Monthly Bulletin on Genetic Engineering

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Contents

National News

1. TN Farm [anti-farmer] Bill Shelved!
2. Non-Bt Cotton Acreage up in Gujarat!
3. Bt Menace Still On!
4. Biotech is Not Just GM!
5. India chases organic market
6. Another Vidarbha in the Making!
7. Nestle, Are You Fair Towards Indians?

GE issues Around the World

8. Nailing the GM Lie!
9. Biotech is Not a Player!
10. GMOs: Pervasive and High-risk!
11. Are the Farmers Really Savvy?
12. Seed Laws stifle Crop Diversity

News in a Nutshell

a) Farmers Sue Bayer:
b) Horror of the Frankentrees:
c) Pepsi Sticks with GE Foods:
d) Activists Warn GM Firms:
e) Japan's GM Stance 'may impact Australia':
f) Canadian Flaxseed in Trouble:
g) Monsanto Eyes More Crops!

National News

1. TN Farm [anti-farmer] Bill Shelved!

Chennai, Sept 10: The Tamil Nadu Government today announced that 'The Tamil Nadu State Agricultural Council Bill', which was passed in the State Assembly recently, would be put on hold in the interests of farmers and preserving traditional farming.

The Bill seeks to regulate agricultural practice and to establish an agricultural council. It also seeks to prepare and certify farm plans, involving private and public sector undertakings. Nearly three months after the bill was passed, some political parties opposed it and threatened to stage demonstrations as it affected the interests of the farmers.

Though the bill was passed in the house unanimously, it received widespread protests from various associations of farmers and political parties, especially the Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK). They alleged that it would adversely affect traditional farming activities in the state.

"As soon as he heard the news, Mr P V Satheesh, Convenor SAGE, wrote the following mail to different groups fighting against genetic engineering"

Dear friends

As all of you are aware we were all deeply concerned about the Dark Bill from Tamil Nadu called Tamil Nadu State Agricultural Council Bill – 2009

Now the good news is that The Bill has been withdrawn by the government of Tamil Nadu. Though they say it is temporarily withdrawn, we know that the bill will not reappear in Tamil Nadu after the tremendous pressure put in by the civil society groups, media and political parties.

The South Against Genetic Engineering and their partners in Tamil Nadu that included VANAGAM, LEISA Network - Tamil Nadu, Women's Collective, Tamil Nadu Farmers Forum, Tamil Nadu Environmental Council, FEDCOT Tamilnadu & CREATE Tamilnaduhad gathered on August 7, 2009 at Chennai and discussed the strategies to fight this oppressive Bill. The same day in a media conference which was widely reported in the press and TV the first collective opposition to the Bill and the reasons for it were made public. The other decisions made by the meeting were:

Action points from the Strategy Session on Tamil Nadu Agricultural Council Bill held at Women's Collective office in Chennai on August 7, 2009.

1. A handbook explaining the Bill and its implications for the farming and farmers of Tamil Nadu will be compiled with inputs from all the members of the group. These inputs must reach Dr Nammalwar and Mr Sundararajan before 11th August Dr Nammalwar has promised to complete the booklet by 15th August. Immediately thereafter Mr Oswald Quintal will take up the responsibility for printing it. About 500 copies printed on a high quality paper will be meant for legislators, bureaucrats and the media . The rest will be distributed to the farmers [expected to be around 25-30000 as per the description of the Farmers Forum, NAPM, WC, LEISA and Dr Nammalwar] and these books will be on a simpler paper than the version for the legislators.

