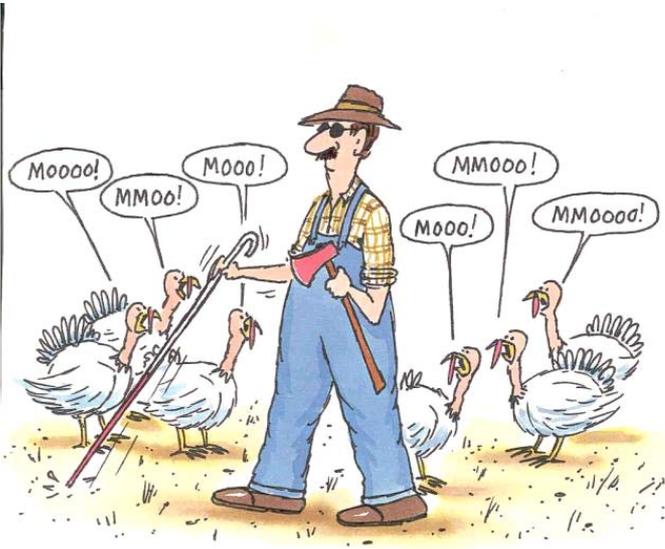


# GE Free NZ Newsletter

December 1999

## Merry Christmas from MONSANTA



### Biotechnology Left Unchecked – Will Soon Affect Every Aspect of Our Lives

The world is divided into three classes of people: a very small group that makes things happen, a somewhat larger group that watches things happen, and the great multitude that never knows what happened.

Dr NM Butler Columbia University USA

### WHAT IS GENETIC ENGINEERING?

Also referred to as GE, GM or GMO's

Genetic engineering uses invasive genetic surgery to take genes from one organism and transplant them into another, often unrelated organism or species. Unlike traditional breeding, which can only exchange genes between closely related species, genetic engineering puts genes into places they don't belong in an evolutionary context. It permanently alters plants and animals and other organisms in ways that could never happen in billions of years of natural evolution or breeding.

### ASPARTAME

Aspartame is marketed as an artificial sweetener and is the main ingredient of 'Nutrasweet,' Equal' and 'Spoonful.' There are now over 5,000 products containing this chemical additive. It is often genetically engineered, and is a known carcinogen.

There is absolutely no reason to take this product. It is NOT A DIET PRODUCT! It actually makes you crave carbohydrates and will make you fat!

It has been shown that when the temperature of Aspartame exceeds 30° Celsius (86° F) the wood alcohol in Aspartame converts to formaldehyde and then to formic acid. Neither of which was ever intended for human consumption, both are known poisons. (Ironically Monsanto is currently trying to sell off their consumer products division, which manufactures Nutrasweet.)

If it says sugar free on the product, check the label for aspartame! A safe alternative to artificial sweetener is the herb Stevia, which is a sweet food not an additive, it also helps in the metabolism of sugar, which would be ideal for diabetics. It is available here in health food stores, and only requires use of very small amounts.

For further information Refer to "Excitotoxins" : The Taste That Kills" by Doctor Blaylock also "Defence Against Alzheimer's Disease" Dr HJ Roberts.

### DIABETICS NOT TOLD OF INSULIN RISK

London Guardian March 9, 1999

Evidence that thousands of diabetics in Britain may have suffered a deterioration in their health from synthetic (GE produced) insulin has been withheld by the British Diabetics Association, whose role is to advise patients and to protect their interests. The evidence was contained in a report, commissioned by the association and completed six years ago, which highlighted dangers faced by about 10 per cent of the 150,000 diabetics who had been switched from the traditional animal-derived insulin to synthetic genetically engineered insulin.

Many doctors are unaware of the problem, or have failed to put their patients back on animal insulin because they do not know it is still available. In NZ however it is not available. (Abridged version, complete article available.)

by Paul Brown

### A ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY ?

As a result of the recent election, we have been promised a royal commission of inquiry into genetic engineering within 100 days. Fortunately now that the Greens will also be a force to be reckoned with, we will stand a chance of seeing this take place as well as the consideration of more sustainable agricultural and environmental policies. With the planet and its biodiversity so severely threatened, this can be the only way forward.

Perhaps the McGillycuddies were right and seeds will be the currency of the future.

