



Monthly Bulletin  
on *Genetic Engineering*  
September 2011

*For details:*

**Southern Action on Genetic Engineering (SAGE)**

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#### **Tamil Nadu government not to promote Bt cotton**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/states/tamil-nadu/article2351661.ece>

#### ***Monsanto and the Mortal Danger to Traditional Agriculture***

[http://www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article\\_23822.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_23822.cfm)

#### ***Thousands of trees felled in attack against Hawaii's genetically engineered papaya groves***

<http://www.startribune.com/nation/128123403.html>

#### **Use of GM seeds**

<http://www.pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx?relid=75271>

#### **No to Bt cotton**

<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/article2352571.ece>

#### **Bt varieties not to be promoted**

<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/article2342001.ece>

**SAGE CHRONICLE**

**SAGE – ODISHA**

**DULAL, took up wall writings in 4 villages Bisoi, Bangriposi, Saraskana and Kuliana**

Health workers’ sensitization programmes were held at Saraskan, Bangriposi and Kuliana towns in which ANMs, Staff Nurses and Doctors participated.

A media meet was organized at Rairangpur on August 27 to debate issues related to GM Food and Agriculture.



**SAGE – TAMILNAD**

On 18<sup>th</sup> August, 2011, **Create** organized a workshop for school children and teachers on safe food. Around 63 participants, including students and teachers of Government Girls Higher Secondary School, Thiruthuraiipoondi, participated. The students and teachers were briefed on topics like poison-free food, the implication of chemical pesticides and fertilizers to human health and the impacts of GE technology and the laws proposed by the State to promote GE technology and the need to confront the issues. All the participants signed in the banner demanding the ban of endosulfan and other deadly pesticides and GE research.

Workshops were organized in two schools on safe food: on 18<sup>th</sup> August at Somaya Corporation High School, Kolathur, Chennai in which 150 students participated; and on 23<sup>rd</sup> August, at Elathur Adi-Dravidar High School in which more than 300 students participated.

**Vanagam** organized a two-day training programme for 25 participants at Surumanpatti on 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> August. The objective of the programme was to prepare the trainees for carrying

on the message of GE threats to farmers, consumers and all other target audience of SAGE. This training was organized at Vanagam farm in which around 25 participants were participated.

**SAGE – ANDHRA PRADESH**

SAGE – PASTAPUR has taken up non Bt. Cotton study under the guidance of Dr. Qayum in 5 villages with 16 farmers in about 20 acres. The researchers are monitoring on a daily basis. Video documentation is being done by Community Media Trust women.

PEACE NGO works in Nalgonda district of Andhra Pradesh took up wall writings in 10 villages of Bhongir division.



**SAGE – SAMVADA, MYSORE**

**BACKGROUND AND GOAL**

GMOs (Genetically Modified Organisms) is a widely debated issue today in India and the world over. The claims made by its proponents that it will increase food production, provide nutritional food etc have been proved to be wrong. On the contrary tests on GMO foods are proving to be detrimental to human and animal health and damaging to agricultural land and besides narrows down our choice of safe food.

Mysore is a Heritage City with a past of royal grandeur, land mark buildings and gardens, parks and tree-lined avenues.

Now we are working to get Mysore declared as a GMO free city which will add to the city's Heritage value. The city's Heritage has bequeathed us some unique vegetables, fruits and flowers. Mysore Betel leaves, Mysore Jasmine flowers, Erangere Brinjal and Avara kai are part of the cities lore with their unique taste and flavour. We may lose all these if we allow GM technology to contaminate these crops. Should we not take the moral responsibility to pass these on to our future generations in their pristine form?

With this background, SAGE (Southern Action on Genetic Engineering) with it's associates is attempting to get Mysore city declared as a GMO free City.

The first step in achieving this goal is to enlighten our Mayor, Corporators and civic Authorities about the dangers of GMOs and protect the citizens of the city from a dangerous food content.

We have some good examples before us to emulate in this regard. Only recently, Peruvian capital Lima has declared itself GMO-free. Many cities, towns and communities around the world have woken up to the problem banning GM foods and even banning field trials and laboratory testing.

Once the resolution is passed by the city corporation declaring our city as GMO-free, we can take up the task of providing informing and educating our food and agricultural department officers, departmental stores (compulsory labeling if they sell food item with GMO content), farming community and consumers.

We request consumer groups, legal and medical professionals, IT professionals, Industrialists, political parties of all hues, student's organization, academicians and every proud mysoreans to join hands with us and see that our city is declared "GMO Free".

*Let us all proudly say:*  
**Heritage Mysore - GMO free Mysore.**

**ಕುಲಾಂತರಿ ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನಕ್ಕೆ ದಕ್ಷಿಣದ ಪ್ರತಿಕ್ರಿಯೆ**  
**SOUTHERN ACTION ON GENETIC ENGINEERING**

**ಮೈಸೂರು**  
**ಪಾರಂಪರಿಕ ನಗರ; ಕುಲಾಂತರಿ ಮುಕ್ತ ನಗರ**  
**Mysore**  
**Heritage City ; GMO Free city**



**ಒಂದು ಸಮಾಲೋಚನಾ ಸಭೆ**

ದಿನಾಂಕ : 27-08-2011 ಶನಿವಾರ  
ಸಂಜೆ - 5:00 ಬೀ, 5:30 ಸಮಾವೇಶ  
ಸ್ಥಳ : ಎಸ್. ಪಿ. ಭಟ್ ಸಭಾಂಗಣ,  
ಇನ್ಸ್ಟಿಟ್ಯೂಟ್ ಆಫ್ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರ್ಸ್  
ರವಾಸ್ತಿ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮೀಭಾಯಿ ರಸ್ತೆ, ಮೈಸೂರು

Date : 27-08-2011  
Evening : 5:00 Tea, 5:30 Event starts  
Place : S. P. Bhatt Auditorium  
Institute of Engineers  
J.L.B. Road, Mysore

: ಸಹಯೋಗ :  
ಬೇವಾಮೃತ, ನೇಸರ, ನಿರ್ವರ್ಗ, ಅರಿವು, ಭೂಮಿಪಾಯಿಯ ಬಳಗ, ಮೈಗ್ರಾಪ.