The responsibility for organizing the printing was taken by the LEISA

2. Post Card Campaign: A massive postcard campaign will be launched. Farmers Forum was certain that they can organize upto 15 lakh cards [their own membership is 15 lakhs]. Oswald was sure of getting 500 cards per every village of Tamil Nadu. Combined with the strength of WC and NAPM as well as FEDCOT it was thought possible to do two million cards. I hope this will materialize. The responsibility for this will lie with Farmers Forum, TNWC, Nammalwar, LEISA, FEDCOT and TN Environmental Council. This will include getting signatures, providing a covering letter to the farmers. These post cards will be sent to the CM of Tamil Nadu. This will be a huge media event with newsapapers from all

parts of Tamil Nadu covering it so that the voice of the farmers will be amplified through media. For this purpose district level meetings will be held in all District HQs of Tamil Nadu.

3. A demonstration of organic farming techniques and Seed Exchange between farmers will be conducted in all districts of Tamil Nadu. This will be lead by LEISA and Dr Nammalwar and facilitated by CREATE, TNWC and Farmers Forum. Organic trainers for this will come from LEISA network VANAGAM and OFAI who will be the joint hosts.

4. A study of the curricula taught in Tamil Nadu agricultural universities will be undertaken by LEISA. This will try and see what % of the total curriculum has organic content in it. Whether it is one subject, one paper and how much time is spent on teaching it. Led by Farmers Forum and Dr Nammalwar a team will meet with all political parties to educate them and seek their support to the issue.

5. Media Action on all these will be lead primarily by TNWC. This will be an ongoing affair and will focus, apart from Chennai in Trichy, Madurai and other major centres of Tamil Nadu.

6. A farmers jury will be planned in mid October. PV satheesh will help the other members of the group to conceive and realize this jury.

Legal Action will be planned by Mr Sundararaman, supported by Satheesh, Miguel, Nammalwar & Farmers Forum

7. A Padayatra [Foot March] will be lead by Dr Nammalwar & Raghavan starting on October 2, 2009 and will attempt to cover a distance of about 100+ kms within a period of one week. LEISA will help the logistics of this Padayatra in collaboration with Farmers Forum.

Some of these actions had already begun. The most important was village level farmer protests committees that were formed and more than 25,000 post cards were already mailed to the Government of Tamil Nadu. The handbook was prepared. Meeting with political leaders and media were done individually and collectively.

One of the main architects of many of these actions was Dr Nammalvar. He was intensely supported by Oswald Quintal and Suresh Kanna of Kudumbam, Sheelu of Women's Collective and Mr Sadagopan of the Farmers Forum. The intensity and spread of this campaign created a heat which the Tamil Nadu Government could not bear and therefore the government beat a quick retreat.

Let us congratulate all these heroes of Tamil Nadu for their accomplishment.

p v satheesh
Deccan Development Society
Convenor, South Against Genetic Engineering.

2. Non-Bt Cotton Acreage up in Gujarat!

http://www.indianexpress.com/news/farmers-in-raindeficit-gujarat-opt-for-cotton-the-nonbt-variety/513684/

When India is moving toward 100 per cent Bt cotton regime, some winds of change have been seen in Gujarat, the leading cotton producer in the country.

Due to the deficient monsoon, farmers have taken to cotton over rain-fed crops like groundnut, to the extent that the area under cotton cultivation has increased by nearly two lakh hectares. Significantly, it's conventional (non-Bt) cotton varieties and not the Bt cotton variety that has caught the attention of the farmers this season.

Cotton acreage has gone up from 24 lakh hectares to nearly 26 lakh hectares, while the area under non-Bt cotton has gone up from 7.5 lakh to 9 lakh hectares in the same period. Last year, Gujarat alone accounted for nearly 1 crore bales of total production of over three crore bales in India.

3. Bt Menace Still On!

http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/news/city/jaipur/5-more-die-in-Guj-Bt-cotton-field/articleshow/4977449.cms

JAIPUR: Barely a week after TOI first reported about the deaths of children in the Bt cotton fields of Gujarat, five more deaths have been reported from the area, taking the total number of those dead in just over a month to 10. A majority of those dead are children and six are girls.All those who died had been trafficked from Udaipur-Dungarpur-Banswara region of Rajasthan. They were taken to the Bt cotton fields at Gujarat's Banaskantha district, when the cross-pollination season began in July end.

