



This is a condensed print version of our weekly newsletter. For links to action alerts as well as in-depth information about each story, please visit the online version: organicconsumers.org/bytes/ob369.htm

Monsanto: Patents on Life?

It's time we ask ourselves: How long will we tolerate the growing monopolization and genetic engineering of seeds by an aggressive cabal of chemical and pesticide corporations who pose a deadly threat to our health, our environment and the future of our food? And when does "how long" become "too late?"

Last week, the US Supreme Court began hearing arguments in a seed patent infringement case that pits a small farmer from Indiana against biotech goliath Monsanto. The case made national headlines as the press and the public fixated on the sticky legal arguments, and the classic David vs. Goliath nature of the fight. But what few reporters commented on is the absurdity and the danger of allowing companies to patent living organisms in the first place, and then use those patents to attempt to monopolize world seed and food production.

orgcns.org/XXz5Ua

Santa Cruz Organic Might Contain GMOs?

That Santa Cruz Organic® applesauce and peanut butter you're feeding your kids? Although by law they can't contain genetically engineered ingredients, they might contain genetically modified organisms (GMOs), according to a Santa Cruz customer service representative. The profoundly misinformed rep also wrongly told us that "the FDA, the USDA and the EPA have determined that existing biotech foods are safe and do not differ in any meaningful way from other food." Really? And how did these agencies "determine" all this? By asking Monsanto, and then taking the biotech bully's word for it.

Santa Cruz Organic and R.W. Knudsen are both owned by the J.M. Smucker Co., which contributed \$555,000 to the \$46 million war chest that helped narrowly defeat Prop 37, the California citizens' initiative that would have required mandatory labeling of GMOs. Whose side were R.W. Knudsen and Santa Cruz Organics on during the GMO labeling battle? Not ours.

Take Action: orgcns.org/1onUKjc

A Pro-Big Oil, Pro Fracking Head of the DOE?

Word on the street is that President Obama will nominate Dr. Ernest Moniz, Big Oil and fracking cheerleader, to head up the US Department of Energy. Moniz is a true believer in fracking as a "bridge" to low-carbon sources of energy. He's actually on record as referring to fracking as "paradigm shifting." But where do our farms fit into this shiny new paradigm?

If you think blasting toxic chemicals into the same ground that gives us the food we eat and the water we drink, is dangerous, if you think allowing fracking to destroy our farmland, contaminate our groundwater and endanger our health sounds like a bad idea, you're part of a growing movement that is determined to ban fracking across the US and move the country toward a sustainable future of clean energy and organic food and farming.

Moniz is poised to leave his perch as director of MIT's Energy Institute, which boasts such Big Oil financial backers as BP, Chevron and Saudi Aramco. Not surprising, given President Obama's track record of appointing industry cheerleaders to government posts. Think former Monsanto lawyer, Michael Taylor, appointed deputy commissioner of the FDA. And Tom Vilsack, another former Monsanto shill, named head of the USDA. Our voices may fall on deaf ears at the federal level, but more and more of us are determined to shift the battleground of our food and water fights to the local and state levels, where we have greater leverage and power. In many cases, we can use the remaining institutions of direct democracy—citizen ballot initiatives, referendums and recalls. In the meantime, we owe it to our farms and our future to educate, speak out, mobilize—and oppose this appointment. Take Action: orgcns.org/1onUWrO

Factory Farm Industry: Environmental Groups Are 'Terrorists'

"As a nation we worry about our security from foreign attacks. But what this actually does is slap private business in the face and in no regard showing attempt to protect us from terrorists." -JD Alexander, past president of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), commenting on the EPA's decision to release data on factory farms to environmental groups.

Who are the "terrorists" Alexander is so afraid of? Environmental groups, including Earth Justice, the Pew Charitable Trust and the Natural Resources Defense Council. Alexander was railing against the EPA when he made that statement. He wasn't too pleased that the EPA, under the Freedom of Information Act, released data it had collected on factory farms, known as Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs), in 30 states. Seems the NCBA and groups like the National Pork Producers Council don't think environmental groups, or the public, should know what kind of putrid antibiotic and hormone containing waste they're spewing into public lands and waters.

Think the factory farm industry has something to hide? As in, perhaps they are the real terrorists? A report issued this week by the Environmental Working

Group says that water systems serving more than 100 million people in 43 states are polluted with trihalomethanes. These toxic, cancer-causing chemicals are formed when chlorine, added to treated water, reacts with rotting organic matter which, you guessed it, includes farm runoff and dead animals.

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Monsanto's Seeds of Deception

Farmer: "If you care about where your food comes from, you need to care about who controls our seeds." Scientist (who was fired for suggesting that Monsanto's genetically engineered products needed more testing): "It's my constitutional right that you don't wreck my food, you don't inject things into my body, you don't force these things on me." Watch: youtu.be/htt91Sj17uY

Monsanto's Roundup: Even Worse than We Thought

It's bad enough that regulatory agencies continue to allow tons of Monsanto's herbicide, Roundup, to be sprayed on food crops—despite evidence that the herbicide's key ingredient, glyphosate, causes birth defects, endocrine disruption and a host of other health problems. Now, a new study says the most widely used herbicide in the world is even more toxic than we thought. The reason? Roundup contains "confidential", and unlabeled ingredients that affect all living cells, including human cells, according to a new study in the scientific journal, *Toxicology*. Turns out that industry regulators and long-term studies look at glyphosate in isolation, instead of looking at Roundup's full formulation, which includes the secret added ingredients.

In 2011, the EPA released figures showing that at least 208 million tons of Roundup had been used on GE crops, lawns and roadsides in the years 2006 and 2007. It's safe to assume that number is much higher now. Hundreds of millions of tons of poison, containing unlabeled "secret" toxic ingredients. When will it stop? orgcns.org/1onVqyk