**“ಪಾರಂಪರಿಕ ಮೈಸೂರು - ಕುಲಾಂತರಿ ಮುಕ್ತ ಮೈಸೂರು”**  
**ಒಂದು ಸಮಾಲೋಚನಾ ಸಭೆ**

: ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷತೆ / Presiding :  
ಶ್ರೀಮತಿ ಪುಷ್ಪಲತಾ ಐ. ಐ. ಚಿಕ್ಕಣ್ಣ  
ಸೂಪ್ತ ಮಹಾಪೌರರು, ಮೈಸೂರು ಮಹಾನಗರ ಪಾಲಿಕೆ  
Mrs. Pushpalatha T.B. Chikkanna  
Worshipful Mayor, Mysore City Corporation

: ಮುಖ್ಯ ಅತಿಥಿ / Chief Guest :  
ಶ್ರೀ ಸತೀಶ್ ಎ. ಎಸ್.  
ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷರು, ಇನ್ಸ್ಟಿಟ್ಯೂಟ್ ಆಫ್ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರ್ಸ್, ಮೈಸೂರು  
Sri. Satish A. S.  
Chairman, Institute of Engineers, Mysore

ವಿಷಯವನ್ನು ಕುರಿತು ಮಾತನಾಡುವವರು / Main Spekers  
ಶ್ರೀ ಪಿ. ವಿ. ಸತೀಶ್  
ರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ಸಂಘಟಕರು, ಸೀಬ್, ಹೈದರಾಬಾದ್  
Sri. P. V. Satheesh  
National Convener, SAGE, Hyderabad

ಡಾ. ಎಸ್. ಜಿ. ಒಂಬತ್ತರೆ  
ಜನಪರ ಚಿಂತಕರು ಮತ್ತು ಹೋರಾಟಗಾರರು  
Dr. S. G. Vombakere  
Social Activist & Thinker

ಪ್ರೊ. ಕೆ. ಸಿ. ಬಸವರಾಜು  
ಪ್ರಾಧ್ಯಾಪಕರು, ಆರ್ಥಿಕಶಾಸ್ತ್ರ ವಿಭಾಗ  
ಮಾನವನಿರೀಕ್ಷಣೆ, ಮೈಸೂರು  
Prof. K. C. Basavaraju  
Professor of Economics

**ಎಲ್ಲರಿಗೂ ಪ್ರೀತಿಯ ಸ್ವಾಗತ**

**ಹಿನ್ನೆಲೆ ಮತ್ತು ಗುರಿ**

ಕುಲಾಂತರಿ ಬೆಳೆ ಮತ್ತು ಆಹಾರಗಳು ಇಂದು ವಿಶ್ವದಾದ್ಯಂತ ಚರ್ಚಿತವಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಕುಲಾಂತರಿ ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನವು ಇಳುವರಿ ಮತ್ತು ಆಹಾರ ಪೌಷ್ಟಿಕಾಂಶವನ್ನು ವೃದ್ಧಿಗೊಳಿಸುತ್ತದೆ ಎಂದು ಅದರ ಪರ ಪ್ರಚಾರಗೈಯಲಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಆದರೆ ಇವೆಲ್ಲವೂ ಸುಳ್ಳೆಂದು ಸಾಬೀತಾಗಿದೆ. ಬದಲಾಗಿ, ಕುಲಾಂತರಿ ಆಹಾರವು ಮನುಷ್ಯನಿಗೆ, ಪ್ರಾಣಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಕೃಷಿಧೂಮಿಕೆ ಹಾನಿಕಾರಕವಲ್ಲ. ಅಲ್ಲದೆ ಸಮೃದ್ಧ ಆಹಾರಗಳ ಆಯ್ಕೆಯನ್ನೇ ಮಿತಿಗೊಳಿಸುತ್ತದೆ.

ಸಮೃದ್ಧ ಮೈಸೂರು ನಗರವು ತನ್ನ ರಾಜ್ಯಭವನ, ಕಟ್ಟಡಗಳು, ಉದ್ಯಾನಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಸುಂದರ ಸಾಲುಮರಗಳ ದೃಶ್ಯಗಳಿಂದಾಗಿ “ಪಾರಂಪರಿಕ ನಗರ”ವೆಂದು ಘೋಷಿತವಾಗಿದೆ.