Susie Lees

## **ERMA RECEIVES A RECORD 1500 SUBMISSIONS AGAINST GE WHEAT TRIAL**

Rumour has it that ERMA was shocked by a sudden increase in the number of submissions they received in response to Monsanto's application to grow Roundup Ready GE wheat trials in Canterbury. ERMA has stated that Monsanto will not be planting this season. Though the public hearing will still be held in March next year. It is important that now we have their attention we keep up the pressure and follow through.

## **FED FARMERS MEETING IN CHRISTCHURCH**

At a recent meeting in Christchurch, both Murray Willocks (employed by Monsanto), and Carl Reller from Greenpeace, spoke to members of Federated Farmers and the General Public, about genetic engineering. Questions were invited from the floor, where it was pointed out that there were no benefits to New Zealand of growing these crops here. We would be risking contaminating our land, while the seeds produced would be exported back to Canada. (This sounds more like a commercial venture rather than a field trial!) It was on these grounds that Federated Farmers put in a submission against this application.

## **GE FREE ZONE IN CHRISTCHURCH**

The Press, 15 November 1999

Christchurch may become a GE free zone, after a deputation to the city council.

Groundswell, a Christchurch based group opposed to genetic engineering of food, asked the council's environment committee to declare Christchurch a GE free zone, which would discourage the use of GE modified products in food production. Group spokesperson Paul de Spa said "the council should set an example to residents and lobby the Government for compulsory, comprehensive labelling of GE foods available for sale in NZ. The move would enhance the city's clean, unspoilt image and encourage foreign visitors."

Mr de Spa also added, "It would promote civic pride, as the declaration of a nuclear free zone had 20 years ago."

The committee decided the council would call a seminar on the topic next year. All interested parties will be invited to attend the seminar.

## **OTHER PROPOSED GE FREE ZONES**

In the North, Kaitia and Kawakawa Councils have already declared themselves as symbolic GE free Zones. In Northland the "F.R.E.E. Northland Inc" group is lobbying 5 more councils to make symbolic GE FREE Declarations.

In Auckland area, Devonport, Balmoral, Waiheke and Western Bays have declared symbolic GE Free zones and another 4 Community Boards are in the process of doing so.

Kapiti coast, Wellington and Christchurch are also in the process of GE Free zone negotiations with council.

**"There are moments and issues in history where parliament is inadequate and it falls to the people themselves to act. With the case of genetic engineering and the granting of patents on life, I believe we have reached one of those historic moments."**

Alan Simpson, UK MP.

## **NGAI TAHU ANNUAL REPORT 1999 ON GMO'S**

This is a subject that engenders fierce emotive debate wherever it arises. Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu has adopted an interim policy thus:

1) Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu opposes the release of any genetically modified organism into the environment.

Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu opposes the granting of any application for the development of genetically modified organisms. This opposition will continue until Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu has concluded the impact such genetic modifications will have upon critical social, cultural, and environmental concerns related to the whakapapa, kaitiakitanga, and rangatiratanga are addressed to its satisfaction .

## **NUCLEAR FREE NEW ZEALAND**

Did you know that with the introduction of irradiated foods into New Zealand our Nuclear Free Status is being put at risk by the proposed use of irradiation plants in our country, it is to be situated near Auckland!

## **PHYSICIANS AND SCIENTISTS FOR RESPONSIBLE GENETICS and RAGE**

"denounced publicly that IBAC (the Governments new Independent Biotechnology Advisory Council) is nothing more than a sham." None of these bodies including ANZFA do any independent safety testing. "ANZFA does not itself carry out tests on food produced using gene technology." Lette These are the people regulating the importation of GE Foodstuffs into New Zealand, comforting isn't it!

Biotechnology is based on the outdated view that nature should be dominated, exploited and forced to yield more. This is not sustainable agriculture. Despite the best intentions this technology will not feed the world as it has been claimed. As the lack of food is not the issue.

### **BOB ANDERSON TOURS THE SOUTH**

Bob Anderson, a member of Physicians and Scientists for Responsible Genetics has been telling the public about concerns surrounding the safety, ethics of the introduction of genetically engineered foods and crops to New Zealand.

The GE proponents say that this is a precise science, but it can have completely unexpected and unknown outcomes, risking toxins or novel proteins being produced, which can have serious consequences to your health.