Ironically, even after so many deaths, the district administration has failed to check the migration and initiate action against the middlemen, who take the children from Rajasthan to Gujarat. Dakshin Rajasthan Majdoor Union, a social organisation working for the welfare of migrant workers, has been spreading awareness and also helping the affected families in their fight for justice.

4. Biotech is Not Just GM!

http://greenbio.checkbiotech.org/news/biotech_not_just_gm

Michael Antoniou teaches Molecular Genetics at King's College, London. In his spare time, he likes to help non-profits with information on the science of genetically modified organisms (GMOs). Savvy Soumya Misra met him at a workshop in Delhi recently where he was vocal against GMOs. Edited excerpts

Jairam Ramesh, minister of state for environment and forests, recently said GM crop (Bt cotton) is acceptable but GM food (Bt brinjal) is not.

This is the first time I have heard somebody make this distinction. People who draw this distinction see cotton as a non-food product but they forget cotton seeds are used for oil, animals eat the stub after harvest and farmers are always in contact with cotton. There is evidence that these farmers have suffered allergic reactions; this needs an official follow-up though. Both environmental and health implications have to be taken into account.

Hazards of GMOs:
Gene transformation is highly mutagenic. This leads to multi-organ toxicity affecting liver, kidney, gut, blood biochemistry and immune system. Acute signs of ageing and decreased fertility in animals fed with GM crops have also been reported.

How safe is Bt brinjal?
Bt toxin in animal studies has shown to cause allergic reactions and disrupt intestinal functions. If you cook Bt brinjal, the Bt toxin may break down and its toxicity may reduce. But the point is the main toxic effect that comes from GM food is not from the new gene but from the effects of the gene transformation process.

Recalling approved crops:
Approval can be withdrawn. But if it is already in the field you are stuck with it. You can try and remove it from the food chain but this is going to be very difficult because of cross pollination between GM and non-GM crops. It will take many generations of cropping before the environment contamination level is reduced.

On biotechnology:
GM is just one aspect of biotechnology. A more powerful use would be increasing gene maps of major food crops. Once a gene marker map is in place it can be used in breeding programmes. The plants can then be crossed. Gene marker assisted selection can be used to take offspring from the cross, map their genes and identify the plants that have by chance combined all the genes required. This has been successful in India to produce a highland drought tolerant variety of rice. Because this is a non-GM procedure, there are no safety considerations and the normal gene order is not disturbed.

Gene mapping can also be done to identify genes of high yield or better nutrients.

5. India chases organic market

New Delhi: Two parallel organic trade fairs, scheduled for November highlight India's plans to increase its area under certified organic farming to 2,000,000 hectare and sale of organic products to one billion US dollars by 2012. A special agency under the Union agriculture ministry - National Centre for Organic Farming - has taken up the task of achieving this target. The global market for organic products is estimated at over $40 billion.

At present about 90 organic products in 15 different categories are exported and, according to the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), in 2008, organic product sales increased to $100 million. From 2005 to 2008, the export value quadrupled and by 2012 organic products export is expected to grow six to seven times faster and reach one billion US dollar mark as per the ambitious plan of the government. APEDA is the nodal agency of the government for promoting exports of organic products.

Currently, organic cotton accounts for 25% of the total organic products export, followed by 20% share for organic tea, 18% for dry fruits, 13% for Basmati rice and 10% share for organic honey. There are, however, apprehensions that the share of organic cotton may take a beating in the near future as the government, through its policy measures, is aggressively promoting Bt cotton. Similarly, the plan to introduce genetically modified (GM) rice is likely to spoil the prospects of organic rice exports. The report of the National Commission on Farmers has already cautioned that GM rice should not be allowed to be cultivated near the zones earmarked for Basmati rice. The All India Rice Exporters Association has also appealed to the government to keep rice export zones free from contamination of GM rice.