ಈಗ, ಈ ಪಾರಂಪರಿಕ ನಗರವನ್ನು “ಕುಲಾಂತರಿ ಮುಕ್ತವೆಂದು ಘೋಷಿಸಿ ಪರಂಪರೆಯನ್ನು ಉಳಿಸಿ ಬೆಳೆಸುವ ಉದ್ದೇಶ ಬಂದಿದೆ. ಮೈಸೂರಿನ ಪರಂಪರೆಯ ಧಾರವಾಗಿ ಈ ನೆಲೆಗೆ ಮಿಶ್ರವಾದ ತರಕಾರಿಗಳು, ಹಣ್ಣುಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಹೂವುಗಳು ಸಮಗ್ರ ಬಳಕೆಯಾಗಬೇಕೆಂದು ಬಂದಿದೆ. ಮೈಸೂರಿನ ವಿಕ್ಕಿಲೆರೆ, ಈರಣಗರೆ ಬದನೆ, ಅವರಣಿಯು, ಬೀಳೆ, ಮೈಸೂರು ಮಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಮುಂತಾದವು ತಮ್ಮ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟ ರುಚಿ ಮತ್ತು ಸುವಾಸನೆಯಿಂದಾಗಿ ದಂತಕಥೆಗಳೇ ಆಗಬೇಕೆಂದೆ. ಕುಲಾಂತರಿ ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನವು ಇಲ್ಲಿನ ಕೃಷಿ ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನ ಪ್ರವೇಶಿಸಿದರೆ ಇವೆಲ್ಲವೂ ಕಲುಷಿತವಾಗಿ ತನ್ನ ವೈಶಿಷ್ಟ್ಯತೆಯನ್ನೇ ಕಳೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತದೆ. ತಲೆಮಾರುಗಳಿಂದ ಸಮಗ್ರ ಬಂದಿರುವ ಈ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟ ಪದಾರ್ಥಗಳನ್ನು ಸಮೃದ್ಧ ಮಂದಿರ ತಲೆಮಾರುಗಳಿಗೆ ಅದೇ ಕುಡುಕಿನಲ್ಲಿ ನೀಡುವುದು ಸಮೃದ್ಧ ನೈಸರ್ಗಿಕ ಹಣ್ಣುಬೀಜಗಳಿಂದಲೇ.

ಈ ಹಿನ್ನೆಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸೀಬ್ (ಕುಲಾಂತರಿ ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನಕ್ಕೆ ದಕ್ಷಿಣದ ಪ್ರತಿಕ್ರಿಯೆ) ತನ್ನ ಸಹಯೋಗಿಗಳೊಂದಿಗೆ ಮೈಸೂರು ನಗರವನ್ನು “ಕುಲಾಂತರಿ ಮುಕ್ತವೆಂದು ಘೋಷಿಸುವ ನಿಟ್ಟಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಹೆಜ್ಜೆ ಇಟ್ಟಿದೆ.

ಈ ದಿಶೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕುಲಾಂತರಿ ಮುಕ್ತ ಪ್ರದೇಶಗಳೆಂದು ಯಶಸ್ವಿಯಾಗಿ ಘೋಷಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿರುವ ಪೆರುವಿನ ರಾಜಧಾನಿ ‘ಲಿಮಾ’, ಹಾಲೆಂಡಿನ ನೀಮೆನ್ (NIMEN), ನಮಗೆ ಮಾದರಿಯಾಗಬಲ್ಲವು. ಆಸ್ತೀರಿಯಾದ ನ್ಯೂಸೈಡ್‌ವೇಲ್ಸ್ ಎಲ್ಲ ಒಳಗೆ ಕುಲಾಂತರಿಗೆ ನಿಷೇಧ ಹೇರಿದೆ. ಯೂರೋಪ್, ಅಕ್ರಿಕ, ದಕ್ಷಿಣ ಅಮೆರಿಕದ ಅನೇಕ ಸಮುದಾಯಗಳು ಕುಲಾಂತರಿ ಪ್ರಯೋಗಗಳನ್ನು ನಿಷೇಧಿಸಿದೆ.

ಮೈಸೂರು ಮಹಾನಗರ ಪಾಲಿಕೆಯು ಸಮೃದ್ಧ ನಗರವನ್ನು “ಕುಲಾಂತರಿ ಮುಕ್ತವೆಂದು ಘೋಷಿಸಿದರೆ, ನಂತರ ಪಾಲಿಕೆಯ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು, ಕೃಷಿ-ಆಹಾರ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು, ಹೋಟೆಲಿಗಳು, ಮಾರಾಟಗಳು, ಎಲ್ಲರನ್ನೂ ಧಾರಿದಾರರನ್ನಾಗಿಸಿ ಅವರಿಗೆ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಒದಗಿಸಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯ ಸದ್ಭರವೇ. ಗ್ರಾಹಕರ ರಕ್ಷಣೆಗೂ ಸಾಧ್ಯ ಬದ್ಧರಾಗಿರುತ್ತೇವೆ.



## Mysore heritage city – GMO Free City: A Report

A couple of months ago Mr. Satheesh had suggested that a campaign be launched to see that the heritage city of Mysore be also declared as “GMO Free city”.

His suggestion was taken up earnestly by SAGE – SAMVADA, A beginning was made by getting an article published in the Sunday supplement of two district-level Kannada Dailies, Viz. ANDOLANA and PRAJANUDI. The article was titled in one daily as ‘Dream of GMO Free Mysore’ and in the other as “Come, Let us make Heritage Mysore also GMO Free”. The article published on Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> Aug, 2011, explained GE technology, its dangers, the market forces behind it and the false claims made by its proponents. The article went on to urge the readers to be a part of “Mysore GMO Free Campaign”.

### Press Meet:

Five days later a press meet was held on 26<sup>th</sup> Aug. 2011 at Press club, Mysore.