Trudy Burgess a consumer advocate travelling with Mr Anderson stated "Never before in the recent history of New Zealand have consumers been fearful of buying unsafe foods in the shops. Even supermarket owners/operators are afraid to uphold consumer concerns, for fear they will be censured or reprimanded by their suppliers. Consumers have immeasurable power, which has been grossly underestimated. If consumers do not buy products which may contain GE ingredients, there will be no economic incentive to either import or manufacture these goods."

ANZFA has promised us labelling of GE foods by the year 2001! This delay is not acceptable. These GE foods are already on our supermarket shelves. The demand for labelling must become consumer driven as our regulatory authorities are not taking care of our best interests. "Some companies are already voluntarily labelling 'GE free'. It can be done and at a reasonable cost. Systems are available to track these foods to source, and a test to detect genetically engineered components in foods." Known as a PCR (Polymerised Chain Reaction) is 0.01% accurate and there are labs using this technique in both Perth and the US."

### **GE FREE BUS TOUR**

Affectionately known as the Jeanne Genie, the Nelson Environment Centre bus recently toured New Zealand, for 2 months visiting both islands to spread the GE Free message. There was good feedback from the general public, the tour helping to raise awareness on the GE issue in an educational way, reaching both adults and children. People informed us that they had found little unbiased information in the media and for this reason we are hoping to launch another tour in the New Year.

We would like to sincerely thank the Nelson Environment Centre for making this possible, and all the other people who supported us in many various ways throughout the country.

### **MONSANTO WANTS OK FOR CHILDREN'S GE SNACKS** Nov 2, 1999

The US based food and chemical giant Monsanto has lodged applications to sell eight different genetically engineered potato, corn and canola products in New Zealand. But these GE foods may already be on the supermarket shelves here in the form of children's

snacks and soft drinks. The Australia New Zealand Food Authority (ANZFA) is seeking public submission on 13 applications, including Monsanto's eight, for genetically engineered foods. Two varieties of insect and virus resistant potatoes, glyphosate tolerant sugar beet, plus several varieties of GE corn, cotton and canola.. "ANZFA has confirmed that these GE potato, canola and corn products may already be found in chippy packets, soft drinks and other snack foods that NZ children consume in large quantities," said Green Party Co-Leader Jeanette Fitzsimons. "Yet these foods have never been tested for their long term effect on our health, or to see whether they could cause cancer, immune system damage etc. This means that our children are part of a massive experiment, the results of which will only be known after millions of children world-wide have been exposed to these foods."

### **WHEN DO WE GET LABELLING OF GE FOODS?**

Party Spokesperson Sue Kedgley said it was outrageous that the Government was allowing more and more GE food into the food chain, while at the same time as it was shelving any labelling regime until at least 2001. "There should be a moratorium on all GE foods until such time as a mandatory labelling regime is in place," she said. "Otherwise consumers are being forced to eat food that has not been properly tested for its safety."

Canadian scientist Dr David Suzuki pointed out recently that "any politician or scientist who says these products are safe are either very stupid or lying, because the experiments have simply not been done". "The hazards of these foods are uncertain," Dr Suzuki said. "In view of the enormous ignorance, the premature application of biotechnology is downright dangerous."

### **MONSANTO'S BOVINE GROWTH HORMONE**

30/11/99 Robert Cohen sitting on a US Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) panel exposed the scandal of another Monsanto product. In 1994 the US Congress had prepared a Bill to require mandatory labelling of all GE foods, the Bill was stalled by Committees with vested interests, bribed by Monsanto.

Immediately prior to the approval of the bovine growth hormone, Monsanto were aware that lab animals given the hormone were getting cancer, cows were getting more mastitis, and producing more pus and bacteria in their milk.

A US Amendment from 1958 stated that if food additives cause cancer, they should not be approved. Monsanto's lawyer, however, thought differently, and changed the amendment, before joining the FDA and rewriting the approval procedure, effectively to ignore cancer concerns. More faked testing showed pasteurisation destroyed 90% (instead of only 19%) of the hormone in milk. To avoid sickness in cows the antibiotic residue allowance in milk was subsequently increased 100 times. The FDA then approved the milk as safe to drink.....