Actually the area under organic agriculture in India is much more than certified. About 60% of the cropped area is organic by default and there is no assured irrigation. Intensive chemical agriculture is practiced largely in the country's 40% irrigated areas. The slow pace of certification of organic zones is primarily due to the pressures from the chemical fertiliser and pesticide lobby and the costly and complicated procedures for certification. However, APEDA has launched a group certification scheme to mitigate the problem.

The Advisor to APEDA, Dr PVSM Gouri while speaking at an event organised by the Indo-German Chambers of Commerce in Delhi on Thursday said that India was endeavoring at several levels to promote organic production, to facilitate its processing and marketing. The government was supporting organic agriculture in 26 federal states with a funding programme, she said. In addition, a whole series of companies are already intensively further extending their organic products lines and presenting products which are tailored to European and US taste and requirements. The ranges have long since ceased focusing on high-quality raw materials in the foodstuff and textile sectors and are now also servicing the demand for convenience food and made-up products in organic cotton.

The state Indian organic product seal meets the high requirements of international organic products markets and is set to receive legal legitimization before the end of this year. "However, the best precondition for the future of organic-based agriculture in India is the close linking of the ecological landscape with tradition and culture: hundreds of thousands of peasant farmers maintain this agricultural culture and view modern industrial agriculture and genetic technology with scepticism," Dr Gouri said.

From November 18 to 20, this year, Mumbai is expected to host two parallel organic expos, namely the premiere of BoiFach India-2009 and the fifth India Organic Trade Fair. The co-organiser of the trade fair duo is the International Competence Centre for Organic Agriculture (ICCOA). "Local players and market experts from all over the world agree: the time has come to offer India's high organic products potential its own platform and provide the Indian market with an even stronger international networking. The merging of these two experienced partners will not only generate key

impulses for the Indian organic products market. Indian exhibitors, international suppliers as well as trade visitors can concentrate on central organic products," said the ICCOA President Mukesh Gupta. He is also the President of Petra Wolf and a member of the NürnbergMesse Management Board.

6. Another Vidarbha in the Making!

http://beta.thehindu.com/news/states/other-states/article8414.ece

If it does not rain over the next week, farmers of Petlawad tehsil and its neighbouring regions in Jhabua might have to go the same way as their brethren in Vidarbha did. [In Vidarbha, the main cotton belt of Maharashtra, there's been a particularly high level of farmer suicides.

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chauhan recently declared Jhabua, along with 36 other districts, drought-hit.

The agricultural apparatus in Jhabua is choking under the same processes that led to the 'Vidarbha catastrophe.'

These include a shift from pulses, coarse grain and oilseed dominated organic and semi-organic farming to a high-input cash cropping system, a vicious debt-cycle with a simultaneous decline in cattle population and an agricultural landscape dotted with BT cotton crop.

Add to this, "a good drought" looming large and the result will mean small and marginal farmers running short of options in the event of a crop failure.

7. Nestle, Are You Fair Towards Indians?

Nestle food products (including baby food) are fairly popular in India, but has now been found out that their policy for the products they sell in India has something shocking.

Nestle has actually admitted it would use genetically-contaminated products in the food it sells in this country.

But what's more shocking is that this is the same Nestle that **dare not sell** genetically-tainted food in EU, Russia or Brazil.

Are Indian people less human? Are we guinea pigs and lab rats? Are we less deserving of safe food than citizens of other countries?

This has got to change, and it has to change now! That's just why we have to tell Nestle Chairman Antonio Waszyk to come clean on the products his company sells in our country.

GE Issues Around the World

8. Nailing the GM Lie!

http://www.rapaluruguay.org/agrotoxicos/Uruguay/multinacionales_marcan_paso.html

Contrary to biotech industry propaganda, genetically modified (GM) crops have not reduced the use of toxic agrochemicals. In fact, they are causing an increase in their use, according to the organization RAPAL-Uruguay.

