

SUBMISSION RE GENETICALLY MODIFIED CANOLA A1140

I am not a scientist or specialist in the field of G.M.O's, but a reasonably knowledgeable, intelligent, concerned consumer who has made it my business over the years to be informed on this subject, because

- a, I care about the environment,
- b. I care about the food I eat (I love it)
- c, I care for the future of the planet, and particularly my descendants, and
- d. I love New Zealand, I care strongly about my country, I was born here, and have a family tree here.

I will discuss, Tangata Whenua, Economy, Democracy, Terminator Seeds, Antibiotics, Dangers, Climate Change, Then Conclusion

“clean green” “100%” (whatever that means) “New Zealand pure” We market ourselves as being absolutely lily white, but are we?

Well one of our reasons we could use is G.E.Free. Yes, it is in certain foods, but we are not growing it here, yet, although there have been several attempts at it. We say we need the tourist and their dollars, but an attraction is our pure food. Why do we want to contaminate it?

It has been said of Genetic Engineering that it is “the biggest scam being played on the world is industrial agriculture”

TANGATA WHENUA

They are not at all happy with their environment being threatened, yet again. To them the environment has Spiritual significance, and to tamper with it is an insult. I am not Maori, but am closely associated with a local Whanau, and share their concerns, and hurts. Once again they are being trampled on, and their concerns not even registering in the minds of pakeha, who have never bothered to try to understand where another culture is coming from. They are supposed to be Treaty partners.

ECONOMY

Our Organic status would be compromised, and eventually lost. It is only a matter of time. This is not good economy, as the Organic industry is large, it brings in many millions of dollars, and there is scope for it to expand greatly.

Here in Northland, there is a huge export industry of Organic agricultural and horticultural produce. The same can be said for the Hawkes Bay region, and elsewhere.

Organic produce is part of what gives us the “clean ,green, 100%, pure) “etc. It has so far given us a unique competitive trading edge, and food markets world wide. Any release of G.E. organisms in to the environment can threaten that and eventually kill it, as once released that is forever. It can never be reversed. And that is the gravest danger of the lot. These areas of New Zealand have fought hard to maintain their environment, even through court processes which have always found in their favour. It is what the residents want. And that is called-

DEMOCRACY

The people have spoken. We still live in a democratic country, and we have every right to have a say about the world we live in. And also about the kind of foods that we eat, and put into our bodies. We as a community have said, NO to G E. organisms in our communities. We do not believe that any completely independent reviews of the science have ever been listened to. All the ones that I have ever seen quoted which are positive about G.E. have in fact come from the agro chemical companies themselves. That is not an independent review. Many others, especially scientists, have submitted reviews, but because they were not what the manufacturers wanted to hear they have either been rubbished or buried. Those scientists who worked for the chemical companies had their employment terminated.

. Why? What was so threatening that the companies didn't want the world to know? What were they afraid of.?

TERMINATOR SEEDS

These have been described as “a crime against humanity” They are evil. So far they have not been proven to be of any benefit to humans.

Farmers who have for millennia saved their seeds from year to year, -a traditional right-, are unable to do so, forcing them to buy new seed from the company every year.

It is a money making scam for the petro chemical companies who are modifying the seeds

.It is exploitation of the farmers, who are not being given a choice, and who, in many countries are the poorest of the poor.

It is a risk to world wide seed security

Because Terminator seeds affect the soil, they also affect the natural fungi and bugs, that live there, birds that eat seeds, and foraging animals. We wouldn't be encouraging this dangerous practice, if we were really concerned about the future of mankind, and the planet. Too bad if in the future it is decided that they were a disastrous experiment and it has gone wrong. It is then too late. We will have them forever.

ANTIBIOTICS

Of huge concern is the amount of antibiotic that is used in the process of the terminator production.