## SCIENTIFIC FACTS

Physicians and Scientists for Responsible Application of Science and Technology state that :

1. Genetic engineering is fundamentally different from breeding.
2. Genetic engineering of today is technically primitive.
3. Hazardous substances may be generated unpredictably.
4. No safety assessment methods are fully reliable.
5. The present rules for safety assessment are seriously inadequate.
6. The GE foods so far developed are of no significant value for mankind.
7. The knowledge is very incomplete about the ecological effects.
8. New and potentially dangerous viruses may emerge.
9. The knowledge of the hereditary substance, DNA, is very limited.
10. Genetic engineering will not help solve the world hunger problem.

For full details visit

<http://www.psagef.org/decl.htm#scifacts>

To join Physicians and Scientists for Responsible Genetics in New Zealand, contact Jean Anderson 440a Otumoetai Road Tauranga, phone 07 576 5721 <http://www.psr.org.nz>

## FAMILY FARMERS WARN: IF YOUR NEXT CROP IS GMO, IT MAY BE YOUR LAST

November 23, 1999

10 Point Declaration Against GE Seed, Cites Lack of Consumer Support and Potential Loss of Foreign Markets.

Washington, DC - Family farm groups from across the country today warned that the use of genetically-altered seed could be the ruination of an already tenuous farm economy.

In a ten-point Farmers' Declaration on Genetic Engineering in Agriculture - released today, family farm groups caution that farmers who plant genetically altered seed are risking their livelihoods on a product that consumers in the United States and around the world have overwhelmingly rejected. Already many critical foreign markets have closed their doors to GMOs, limiting trade opportunities for farmers that are struggling against low prices and bad farm policy. Gary Goldberg, CEO of the American Corn Growers Association, urged all farmers to weigh the pros and cons of planting genetically engineered seed before deciding what crops to plant this coming spring. "Export markets in Europe and Asia are saying 'no' to foods produced from genetically engineered crops.

Farmers know that they have to respond to consumer demand if they are to survive. Right now, farmers may decide it is best for them to also say 'no' to GMO seed," said Goldberg.

\*\*\*\*\*

**The declaration also says that inadequate testing of genetically engineered crops could open the door to massive liability from damage caused by genetic drift, increased weed and pest resistance and the destruction of wildlife and beneficial insects.**

\*\*\*\*\*

"Consumers are right to question the safety and viability of GE crops. There hasn't been enough research on how these products will behave once they're released. If corporate agribusiness continues to flood the marketplace with these untested products, the companies should be held liable for the damage caused by seeds approved without adequate assessment of risks to farmers, human health and the environment," said Bill Christison, president of the National Family Farm Coalition.

The farmers called on Monsanto, DuPont, Novartis and other seed companies to promote the sale of non-genetically engineered over GMO seed to farmers for the coming crop year until an independent and comprehensive assessment of the social, environmental, health and economic impacts of genetically engineered seed is available. Brenda K. Foster

## SIGN OF THE TIMES

Pro-GE soybean advertisements are being run on USA TV at the 10pm spot in Eau Claire, WI, aimed at farmers who might be wary of planting them next Spring...

<http://www.ncsrp.com>

## VIRAL RISKS IN GM CROPS HIGHLIGHTED

20 November 1999

Below are details of a review of recent research published in the December issue (in press) of the international scientific journal *Microbial Ecology in Health and Disease* (no 4, 1999) highlighting risks associated with the most commonly used viral promoter in GM crops.

This subject is probably the most hotly debated and controversial technical issue relating to GM crops. In particular it is worth noting:

1) The type of promoter discussed in the journal is used in GM crops to activate the foreign genes which are inserted. Without the promoter they would not be activated in the host plant and would remain silent.

2) It has been hypothesised that the toxic effects of GM potatoes reported by Dr Pusztai, and recently published in the *Lancet*, may have been caused by the viral promoter rather than the inserted gene involved.

3) The viral promoter used in Dr Pusztai's potatoes is the same promoter as discussed below. It is derived from a

group of viruses most closely related to the hepadnaviruses of animals, which includes the human hepatitis B virus.

4) This promoter is used in almost all commercial GM crops, none of which have been subjected to the independent in-depth toxicity testing that was carried out on Dr Pusztai's potatoes and over which there has been intense controversy.

5) This year's UK John Innes Centre and Sainsbury Laboratory Annual report specifically acknowledges that this particular viral promoter is prone to 'recombination' events.