The organization points to the cases of Brazil and Uruguay. In a recent newsletter, the organization provided data that was presented by the Brazilian National Health Surveillance Agency during a seminar on toxic Agro-toxins, Health, and Society held in Brasilia in July. "Brazil is one of the major consumers of agro-toxins in the world. GM soy crops have increased its use of such products, followed by corn, sugar cane, and cotton. In 2008 the Brazilian market consumed 673,862 tons of such products; this proves—contrary to industry propaganda—that GM crops increase the use of agro-toxins."

Uruguay is in a similar situation, maintains RAPAL. According to data obtained by the

organization from the Uruguayan government, between 2002 and 2008, imports of herbicides, insecticides, and fungicides increased by 258%. In 2002, Uruguay imported 5,336 tons and in 2008, 13,770 tons of toxic agrochemicals were used on various crops, but mainly in GM soy. The small number of transnational corporations that control the GM market, which includes Monsanto, BASF, Bayer, Dow, and Dupont, are the same world leaders in the production of pesticides.

9. Biotech is Not a Player!

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/timothy-lasalle/organic-agriculture-beats_b_261595.html

Organic agriculture's recently recognized benefits for improving food security don't depend on a boost from genetically modified (GM) technology. While the chemically-based systems that GM requires could be cleaned up with organic techniques, there's no clear reason to degrade organic standards to accept the downsides that come with biotech-produced crops as they are currently managed.

Recently, there have been renewed efforts to pressure organic agriculture to abandon one of its foundational principles and accept genetically modified crops. While there may be nothing inherently wrong with contemplating a theoretical overlap between biotech crop genetics and organic farming systems, there's not a compelling set of reasons to do so, either.

10. GMOs: Pervasive and High-risk!

http://greenbio.checkbiotech.org/news/medical_groups_say_genetically_modified_foods_should_be_avoided
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jeffrey-smith/lymeautism-group-blasts-g_b_268580.html

Genetic modification describes the process by which scientists can pinpoint the specific gene which produces a desired outcome in a crop, extract that gene, copy it and insert it into another organism.

Agreeing with the position of the American Academy of Environmental Medicine (AAEM), the **Lyme Induced Autism (LIA) Foundation** says there is plenty of evidence of harm in GM animal studies for them to urge "individuals, especially those with autism, Lyme disease, and associated conditions, to avoid" GM foods.

Tami Duncan, co-founder and president of the LIA Foundation, states:

It is well-known that the rapid increase in multifaceted, chronic illnesses such as autism and Lyme disease are costly, both to the patients and to society as a whole. Children with autism often have compromised digestion, immunity, and toxin-clearing abilities. We must fully evaluate the role that GM foods may play in this alarming increase. "Even if you don't have Lyme disease or autism, it may be wise for you to avoid GM foods as well.

The LIA Foundation calls for physicians and patient advocacy groups to explain to patients the role that GM foods may play in disease and to distribute non-GMO educational materials, including the Non-GMO Shopping Guide, which makes it easier to find brands without GM ingredients. (See www.nonGMOGuide.com). They also called for a moratorium on all GM foods and for "Research to evaluate the role of GM foods on autism, Lyme disease, and related conditions."

The five main GM foods are soy, corn, cotton, canola, and sugar beets. Their derivatives are found in more than 70 percent of the foods in the supermarket. The primary reason the plants are engineered is to allow them to drink poison. They're inserted with bacterial genes that allow them to survive otherwise deadly doses of poisonous herbicide. Biotech companies sell the seed and herbicide as a package deal. Roundup Ready crops survive sprays of Roundup. Liberty Link crops survive Liberty. US farmers use hundreds of millions of pounds more herbicide because of these herbicide-tolerant crops, and the higher toxic residues end up inside of us. The LIA position paper acknowledges that "Individuals with infections that compromise immunity... and/or high toxin

loads may also be especially susceptible to adverse effects from pesticides."