Mr. Ramachandra introduced SAGE, Satheesh and Prof. V. N. Laxminarayan to the journalists. Prof. V. N. Laxminarayan is a distinguished citizen of Mysore; a retired Professor of English, he is involved in the film society movement, and has been a member of the film awards jury. At the meet, he said that there were three interest groups in traditional agriculture. They are farmers, sellers of agricultural producers and consumers. “But a fourth one entered the market in the form of seed, chemicals and implement selling agents during and after Green Revolution” he said. He also said that G. M. food crops was introduced in India with the sole purpose of helping corporate to earn profits and to capture our agriculture without caring for our food security or the people’s health.

Mr. Satheesh said that a city such as Mysore, with centuries-old history should be proud to retain its heritage value, not only by keeping its monuments intact, but also by preserving its traditional fragrance, flavor and food culture.

### Public Meeting:

27<sup>th</sup> Aug. 2011, Institution of Engineers, Mysore:

The evening witnessed a gathering of people from all walks of life at the venue. It consisted by farmers, engineers, medical and legal professionals and the consumer community of the city.

**Addressing the gathering, Mr. Satheesh** said that the heritage value of any city has two aspects to it: one, the grand and historical structures; the other, and the more important, is the culture which is manifested in the food they eat, the fragrances they enjoy etc. It forms the soul of any city or place which looks for a heritage tag. Mysore, he said, has many of them, be it the betel leaf or jasmine flower or the Brinjal, Avarekai or the Banana.

It is to preserve the uniqueness of these and other Mysore specials, that the city should be made a “GMO Free city” he said. If GMOs are allowed here through agriculture and food imports, they will contaminate our food culture, apart from causing health hazards to the citizens.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof. K. C Basvaraju, Professor in Economics, chronicled the history of various international trade agreements where Indian interests are given a go-by. GMOs in agriculture is one such deal which is being off-loaded on India by the American multinationals for their private gain, which if not stopped, may sound the death knell of the Indian farming community, he said.

Dr. Sudir Vombatkere, a progressive thinker and activist, was the President of “Mysore Grahakara Parishat”. He explained the science and technology of GMOs and debunked the many claims made by the GMO propagators.

The highlight of the evening was the submission of a memorandum to the Mayor of the city. True to the royal tradition of Mysore, the memorandum was printed on a silk scroll.

More significantly, two distinguished citizens of Mysore handed over the scroll to the Mayor: one, a nonagenarian, Dr. H. A. B. Parpia, a scientist of repute and former Director of **Central Food Technological Research Institute** (CFTRI); and the other, Mr. Babu Satyanarayana, a retired. Chief Engineer, CPWD who served abroad as a UNDP expert. A great lover of Mysore, Mr. Satyanarayana, now in his eighties, writes about the conditions of roads and monuments of the city to ensure that they are well maintained. The memorandum was read out by Ms. Shneha Omkar to the audience.

The Mayor, in her presidential address, greatly appreciated the idea of a **GMO Free Mysore** and promised that she would do her best to push for the cause. There was an audience interaction towards the end. Many enthusiastically participated and liked the idea of a **GMO Free Mysore**.

**ಕುಲಾಂತರಿಮುಕ್ತ ಮೈಸೂರು: ಮೇಯರ್**  
23/8/11

ಮೈಸೂರು ಪಾಲಿಕಾರ್ಡ್ ಪ್ರೀತಿಯ ಕುಲಾಂತರಿಮುಕ್ತ ಮೈಸೂರು ಮುಖ್ಯ ಮಂತ್ರಿಗಳಿಂದ ಪ್ರತಿಷ್ಠಾಪಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಮೈಸೂರು ಪಾಲಿಕಾರ್ಡ್ ಮುಖ್ಯ ಮಂತ್ರಿಗಳಿಂದ ಪ್ರತಿಷ್ಠಾಪಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಮೈಸೂರು ಪಾಲಿಕಾರ್ಡ್ ಮುಖ್ಯ ಮಂತ್ರಿಗಳಿಂದ ಪ್ರತಿಷ್ಠಾಪಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

**Plea to declare Mysore free from GM foods**

THREE NEWS NETWORK

Mysore: The Southern Action Genetic Engineering (SAGE), which is against genetically modified (GM) foods has announced a movement to press the city administrators to declare Mysore as GM-free.

**Heritage City is now GMO-free too!**

DECCAN HERALD

In an announcement that will induce a lot of confidence among the activists who are working to create awareness against Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO), Mayor Puhpalatha Chikanna declared cultural city Mysore as GMO-free.

## National News

### Panel against faster clearance to GM crops via new regulator

By [Soumik Dey](#) Aug 09 2011, New Delhi

PARLIAMENTARY standing committee on agriculture does not favour the Biotechnology Regulatory Authority of India, envisaged under the Biotechnology Regulatory Bill, to provide single-window clearance for GM crops, the chairman of the committee Basudeb Acharya of CPM told Financial Chronicle on Monday.

“GM crops would have to be dealt with carefully.

Both the parliamentary committee and Genetical engineering approval committee (GEAC) are of the view that any government department which is promoter of biotechnology cannot be geared to provide single window clearance, or else its regulatory functions would stand compromised,” said Acharya.

He said the committee will finalise its recommendations on the Bill by the end of this month and table its report in the ongoing session of Parliament.

The Biotechnology Regulatory Bill provides for single window clearance to GM crops by establishing the Biotechnology Regulatory Authority of India (BRAI) under the department of biotechnology of the Science and technology ministry to act as the regulator and approver of GM technology.

The committee, Acharya said, is likely to recommend that the ministry of agriculture should have a say in the approval of GM crops and sale of seeds.