Please see:

[www.btinternet.com/~nlpwessex/Documents/camv.htm](http://www.btinternet.com/~nlpwessex/Documents/camv.htm)

6) The UK's Royal Society has written to the Natural Law Party indicating that it has called for Dr Pusztai's work to be repeated because of the outstanding uncertainties it considers arise from it. In fact the Royal Society is calling for an even more complex study of the potatoes. No such study has been applied to GM foods already allowed onto the market.

There must now be considerable concern arising from the fact that the Royal Society feels it is necessary to call for a standard of testing which has not been applied to existing GM foods which have already passed through the food safety approvals system.

7) Given the outstanding issues raised by the Royal Society, and the generally unresolved debate over the safety implications of the use of viral promoters in GM crops, the calls below for the immediate withdrawal of their use as a precautionary measure published in the December edition of *Microbial Ecology in Health and Disease* (Scandinavian University Press) are extremely timely.

Natural Law Party Wessex

[nlpwessex@bigfoot.com](mailto:nlpwessex@bigfoot.com)

[www.btinternet.com/~nlpwessex](http://www.btinternet.com/~nlpwessex)

#### **DORMANT VIRUSES CAN BE REACTIVATED WITH GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS**

17 Nov,99 new research see also [www.scup.no/mehd/ho](http://www.scup.no/mehd/ho)

The use of the Cauliflower Mosaic Viral promotor (CaMV) has the potential to reactivate dormant viruses or create new viruses in all species to which it is transferred. CaMV is known to be found in practically all current transgenic crops released commercially or undergoing field trials.

This transgenic instability increases the possibility of promotion of an inappropriate over-expression of genes to the transferred species. The development of cancer may be one consequence of such inappropriate over-expression of genes.

The scientists behind the research "strongly recommend that all transgenic crops containing CaMV 35S or similar promoters which are recombinogenic should be immediately withdrawn from commercial production or open field trials. All products derived from such crops

containing transgenic DNA should also be immediately withdrawn from sale and from use for human consumption or animal feed".

These research results will be published in an article by scientists Mae-Wan Ho, Angela Ryan, and Joe Cummins, researchers at The Open University in England and University of Western Ontario, Canada. The article, "Cauliflower Mosaic Viral Promotor - A recipe for Disaster?", will appear in the December issue of the international scientific journal *Microbial Ecology in Health and Disease* (no 4, 1999). See [www.scup.no/mehd/ho](http://www.scup.no/mehd/ho) for pre-publication full text.

The article can be read in the same journal at [www.scup.no/mehd/Table of contents /Volume10/no.1](http://www.scup.no/mehd/Table of contents /Volume10/no.1).

#### **VATICAN CITY (CNS)**

Vatican experts voiced a "prudent yes" to genetic engineering of plants and animals, but restated Church objections to human cloning and other biotechnologies that modify the human genetic code.

The Vatican decision came as a battle erupted within the Church of England over its attitude towards GE food. The Church of England's ethical investment working group is deciding whether to allow GE trials on their land. Church commissioners have been advised to disinvest from companies like Astra Zeneca and Novartis. *Christchurch Press 1.12.99*

#### **GE CROP TOXINS LEAKING INTO SOIL 2.12.99**

GE crops modified with gene sequences from *Bacillus thuringiensis*, a naturally occurring bacteria, ( used sparingly by organic farmers to control pests,) are leaking toxins into the soil. It is feared that this will kill beneficial soil organisms, and that targeted pests will become resistant. The University of New York findings were published in *Nature* and raise fresh fears about the impact on the environment of GE crops. 20% of the US maize crop is now modified with the Bt gene.

**There is neither valid nutritional nor public interest reason for the introduction of genetically engineered foods. Eminent geneticists have stated that they have the potential to cause irreparable harm. Genetically engineered foods are being pushed by multi-national biotechnology companies in a ruthless drive to recoup the vast sums of money they have invested in developing the technology with little or no safety testing.**

**PSRG**

## WHAT TO LOOK FOR WHEN YOU ARE SHOPPING

**If you want to buy processed foods and avoid GE ingredients, you will have to read product labels. If it lists any of the ingredients below without stating it as organic, then the product may well contain GE ingredients.**

---

**PROCESSED FOODS** ⇒ Does it contain any of the ingredients listed below, e.g. biscuits, canned food, bread?

⇒ **Yes** ⇒ assume the product is suspect; may be okay if all NZ ingredients

⇒ **No** ⇒ almost certainly free of genetically engineered ingredients

**UNPROCESSED FOODS** ⇒ Was it grown in New Zealand e.g. fruit and vegetables, nuts, grains?

⇒ **Yes** ⇒ GE free at this stage

⇒ **No** ⇒ probably GE free if not listed below

### Primary Suspects; Ingredients and Products to Check

Unless you have written assurance that they are GE free, consider them suspect. [NZ made products may contain ingredients imported from elsewhere.](#)

**Soybeans:** Soy flour, soy oil, lecithin, soy protein isolate and concentrates. Sometimes 'vegetable protein of oil' will mean 'soy protein of oil,' be aware!

