

Organic Bytes - Newsweekly of the Organic Consumers Association

Condensed version · Read the full version online: organicconsumers.org/bytes/ob409.html

#409- Jan 16. 2014

Not Your Grandmother's Food Chain

Fish no longer eat other fish. Cattle eat corn, even though it makes them sick. Chickens eat corn and fish. And fish eat byproducts from cows and poultry. Even chicken feathers have become food. California grows oranges, but sends them away because they're too difficult to peel. The oranges Californians eat come from Australia. The food chain doesn't look like it used to.

Demand for more food, and cheaper food, has created a food chain that's motivated by making the greatest amount of food, at the cheapest cost. It's efficient, if you measure efficiency by corporate profits. But in terms of health and the environment? Grandma wouldn't approve. orgcns.org/1b6NxgZ

Agent Orange Corn & Soy? No Thanks.

It's been linked to a host of major health problems, including cancer, reproductive disorders, neurotoxicity, auto-immune disorders. It's devastating to the environment. Even the USDA concedes that it could trigger a new crop of superweeds. But that hasn't stopped the USDA from signaling that it's about to approve new GMO corn and soy varieties that are engineered to withstand massive amounts of 2,4-D—the same "Agent Orange" concoction used by the U.S. Army to defoliate jungles and destroy food crops during the Vietnam War.

What happens if Dow AgroSciences gets the green light for its new "Enlist" brand corn and soy? Scientists predict a 50-fold increase in the use of the highly toxic 2,4-D herbicide. And instead of just spraying the toxins on weeds, farmers will now be spraying them on the corn and soy itself. We have until March 4 to bombard the USDA with comments. Please help! Take Action: orgcns.org/SSoPIs

No, We Can't All Just 'Get Along'

It should be a crime for seed companies like Monsanto to release GE crops into the environment, knowing that those crops will eventually contaminate organic and conventional, non-GMO crops. Yet they do. Without any accountability. Because instead of putting the onus on companies like Monsanto to prevent contamination, the USDA just asks that everyone—organic, non-GMO and GMO farmers—just "coexist." Voluntarily. Why can't non-GMO and organic farmers just "get along" with the biotech bullies?

Because an industry as reckless and monopolistic as the biotech industry, an industry that harms health, destroys biodiversity, damages the environment, tortures and poisons animals, destabilized the climate and economically devastates the world's 1.5 billion seed-saving small farmers—with impunity—has no real interest in "getting along" with farmers who haven't bought into the GMO program.

The USDA is accepting public comments, up until March 4, on its "coexistence" policy? What do you think? Let Monsanto police itself? Or demand accountability? Take Action: <code>orgcns.org/1b6NHoE</code>

Agent Orange. Legacy of Death and Deformity

Experts have zeroed in on dioxin as the common denominator in people who suffer health problems from exposure to pesticides. So you'd think that an herbicide that contains dioxide would be banned. But investigators in Australia found that not only does the herbicide 2,4-D contain levels of dioxin that could pose a health risk, but that imports of 2,4-D aren't carefully regulated. And farmers are spraying forms of 2,4-D that drift well beyond the intended target crops, causing widespread contamination. Watch the video: orgcns.org/1eOuPPX

GMOs, 'Virtually' Everything You Need to Know

You know what they say. Don't hate the media. Become the media. With Monsanto's new public relations "charm offensive" (as Politico called it) paying off with pro-GMO stories in major media outlets from the *New York Times* to NPR... where can you go for reliable, honest information about what's really going on with GMOS?

You can "go" to a virtual conference. Where you can hear directly from reliable sources, without the media filter. A superior line-up of scientists, business leaders, consumer advocates and wellness experts will share their expertise about GMOS—and why they are ground zero in the fight for a sustainable food system.

GMOs: What You Need to Know virtual conference streams live, January 27-30, 2014. Sign up for your free ticket: orgcns.org/1b6NTUZ

Will Monsanto Shareholders Vote to Label GMOs?

For years, Monsanto has bragged about its GMO seeds and crops. How they will feed the world. How they help farmers prosper. How they reduce the need for toxic pesticides and herbicides.

But proud as the Monsanto Big Wigs are of their products, they've fought—and paid millions—to keep from labeling them.

Could shareholders force them to cede to consumer demand for labels? By passing a GMO Labeling Resolution? That's what activists, and protesters, hope.

On January 28, when Monsanto shareholders gather in Creve Coeur, Mo, for their annual shareholders meeting, they will vote on a GMO Labeling resolution (which Monsanto has already recommended they not pass). Monsanto declined to provide streaming video of this year's meeting. But unlike past years, they will stream audio. Just to make sure folks know about the resolution, activists with the GMO Free Midwest Coalition have called for the protests beginning at 12 noon on January 28 throughout the shareholder meeting. Everyone—activists, shareholders and even activist shareholders—are invited! RSVP on Facebook: orgcns.org/1eOv11t

Read the shareholders resolution: orgcns.org/1b6NZvP

A Place to Stand

"Give me a place to stand, and I will move the world." – Archimedes

Monsanto is spending millions to spin its lies in mainstream media. The Grocery Manufacturers Association (GMA) is pushing Congress to pass a law to preempt state GMO labeling laws and would also allow the use of the word "natural" on products that contain GMOs. In Washington State, where the GMA was caught breaking campaign finance laws, it's retaliating with counter-suits and accusations that the laws are "unconstitutional" and the attorney general has violated the lobbying group's civil rights. Industry is on the move. Because you have taken a stand. We have always known that the battle to reclaim our food and farms would be a long one. We've also always known that if we gave people like you a place to stand, you would help us move the world. Thank you!

Donate to the OCA (tax-deductible, helps support our work on behalf of organic standards and fair trade): orgcns.org/1c4ezHD

Donate to the Organic Consumers Fund (non-tax-deductible, necessary for our legislative efforts): orgcns.org/1e3kpgo