<http://www.mydigitalfc.com/agriculture/panel-against-faster-clearance-gm-crops-new-regulator-057>

### Declare Mysore a GMO-Free City'

#### Special Correspondent

The Southern Action on Genetic Engineering (SAGE) has urged the authorities to declare Mysore a 'GMO-Free City' (Genetically Modified Organism-Free City) in keeping with its heritage character and to safeguard the agricultural biodiversity of the region.

A memorandum addressed to the Mysore City Corporation (MCC) was released at a programme here on Saturday.

P.V. Satheesh of Deccan Development Society, Hyderabad, and convener of SAGE said that it was imperative not to allow the agricultural and farming biodiversity of the region to be destroyed. He cited the examples of France and Italy where there was resistance to the introduction of genetically modified crops in vineyards while California in the U.S. was in the forefront of the anti-nuclear energy agitation.

Mr. Satheesh pointed out that Mysore was known for unique agricultural produce that had been accorded Geographical Indication (GI) status such as Mysore betel leaves, Nanjangud Rasabale and Erangere Badanekai. Memorandum

Citizens submitted a memorandum to Mayor Pushpalatha Chikkanna urging her to take steps to make Mysore free of GM crops and food. The memorandum pointed out that Mysore was not only a cultural and heritage city but the region was renowned for agricultural diversity as well.

“Mysore Mallige is not only a true representative of the city; it also symbolises the culture of the region. Likewise, vaangi bath cooked from Yerengere Badanekayi is intrinsic to the culinary culture of the region. Hence, it is imperative to protect the purity of the species,” the memorandum said.

The citizens also said that the Government's policy of promoting GM crops posed a major threat to agricultural diversity. It was imperative to fight it at the local level and emulate the steps taken in other advanced countries.

#### Dangers of GM foods

The Mayor was apprised of the dangers of GM foods and was urged to declare Mysore a 'GM-Free City' in the next meeting of the corporation council. It also called for banning the sale of GM foods and products within MCC limits. It also called for a ban on transactions related to GM seeds.

- *'Mysore is known for unique agricultural produce that have been accorded GI status'*
- *'Government's policy of promoting GM crops poses a major threat to agricultural diversity'*

<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/article2405066.ece>

The signatories to the memorandum included various progressive organisations and individuals such as K.N. Ramachandra of SAGE, Mysore; Sudhir Vombatkere of National Alliance of People's Movement; Ugranarasimhe Gowda of Jeevamrutha; Guruprasad of Nesara; and Ramakrishna Bhatta of Bhoomitaayi Balaga.

Environmentalists U.N. Ravikumar, social activist Bapu Satyanarayana, former Director of Central Food Technological Research Institute H.A.B. Parpia, and Srimathi Hariprasad of Mysore Grahakara Parishat were present.

## Global

### GM protest in Warsaw

**16.08.2011 12:10**

A demonstration calling for President Komorowski not to sign off on a new law allowing GM seeds to be used in Poland took place in Warsaw over the weekend.

On 31 July 2011 the Senate, the upper house of parliament, voted to pass into law the 'Seeds Act', which legalises the planting of GM seeds in Poland.

The vote went through parliament after MPs and senators from the ruling coalition of Civic Platform (PO) and Polish Peasant Party (PSL) supported the bill.

Participants of the five-hour demonstration on Saturday in Warsaw, however, called for more public debate on the controversial law.

"If we do not protest now then when will we? When our children and grandchildren ask us in ten or twenty years: mom, dad, where were you when GMO food was introduced in Poland?"

Klaudia Wojciechowicz from the "GMO Is Not It" initiative told the rally

"Do you really want to answer that you were on vacation?" she added.

Supporters for genetically modified crops argue that studies have shown that there is no risk to traditional crops from GM. They also point to greater yield from GM crops,

A study by the Plant Breeding and Acclimatization Institute in Poland concluded that "important benefits" could be derived by the Polish farming community from using GM seeds. (di/pg)

<http://www.thenews.pl/1/12/Artykul/53445,GM-protest-in-Warsaw>

### 270,000 Organic Farmers Sue Monsanto

by Danielle Magnuson

**More than 270,000 organic farmers are taking on corporate agriculture giant Monsanto in a lawsuit filed March 30.**

Led by the [Organic Seed Growers and Trade Association](#), the family farmers are fighting for the right to keep a portion of the world food supply organic—and preemptively protecting themselves from accusations of stealing genetically modified seeds that drift on to their pristine crop fields.

Consumers are powerful. For more than a decade, a cultural shift has seen shoppers renounce the faster-fatter-bigger-cheaper mindset of factory farms, exposed in the 2008 documentary *Food, Inc.* From heirloom tomatoes to [heritage chickens](#), we want our food [slow](#), sustainable, and local—healthy for the earth, healthy for animals, and healthy for our bodies.

But with patented seeds infiltrating the environment so fully, organic itself is at risk. Monsanto's widely used Genuity® Roundup Ready® canola seed has already turned heirloom canola oil into an extinct species. The suing farmers are seeking to prevent similar contamination of organic corn, soybeans, and a host of other crops. What's more, they're seeking to prevent Monsanto from accusing them of unlawfully using the very seeds they're trying to avoid.

seeking to prevent Monsanto from accusing them of unlawfully using the very seeds they're trying to avoid.