Because of a corporate takeover at the FDA (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jeffrey-smith/obamas-team-includes-dang_b_147188.html), they don't require a single safety test on GMOs — so almost none of the potential side effects are evaluated before the crops are approved for sale. The few animal feeding safety studies that have been conducted, however, show serious problems. It's obvious why those suffering from autism, Lyme, or any ailment, would want to stop being used as a guinea pig in this massive GMO feeding experiment.

The Institute for Responsible Technology's Campaign for Healthier Eating in America (http://www.responsibletechnology.org/GMFree/CampaignforHealthierEatinginAmerica/index.cfm) has been very busy distributing Non-GMO Shopping Guide to doctors around the nation, who are quite concerned about the impact of GMOs on their own and their patients' health. They are also giving patients our small pamphlet (http://www.responsibletechnology.org/GMFree/HealthRisks/HealthRisksBrochure/index.cfm) that summarizes the health dangers of GMOs. This helps to inspire people to use the Shopping Guide. Some of the health risks are included below. (Citations are posted (http://www.responsibletechnology.org/GMFree/HealthRisks/HealthRisksBrochure/index.cfm)

11. Are the Farmers Really Savvy?

http://www.ucsusa.org/food_and_agriculture/science_and_impacts/science/the-real-scoop/the-real-scoop.html

Since the release earlier this year of our report Failure to Yield - which showed that genetic engineering (GE) has had only a modest impact on yields of corn and soybeans in the United States—there has been renewed debate about why so many U.S. farmers nevertheless choose to buy and grow GE seed. A recent article covering our report in the leading biotechnology journal Nature Biotechnology quoted one scientist as suggesting that farmers must be achieving increased yield or other benefits by growing GE varieties, or they wouldn't keep doing it. This is a common argument in support of the value of genetically engineered crops, so it merits some thought.

I agree that farmers are generally savvy, and can judge the overall performance of their crops. But for the most part they can't readily determine whether particular crop properties—good or bad—are the result of GE technology. This is especially true for complex properties like yield or drought tolerance.

The problem for farmers is the difficulty in distinguishing between "natural" crop genes and engineered genes. Crop varieties that contain an engineered gene have also been improved through conventional breeding, which works with the genes already occurring in the crop. The GE companies (and public breeders) often use conventional breeding to improve corn, soy and cotton seed, and then stick an engineered gene, such as for glyphosate herbicide tolerance, into those conventionally improved varieties. This is one reason that Failure to Yield relied on controlled field trials - carefully designed and run by academic scientists—to tease out the contribution of the engineered gene to yield.

Farmers are also limited by the particular conditions on their own farm that affect crop performance, and these often vary from year to year. So their observations about crop varieties will often not be widely applicable.

So if farmers have limited ability to distinguish between natural and engineered genes, and their observations are specific to their own farms, where can they go to get the information they need about GE crop genes and varieties? For many decades prior to genetic engineering, farmers relied on university agriculture extension scientists to perform tests comparing new and standard crop varieties. But it is increasingly difficult for university scientists to conduct these important tests on GE varieties, because they are prohibited from doing research on GE crops without company

permission. And when scientists do receive permission to do research, it is usually with strings attached that restrict the usefulness of the studies for comparing crop varieties. This was reported in the New York Times back in February, when 26 entomologists complained that they could not get seeds from GE companies to do adequate research on Bt crops. The problem is pervasive. Even as far back as 1999, weed scientists were also noting restrictions on their research about herbicide tolerant GE crops.

That leaves the GE companies in control of much of the information about seeds and crop varieties that gets to the farmers (and the public) - and what do you suppose they are saying about it? More and more, important information about our crops and the food they produce is coming from companies that are interested in showing only the positive side of their products.

