

submissions

From: Myres, Biddy [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 23 August 2013 2:43 PM
To: submissions
Subject: Submission A1081- Food derived from Herbicide-tolerant Soybean Event SYHT0H2
Importance: High

I did not receive any indication that submission of this online a few minutes ago was successful, so I am sending it to you again just in case.

Thank you, Biddy Myres

I strongly object to the proposal to allow the use of genetically modified soybeans to be sold in Australia. Because soy oil, or oil containing soy, is present in a large range of processed foods (eg. bread, cereal, soup and biscuits) it is grossly misleading to consider allowing use of GM soy oil in Australia as “limited use”. In allowing GM soy oil or other GM soy ingredients in processed foods, FSANZ would in fact be allowing the presence of GM content in many foods – hardly “limited”. Allowing GM soy in animal feed is a tragedy for the welfare of commercial farm animals, their fertility and productivity (see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pNvWia3dYCE> for evidence of GM-caused problems such as stillbirths).

Direct manipulation of nature on a genetic level should be prohibited by legislation to protect human health, ecosystems and economies. There are already established ways to feed the global population, such as permaculture and biodynamic agriculture. These methods not only increase yields, but directly improve soil fertility and the lives of growers, not to mention the multitude of health and environmental benefits from not having to spray herbicides. If in doubt, please view John Liu’s documentary entitled 'Green Gold' (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YBLZmwIPa8A>) where desert landscapes are transformed within 3 years by using sustainable agricultural techniques.

Environmental contamination of non-GM crops by GM farmers unable to contain the drift of seed across their boundary is another problem unanswered by genetic lobbyists. Kojonup organic farmer Steve Marsh is a victim of windblown canola seeds – about 70% of his property has been contaminated by his GM neighbour. With his organic certification suspended by the certifying body, (NASAA) his livelihood is now at risk. The main company responsible for developing and promoting GMOs, Monsanto, has insisted on “no-liability” agreements with participating farmers, making the company immune from persecution or liability for any “fall out” from its products. Big money talks.

It seems that market interests are a high priority for food safety agencies, however, allowing unlabelled GM soy onto the Australian market may backfire, given that so many consumers care about what they eat, and their numbers are increasing. You may recall that researchers at the University of Canterbury recently expressed concern over FSANZ failing to consider important concerns relating to foods with dsRNA molecules, and in accepting industry assurances above independent concerns (<http://www.inbi.canterbury.ac.nz/Documents/Press%20releases/media-statement-on-FSANZ-response.shtml>).

It is of deep concern that the application states that “no potential public health and safety concerns have been identified”, as clearly many concerns have been identified and expressed. The American Academy of Environmental Medicine’s report states "there is more than a casual association between GM foods and

adverse health effects. There is causation as defined by Hill's Criteria in the areas of strength of association, consistency, specificity, biological gradient, and biological plausibility. The strength of association and consistency between GM foods and disease is confirmed in several animal studies. Specificity of the association of GM foods and specific disease processes is also supported. Multiple animal studies show significant immune dysregulation, including upregulation of cytokines associated with asthma, allergy, and inflammation. Animal studies also show altered structure and function of the liver, including altered lipid and carbohydrate metabolism as well as cellular changes that could lead to accelerated aging and possibly lead to the accumulation of reactive oxygen species. Changes in the kidney, pancreas and spleen have also been documented." (<http://www.aaemonline.org/gmopost.html>). It is grossly irresponsible to ignore the health risks raised by independent (ie. not funded by biotech companies) research.

GM is often promoted as a way to grow foods without using chemicals, yet growing GM crops entails producing crops that are pesticide and/or herbicide resistant – why? In addition, the fact that GM contamination cannot be reversed should also be considered a fatal flaw in the proposal to allow GM products.

In summary, from experience, we know that GM crops cause

- Ill health in humans and animals
- Contamination of other crops
- Nutrient reduction in soil
- Increased use of pesticides, herbicides and fertilisers
- Reduced yield over the longer term
- Reduced living standards for GM farmers in Asia as they are committed to buying GM seed every year
- Patents on food that has been grown for centuries, benefiting only multinational companies

Until the many questions over the safety and effect of GM crops and other products have been answered, FSANZ should keep Australia free of GM in general and reject this proposal in particular.

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