5rzA

Russian lawmakers want to equate GMO-related activities that may harm human health or even cause death to terrorist acts. The bill's initiators say liability for GMO-inflicted harm should be expanded to state and local self-government officials.

On line petition :- Brazil - Terminator technology about to be voted on. Monsanto, Bayer, and others want to sell 'suicide seeds' GE seeds that can be used once, forcing small farmers into buying seeds from Monsanto forever. **Help stop this proposal.**

action.sumofus.org/a/brazil-terminator-seeds/4/2/?akid=3489.1556810.cfEOYa&rd=1&sub=fwd&t=2

Seeds of time educative resources seedsoftimemovie.com/loss-of-diversity.php

The war on Drugs brought in more Drugs. And the war on Terrorists created more Terrorists.

Maybe next year we can have a war on Farmers Markets!



Campbell Live report on GE in NZ 26.2.14 This Campbell Live report on GE brought fruit and vegetable grower John Bostock into full focus along with vineyards in the region who are wanting Hawkes Bay to declare itself GE Free as a marketing advantage. Lawrence Yule, mayor also validated growers reasoning, Amy Adams supports changes to the RMA to make GE regulation a government decision preventing councils from deciding their own future and allowing potential GE contamination in the future.

This is not likely to go down well with councils many of whom are working to implement precautionary policy after years of community consultation. The Royal Commission into GM in 2001 recommended that councils be able to put in place rulings to help prevent contamination of vital primary industries after submissions highlighted community and growers concerns.

Also appearing was Rob Forlong CEO of the EPA (ex ERMA) who blamed GE breaches (3) on activists despite the majority of all GE breaches having been a direct result of the cavalier attitude and proven negligence of Crown Research Institutes' scientific staff.

GE Free Northland are still waiting for an answer to an OIA put in (Oct 2013) asking for details of a breach of containment of a GE fungus *Beauveria bassiana* from containment at Lincoln.

The budget today 15.5.14 gave an extra \$57m to innovative, read controversial, research receiving \$1.6 billion by 2016 as well as tax breaks for companies working in innovation and intellectual property.

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When you have finished with your newsletter, spread the word and pass it on ...

KEEP NEW ZEALAND GE FREE

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