**Corn:** Corn flour, cornstarch, corn oil, corn sweeteners, and syrups.

**Canola Oil:** Products that may contain GE canola derivatives.

**Cotton Oil/Fabric:** Products that may contain GE cotton or its derivative.

**Potatoes:** NZ Spuds at this stage are safe but watch out for foreigners! potato starch and flour.

**Tomatoes:** In the USA some regular tomatoes and one cherry tomato are GE. Products which may contain GE tomatoes or derivatives.

**Dairy products:** Milk, cheese, butter, butter milk, sour cream, yoghurt, whey, if derived outside of NZ.

**Animal Products:** Overseas, animal feed often contains GE organisms, all non-NZ animal products or by-products may be affected.

A food may contain some of these items and yet be free from GE organisms, but we have no way of knowing without labels. Even reading labels is no guarantee that you will be able to avoid GE ingredients. Because manufacturers are not required to list every little

ingredient, enzyme or organism used in the manufacturing process.

This information was provided by the Nelson Environment Centre; Thanks also to Mothers for Safe Food Campaign, USA <http://www.safe-food.org>

## GE FREE FOOD LIST

As this list is not extensive we would like to urge consumers to invite manufacturers to voluntarily register their products onto the website. [www.rage.org.nz/db](http://www.rage.org.nz/db)  
Shoppers usually prefer products declared and labelled GE Free which gives them added security. There is huge economic advantage for manufacturers to be able to provide safe GE-Free food to consumers. Tests are available to ensure the integrity of the food is free from contamination by GE ingredients and are reported to be used in labs in Perth, the USA and Scotland.

**To register your product** – Simply go to the Website, print the declaration form, fill it out and return it. If you are aware of any manufacturer who is GE-Free please print out the form and hand it to them!

Consumers can look up GE-Free products by category or print it out. For a photocopy of the whole list please send a \$1 donation, with your address to - GE Free Project at P O Box 2657 Christchurch phone 03 379 2257.

**Consumers** - We encourage you to approach the manufacturers of your favourite foods and tell them they need to come on board. We need your help to make a more comprehensive list of safe foods. **Use the 0800 number on packaging or the address provided to enquire about GE content.**

Trudy L Burgess

### Web Sites To Visit

The Minister of Health [mailbox@mx.parliament.govt.nz](mailto:mailbox@mx.parliament.govt.nz)

ANZFA Email: [info@anzfa.gov.au](mailto:info@anzfa.gov.au)

Website: <http://www.health.gov.au/anzfa>

ERMA email [enquiries@ermanz.govt.nz](mailto:enquiries@ermanz.govt.nz)

**GE free food List** <http://www.rage.org.nz/db>

US Food List <http://www.safe-food.org>

RAGE [www.org.rage.nz](http://www.org.rage.nz)

Physicians and Scientists for Responsible Genetics

<http://www.psrp.org.nz>

Greenpeace: <http://www.greenpeace.org>

Natural Food Commission - Natural Law Party

<http://www.NaturalLaw.org.nz/genetics>

Info for schools <http://www.oneworld.org/penguin/>

<http://www.rsnz.govt.nz>; <http://www.eednz.org.nz>

### Suggested Reading:

"Eating Safely in a Toxic World" by Rachael Mackay and Sue Kedgley

"Dream or Nightmare" by Dr Ma Won Ho

"Genetically Engineered foods – Are They Safe? You decide" by Laura and Robin Ticciati (PHD)

published Keats/Ntc Inc

**THE WTO AGENDA -  
CANBERRA BACKS ROLE ON GM FOODS**

Australia will back a move to have the World Trade Organisation regulate genetically modified (GM) foods, despite strong concerns from environmental groups. A WTO working party will examine GM foods as part of an extensive agenda agreed to in Seattle on Tuesday. that also includes investment, e-commerce, government procurement and the transparency of the WTO, as well as previously mandated issues such as farm and services trade barriers.