“It seems quite perverse that an organic farmer contaminated by transgenic seed could be accused of patent infringement,” says [Public Patent Foundation](#) director Dan Ravicher in a Cornucopia Institute [article about the farmers' lawsuit](#) (May 30, 2011), “but Monsanto has made such accusations before and is notorious for having sued hundreds of farmers for patent infringement.” Even as the megacorporation [enjoys soaring stock](#), the U.S. justice department continues to look into allegations of its fraudulent antitrust practices (The Street, June 29, 2011):

*Monsanto, which has acquired more than 20 of the nation's biggest seed producers and sellers over the last decade, has long pursued a strict policy with its customers, obligating them to buy its bioengineered seeds every year rather than use them in multiple planting seasons. Farmers who disobey are blacklisted forever.*

It's a wide net Monsanto has cast over the agricultural landscape. As Ravicher points out, “it's actually in Monsanto's financial interest to eliminate organic seed so that they can have a total monopoly over our food supply.”

Imagine a world devoid of naturally vigorous traditional crops and controlled by a single business with a appetite for intellectual property. Did anyone else feel a cold wind pass through them? Now imagine a world where thousands of [family farmers fight the good fight](#) to continue giving consumers a choice in their food—and win.

Via [Organic v. Monsanto – Environment – Utne Reader](#).

Thanks to Charles Council for this story.  
*August 13, 2011 Update from OSGATA*

### **Farmers Defend Right to Protect Themselves From Monsanto Patents**

*Organizations File Amici to Defend Plaintiffs' Right to Trial and Respond to Monsanto's Attempt to Dismiss Case*

New York – August 11, 2011 – The 83 family farmers, small and family owned seed businesses, and agricultural organizations challenging Monsanto's patents on genetically modified seed filed papers in federal court today defending their right to seek legal protection from the threat of being sued by Monsanto for patent infringement should they ever become contaminated by Monsanto's genetically modified seed. [The Public Patent Foundation](#) (PUBPAT) represents

the plaintiffs in the suit, titled [Organic Seed Growers & Trade Association](#) (OSGATA), et al. v. Monsanto and pending in the Southern District of New York. Today's filings respond to a motion filed by Monsanto in mid-July to have the case dismissed. In support of the plaintiffs' right to bring the case, 12 agricultural organizations also filed a friend-of-the-court *amici* brief.

"Rather than give a straight forward answer on whether they would sue our clients for patent infringement if they are ever contaminated by Monsanto's transgenic seed, Monsanto has instead chosen to try to deny our clients the right to receive legal protection from the courts," said Dan Ravicher, PUBPAT's Executive Director. "Today's filings include [sworn statements](#) by several of the plaintiffs themselves explaining to the court how the risk of contamination by transgenic seed is real and why they cannot trust Monsanto to not use an occurrence of contamination as a basis to accuse them of patent infringement."

contamination by transgenic seed is real and why they cannot trust Monsanto to not use an occurrence of contamination as a basis to accuse them of patent infringement."

It is now virtually impossible for a U.S. farmer to grow crops of their choosing (corn, soybeans, canola, etc.) and remain GMO-free because of the numerous biological and human means by which seeds can spread. "Given the difficulties in minimizing GM contamination farmers must make numerous decisions about which steps are worthwhile for them and which steps are not.

They are not able to make these decisions based on their own and their customers' interests, but must instead make these decisions with the threat of litigation from a giant corporation looming over their head," Spiegel writes in the *amici* brief. "The constant threat of a patent infringement suit by Monsanto creates significant, unquantifiable costs for Plaintiff farmers and similarly situated farmers." The plaintiffs can do everything possible to maintain non-

contaminated seeds, and will very likely still become contaminated, and be placed under the threat of a lawsuit. As Monsanto's domination of the seed industry grows, and the winds continue to disperse pollen from their GMO laced crops, the likelihood of contamination and lawsuits only increases.

Monsanto has stated that they would not sue farmers who were "inadvertently" contaminated or farmers whose crops contain "trace amounts" of GMO, however they have refused to sign a simple covenant not to sue, that would bring an effective end to the lawsuit.

Monsanto's track record makes it clear that Monsanto intends to continue threatening and harassing farmers. "**Monsanto has undertaken one of the most aggressive patent assertion campaigns in history,**" wrote Ravicher. **Monsanto admits to filing 128 lawsuits against farmers from 1997-2010, settling out of court with 700 others for an undisclosed amount.** As Spiegel writes, "The passage of time and natural biological processes will inevitably lead to higher contamination levels, at which point Monsanto will have created a target-rich environment for its patent enforcement activities."

Plaintiffs Bryce Stephens, who farms in Kansas and serves as vice president of OSGATA, Frederick Kirschenmann, who farms in North Dakota, C.R. Lawn, who is founder and co-owner of Fedco Seeds in Maine, Don Patterson of Virginia and Chuck Noble, who farms in South Dakota, each submitted declarations to the court describing their personal experiences with the risk of contamination by genetically modified seed and why those experiences have forced them to bring the current suit. As summarized by the accompanying brief filed by PUBPAT on the plaintiffs' behalf, "Monsanto's acts of widespread patent assertion and the plaintiffs' ever growing risk of contamination create a real, immediate and substantial dispute between them."

In their brief, the *amici* describe some of the harmful effects of genetically modified seed and how easily GMOs can contaminate an organic

or conventional farmer's land. The organizations filing the *amici* brief were Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance, Biodynamic Farming and Gardening Association, Carolina Farm Stewardship Association, Ecological Farmers of Ontario, Fair Food Matters, International Organic Inspectors Association, Michigan Land Trustees, Natural Environment Ecological Management, Nebraska Sustainable Agriculture Association, Organic Council of Ontario, Slow Food USA, and Virginia Independent Consumers and Farmers Association.