We are constantly being warned about the dangers of overuse of antibiotics in humans, and over prescribing. When one considers the amount of antibiotic that is necessary to coat every seed that is produced, the thought is horrifying. How do they dispose of the used drug. Sooner or later it ends up in the environment, to contaminate the soil, and waterways. This is truly appalling. And when one considers the world of medicine without antibiotics the thought is more than appalling. It is beyond our thinking. No more surgery as we know it, infections killing people in mass numbers, plagues and epidemics that are currently unknown. It may/may not be in our lifetime, but that doesn't mean we turn a blind eye to what is down the track. A responsible person is always aware of how much their behaviour affects others. How much will the chemical companies be contributing to this scenario.? And do they care? I don't want to be a part of that.

DANGERS -and the down side.

As above, antibiotic overuse and resistance .

There is a detrimental effect of G.E. crops in combination with herbicide applications. The full formula of pesticides is much more toxic than the active ingredient on its own. Pollen drift will contaminate all around. We are told that the current Myrtle Rust problem "drifted" from Australia, therefore a few metres between an organic farm and a G.E. one is laughable-if it wasn't so serious.

Also there is in the natural, an interconnectedness between all things. Genetically engineering crops destroys that interconnectedness.

G.E. crops encourage monoculture which, long term, deplete the soil.

G.E. contaminated potatoes are going in to the soil, either to be planted, then eaten or to be composted and then spread around on the soil. Either way the ground is then contaminated. Canola seed of course is exactly the same. Even if they don't grow, they are still in the soil-for all time.

We need farming systems that function, rather crops that will grow if we simply poke enough stuff at them.

Once we say yes to G.E. organisms in our environment there is no going back. They are here to stay. We don't learn. We have done it with possums, rabbits. Deer, gorse, nuclear waste and depleted uranium, Dioxin and Agent orange, and how about tobacco and the harm it has done, asbestos, plastic (plastic Islands in the oceans) polluted waterways C.F.C's pine trees, and a host of other things as well.

The introduction of Modified canola and potatoes will be devastating for the area of Northland. It will gut the economic growth of our district, while not providing any benefits.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Sustainable, conventional , organic horticultural and agricultural initiatives have consistently shown better yields of produce. The soil is maintained and looked after naturally without the aid of chemicals, e.g. roundup, and produces abundantly. With even more water shortages looming with climate change, and higher temperatures forecast, it makes sense to practise looking after the soil rather than putting artificial chemicals and fertilisers into it.

One need only watch "Country Calendar" to see the contrast between those farmers and horticulturalists who farm conventionally and those who farm sustainably to see that it is the latter who come through droughts and still make a profit, whereas the former are always asking the government for help and blaming the drought, not their own lack of preparedness.

We need to look after our soil. It is a living commodity with all the bugs that are necessary for growth. Not a sterile environment that can have artificial chemicals piled on it ad infinitum.

CONCLUSION

WHY ARE WE CONSIDERING G.E. CANOLA AND POTATOES (or any other G.E. see/plant/commodity)?

What problems are trying to be solved by the introduction of these foods?

Are we in fact trying to solve a problem or are we bowing to the pressure of “market forces” wanting to sell rubbish here.? Are we not big enough to tell them we manage perfectly well as we are?

As a small trading nation surrounded by vast oceans, we are in a fairly unique position as far as world geography goes. Our environment is fast becoming run down, but it isn't too late to turn that around, if we act appropriately now.

And that means remaining G.E. free. And proud of it. After all we did it with the nuclear issue. We can do it again

We need to build on our uniqueness, and stay G.E. free.

Stay clean and green.

Stay 100% pure.

It is possible to vastly expand our organic crops and markets. There is huge potential for more markets that are crying out for organic foods, and will take whatever amounts we can produce for them. Farmers who are keen to do it, and the supply isn't big enough. New Zealand can do it, but the introduction of G.E. canola and potatoes will destroy our only chance .We will never get it back.

I have sent a copy of the same submission for each topic as my thoughts about the 2 subjects (canola and potato) are basically the same.