Australia, which initially resisted cluttering up the Seattle summit with GM and other issues outside those already mandated, has agreed to its inclusion in exchange for US support for eliminating agricultural subsidies. Working parties have begun seeking common ground for a ministerial declaration to launch a new round of trade talks.

Europe and Japan remain far from the US-Australia position on eliminating agricultural subsidies. They want the declaration to call only for a reduction in subsidies. Japan did not even turn up to the first meeting of the agricultural working party. GM foods and organisms are expected to be discussed once Europe and the US agree on the parameters of the deliberations.

\*\*\*\*\*

*"If this GMO [genetically modified organisms] deal gets through, we can forget about having our national laws on dealing with these controversial products," said the Seattle representative of the Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF), Ms Anna Reynolds. "The trade in GM foods will be fast-tracked through the WTO. There will be more of those foods on our supermarket shelves."*

\*\*\*\*\*

**The US, with an expanding food biotechnology industry, has floated a proposal for labelling GM foods that excludes a requirement to label products that may be genetically engineered but are only slightly different to natural foods, products termed "substantial equivalent".**

\*\*\*\*\*

How integrated the GM food issue becomes with the push for farm trade liberalisation remains to be seen, but Australia wants it considered separately. The ACF believes an era of lax regulation for GM foods is likely if the WTO encompasses it in its agenda. This could produce not only a flood of unlabelled GM foods on the market - but potentially serious consequences for the environment, given the lack of scientific knowledge of what happens when GM crops are dispersed by wind, or rain and find their way into animal feed, other crops, and the ecosystem in general. By Tom Allard and Sarah Crichton

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/9912/02/pageone/pageone10.html> Sydney Morning Herald, December 2, 1999

**DEUTSCHE BANK ADVISES AGAINST BIOTECH**

Europe's biggest bank has advised several thousand of the world's largest investors not to invest in biotechnology. The report to its investors warns that farmers who plant biotech crops could lose money and that the market value of biotech companies could collapse. The report concludes "GM organisms are dead" because consumers are suspicious of their effect on human health and the environment.

**BIOTECHNOLOGY FIRMS TOP BLACKLIST**

A survey of socially responsible investors by the Ethical Investment Trust shows that concerns about investing in businesses carrying out biotech research has gone from being a minor issue 2 years ago to being investors' biggest concern. Arms manufacturing was ranked least ethical investment, followed by biotechnology.

**Consumers Have Immeasurable Power At Their Disposal And They Can Influence The Food Industry By Their Shopping Habits**

**Contact Address**  
**GE FREE NZ** (rage) Email – [GEFREE@ts.co.nz](mailto:GEFREE@ts.co.nz)  
**SAGE** (Society Against Genetic Engineering)  
P O Box 693 NELSON Email: [sagenz@ts.co.nz](mailto:sagenz@ts.co.nz)  
Phone 03 548 6608 Fax 03 546 5036  
WEB: [www.ge-free.co.nz](http://www.ge-free.co.nz)  
NZ Wide Information Distribution and Networking  
**GROUNDSWELL** Christchurch  
Phone 03 337 9764 Fax 03 337 9042  
Email [groundswell@clear.net.nz](mailto:groundswell@clear.net.nz)

**Many thanks to Trudy L. Burgess for providing us with this newsletter for R.A.G.E members and allowing us to make editorial changes. Due to staffing problems we were unable to completely produce our own this time.**

**We have to take action now; New Zealand's future depends on it. If left unchecked soon there will be no aspect of human lives untouched by biotechnology. The Government has to realise that they are legislating for future generations**  
Trudy L Burgess

Disclaimer: We are not liable for any error, omission of fact, or misinterpretation of the information given in this publication, nor action taken upon the information given.

# **SUPPORT GE FREE NZ**

Promote GE Free Zones Approach your council to go GE Free  
Info Packs available \$ 10.00 (cheques payable to RAGE) from:  
GE Free Action Pack , P.O. Box 300-232 Albany Auckland

**GE FREE FOOD CAMPAIGN**  
**RING 0800 No.s ON FOOD PRODUCTS**  
Consumer pressure does make a difference.