*The brief filed by the plaintiffs in opposition to Monsanto's motion to dismiss is [available here](#). The amici brief in support of the plaintiffs is [available here](#).*

**Update via [ORGANIC SEED GROWERS AND TRADE ORGANIZATION](#)**

<http://www.growswitch.com/blog/2011/07/270000-organic-farmers-sue-monsanto/#.TIMt3cpqBuo.gmail>

## **GE Food**

### **US Sought “Talking Points” to Combat Impact of French Documentary on Monsanto**

By: Kevin Gosztola Thursday August 25, 2011 10:40 am

French book *The World According to Monsanto* There are multiple indications in the large cache of US State Embassy cables WikiLeaks has been releasing (extended summary here) that the US State Department is willing to do just about anything to ensure the multinational agricultural biotech corporation, Monsanto, has its interests protected in countries around the world.

Cables show the State Department has been very active in defending Monsanto in France during the past decade. In one particular case, a French documentary, “*The World According to Monsanto*,” was released. A diplomat with the US embassy in Madrid immediately felt the need for “talking points” so it knew what to say in response to the content in the film.

The diplomatic cable summary sent on February 4, 2008 reads:

On March 11, French public TV channel ARTE broadcasted a film entitled “*The World According to Monsanto*,” by freelance journalist Marie-Monique Robin. A book by the same name was

released soon thereafter. Given the wide publicity generated by this film (for sale on line on ARTE's website at <http://www.arte.tv/monsanto>, which, to date, has received over 100,000 “hits”), it has generated much attention particularly by biotech stakeholders. The film and book not only demonize Monsanto, but also characterize U.S. Government actions as lacking ethical and scientific integrity. Allegations include questioning of the concept of substantial equivalence; the assertion that political rather than scientific decisions have been made to authorize biotech products in the United States; and, that a “revolving door” between Monsanto and the U.S. Government has influenced the U.S. biotech regulatory system. The book and film are to be translated into English and other languages. Country team requests that Washington agencies provide talking points for use with a range of interlocutors on an “if asked” basis. [emphasis added].

The “Country Team” is particularly disturbed by all the names dropped in the film of people who may have been working on behalf of Monsanto while in government, like John Ashcroft, Tommy Thompson, Ann Veneman, Donald Rumsfeld and Clarence Thomas. The “Team” expresses interest in responding to the film but is aware that if they respond to the film with criticism they will only draw attention to the documentary. Still, they think “there is a role for public diplomacy, mainly focusing on the rigor of the US regulatory system

and the positive role ag biotech can play in meeting world food needs, particularly in the developing world.”

The idea that Monsanto’s biotech, particularly its genetically-modified seeds would be needed to “feed the developing world” is propaganda from Monsanto’s public relations department.

As is the case with a number of the cables, there may not be hard news in them, but they definitely

reveal how US diplomats around the globe are used to advance corporate interests, not just for the good of the US economy but for the benefit of executives — including former or current US government officials — in individual corporations.

<http://dissenter.firedoglake.com/2011/08/25/us-sought-talking-points-to-combat-impact-of-french-documentary-on-monsanto/>

## GE Agriculture

### **RESPONSE: Why a deregulated approach to GM crops is ‘deeply flawed’**

**Paul Johnston 23rd August, 2011**

Greenpeace’s chief scientist Dr Paul Johnston on why recent proposals to expand GM technology support a flawed agricultural system and serve the biotech companies with the greatest vested interests.

In a recent Ecologist interview, the scientist leading the controversial trials of genetically modified (GM) potatoes in the UK, Professor Jonathan Jones, outlined his vision for the future of GM crops, proposing economic and policy changes that appear to be based on some sweeping assumptions and his own perceptions of the supposed benefits of these crops. In my view, Prof. Jones’ vision is deeply flawed in relation to its potential scientific, ecological and public policy impacts.

Professor Jones states that in the future, he expects about 90 per cent of several important staple crops, including maize and soy, to be genetically modified, and recommends that public sector funding should be used to help biotech companies further develop these, and other GM crop varieties. In addition, he suggests that the costs of regulation to the GM industry be reduced to zero, and that the products themselves be labeled to promote their (supposed) benefits.

Professor Jones’ ambitions for the future of GM would undoubtedly prove highly lucrative for Mendel Biotechnology - which he co-founded and is a science advisory board member - which carries out contract research for the biotechnology giants Monsanto and Bayer. More troubling are the implications of Prof. Jones’ suggestions for the conduct of robust science and the use of scientific information in informing policy and the effective regulation of GM crops.

### **Checks and balances**

Complaints about burdensome regulation are predictable when they come from a biotech industry that sees its primary responsibilities as generating profit for its shareholders. Nonetheless, the importance of scientific tests informing and underpinning the checks and balances aimed at protecting both the public and the natural environment must not be underestimated. As a matter of principle, testing should be conducted by publicly accountable agencies, rather than the biotech industry itself. Moreover, the costs involved in ensuring protection of the environment should rest squarely on the companies that seek to profit from GM technology.

Like many people, I believe that the checks and balances for the development of GM crops need to be strengthened rather than weakened. Many of the companies involved in biotech have their roots in the chemical industry.