12. Seed Laws stifle Crop Diversity

http://solveclimate.com/blog/20090908/scientists-warn-international-seed-laws-are-stifling-crop-diversity

Powerful seed companies and government subsidies are weakening crop diversity and may be destroying some of the very keys to future climate adaptation.

The researchers – from the non-profit International Institute for Environment and Development and partner organizations in China, India, Kenya, Panama and Peru – say seed diversity and ancient traits that could sustain crops through droughts and disease are quickly being lost.

Around the world today, a small range of modern seeds bred by agriculture companies to produce higher yields are taking over agricultural markets. In many places, government subsidies have made these modern seeds cheaper, effectively pushing out a wide variety of traditional and native seeds local farmers once used.

At the same time, corporations are lobbying to strengthen already-restrictive local and international seed-use laws that protect the profits of plant breeders.

The impact of these growing seed monopolies will hit food production in the form of less genetically diverse crops that are poorly able to whether the effects of climate change, the researchers say. They argue that farmers must be allowed to save, use and exchange farm-saved seeds to protect genetic diversity, seed quality and the livelihoods of rural communities.

“The farming communities that have developed and sustained a rich diversity of seeds over millennia urgently need incentives to continue sustaining them,” says Ruchi Pant of Ecoserve in India.

NEWS in a Nutshell

a) Farmers Sue Bayer:
Nearly 1,500 rice farmers are suing the German conglomerate Bayer Cropscience and affiliated companies over a genetically engineered strain of rice.
http://www.kfsm.com/news/sns-ap-ar—rice-lawsuit,0,3707953.story

b) Horror of the Frankentrees:
A handful of global speculators hope to profit by making ethanol from cellulose-enhanced eucalyptus – never mind that their self-aggrandizement would put America’s native forests in danger of irreversible contamination by these destructive, invasive Frankentrees.
http://jimhightower.com/node/6900 ;
listen to the commentary—
http://jimhightower.com/sites/jimhightower.civicactions.net/files/28_17_rnc.mp3

c) Pepsi Sticks with GE Foods:
Pepsi believes that genetically-modified products can play a role in generating positive economic, social and environmental contributions to societies around the world; particularly in times of food shortages.

http://greenbio.checkbiotech.org/news/pepsico_chooses_continue_using_ge_ingredients_despite_evidence_of_harm

d) Activists Warn GM Firms:
Genetically-modified barley, which was being grown in Gunnarsholt, south Iceland, by start-up company ORF Liftaekni, was damaged by a group of activists.

http://www.icelandreview.com/icelandreview/daily_news/?cat_id=40764&ew_0_a_id=338035

e) Japan's GM Stance 'may impact Australia':
The new Japanese government's position on genetically-modified food may impact future growth of GM canola crops in Australia.

http://news.smh.com.au/breaking-news-national/japans-gm-stance-may-impact-australia-20090901-f6gn.html

f) Canadian Flaxseed in Trouble:
Cash bids for flaxseed in Western Canada have taken a dramatic turn for the worse with some of the decline being linked to European concerns that the crop contains genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

http://www.albertafarmexpress.ca/issues/ISArticle.asp?aid=1000340063&PC=FBC&issue=09042009;http://web.archive.org/web/20011224223705/http://biotech-info.net/reject_proposal.html

g) Monsanto Eyes More Crops!
http://greenbio.checkbiotech.org/news/monsanto_testing_gm_corn_animal_feed_india

Decatur (Illinois) - After the success of genetically modified cotton in India, Monsanto is interested in extending its product line to include corn (maize), rice, wheat and vegetables such as tomato, okra and pepper.

When queried about the alleged threat to bio-diversity, Dr Robb Fraley, the CTO of Monsanto explained that bio-tech crops have been planted for about 13 years on hundreds of millions acres in 25 countries, but no issues have been reported or brought forward.

This monthly bulletin is brought out by South Against 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 Maharashtra. 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.