History has taught us that the self-regulation by the chemical sector has rarely been effective. If one thing has become clear it is that a regulatory framework needs to be prescriptive and enshrined in law rather than being simply voluntary. Accordingly, one good way forward would be to place the precautionary principle solidly at the centre of policy development and the overall regulatory process. Professor Jones himself unintentionally highlights the need to approach GM regulation in this way by describing the emergence of herbicide tolerant weeds.

policy development and the overall regulatory process. Professor Jones himself unintentionally highlights the need to approach GM regulation in this way by describing the emergence of herbicide tolerant weeds.

The potential for development of widespread herbicide tolerance was always a risk of using herbicide resistant GM crops, but the valid concerns were largely dismissed by an enthusiastic biotech industry. As it turns out, GM crops have actually spread their genes to non-GM crops and to closely related weed species. Intense usage of herbicides on the GM crops has also helped to drive the evolution of resistant 'superweeds' which are notoriously difficult to control.

Such events do not bode well for the human and environmental safety of GM crops modified to produce pharmacologically active agents or industrial feedstock chemicals. These crops could be commercially grown in the future.

### **Pie in the sky**

Indeed, extolling the future benefits of GM products while ignoring, dismissing or minimising the potential risks can be seen as a simultaneous embrace of both 'pie in the sky' and 'head in the sand' thinking. Prof. Jones' approach is the complete antithesis of a precautionary approach to environmental regulation and to sustainability. A deregulated approach is one, however, that the biotech companies seem keen to take. Far from solving some of the perceived problems of chem-

ical based intensive agriculture and food quality, deregulation actually locks the world more tightly into the current flawed agricultural paradigm and does so in a way that just happens to serve the companies with the greatest vested interests.

The notion that the already inadequate checks and balances should be further weakened by smoothing the pathway to approval of GM crops should be seen for what it is: somewhat cynical and entirely self serving. Indeed, the concept of using public money to defray the industry's costs as proposed by Prof. Jones is also really rather dangerous. A return to the old fashioned business ethics of the chemical companies would effectively externalise the costs of regulation (and inevitable regulatory failure) onto the consumer, and thence, onto the environment as a whole.

The idea, floated by Prof. Jones, that we should be willing to move towards a situation where all our food is assumed to be 'GM maybe' is entirely wrong-headed and not a little arrogant. Anyone seeking to avoid GM foods would have to rely entirely on products grown using organic methods with no guarantee that even these would be wholly GM free. At the same time the biotech industry wants to be allowed to advertise its synthetic products with labels that declare them to be 'environmentally friendly'.

So, welcome one and all to a strange 'Alice in Wonderland' world, where we will pay more for natural goods produced in a sustainable manner, where unnatural products and industrial agriculture are touted as good for the planet and where the public purse and weakened regulations underpin corporate profit. I have to wonder what Professor Jones could have been eating?

*Dr. Paul Johnston is Greenpeace International's principal scientist based at Greenpeace Research Laboratories in the University of Exeter*

[http://www.theecologist.org/blogs\\_and\\_comments/commentators/other\\_comments/1026452/response\\_why\\_a\\_deregulated\\_approach\\_to\\_gm\\_crops\\_is\\_deeply\\_flawed.html](http://www.theecologist.org/blogs_and_comments/commentators/other_comments/1026452/response_why_a_deregulated_approach_to_gm_crops_is_deeply_flawed.html)

## Monsanto GM Corn in Peril: Beetle Develops Bt-resistance

By Rady Ananda / August 26th, 2011

Nature herself may be the best opponent of genetically modified crops and pesticides. Not only plants, but insects are also developing resistance. The Western rootworm beetle – one of the most serious threats to corn – has developed resistance to Monsanto's Bt-corn, and entire crops are being lost.



Farmers from several Midwest states began reporting root damage to corn that was specifically engineered with a toxin to kill the rootworm. Iowa State University entomologist Aaron Gassmann recently confirmed that the beetle, *Diabrotica virgifera virgifera*, has developed resistance to the Bt protein, Cry3Bb1.

*Bacillus thuringiensis* – Bt – is a bacterium that kills insects. Different proteins are engineered into cotton as well as corn plants.

Two-thirds of all US corn is genetically modified

per the USDA, and the bulk of that is Bt-corn. Monsanto has the biggest market share in the US, reporting about 35% in 2009.

In response to the July 2011 study, Monsanto said only the “YieldGard® VT Triple and Genuity® VT Triple PRO™ corn products” are affected.

“It appears he has demonstrated a difference in survival in the lab, but it is too early to tell whether there are implications for growers in the field.”

However, Kansas State researchers summarized the study, indicating that the specimens tested came from fields suffering severe rootworm damage and compared them to those from unaffected fields. In other words, it was a field study.

Resistance developed where the same Bt corn had been grown at least three years in a row. Gassmann found “a significant positive correlation between the number of years Cry3Bb1 maize had been grown in a field and the survival of rootworm populations on Cry3Bb1 maize in bioassays.”

Ag Professional's Colleen Scherer explains that “the Cry3Bb1 toxin is the major one deployed against rootworms. There is no ‘putting the genie back in the bottle,’ and resistance in these areas is a problem that won't go away.”

Monsanto urges farmers to try their “stacked” GM products where more than one trait is engineered and to employ integrated pest management (IPM) techniques.

<http://dissidentvoice.org/2011/08/monsanto-gm-corn-in-peril-beetle-develops-bt-resistance/>

This monthly bulletin is brought out by Southern Action on Genetic Engineering (SAGE), a coalition of civil society activists, farmers, scientists, academicians, and consumer groups of four Southern States of India, viz., Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Orissa. SAGE has been waging a concerted battle against genetic engineering through a series of activities that involve public protests, media actions, seminars, consultations and publication of a series of educational materials.