

Gene Ethics News Release Wednesday 10 December, 2008

GM canola delivers contamination

Monsanto claims that cleaning trucks will enable Industry Standards for GM and non-GM canola segregation to be met. But the Industry Standards assume GM contamination is inevitable so segregation is a sham.

"Industry Standards approved by weak governments allow 0.9% contamination in harvested seed and 0.5% of GM in non-GM seed for planting, precisely because GM contamination is inevitable," says Gene ethics Director, Bob Phelps.

"Cleaning trucks will not prevent the inevitable leakage of GM canola seed and pollen at every point along the supply chain, from the seed to the spoon.

"Cleaning a truck of GM canola is too late, since Cropwatch found windrowed GM canola blown onto roadsides at Horsham last week.

"The Californian government also says GM contamination of non-GM farmers by pollen and seed drift is inevitable. See: http://www.gepolicyalliance.org/action_alert_support_ab541.htm

"Schwarzenegger's new law protects non-GM farmers from Monsanto lawsuits over GM contamination, as hundreds of farmers were sued for the inevitable GM contamination of their crops that they could not prevent:
<http://www.centerforfoodsafety.org/Monsantovsusfarmersreport.cfm>

"In contrast, the Victorian and NSW governments refuse to protect GM-free growers in any way from GM, particularly by passing strict liability laws.

"In a year or two, GM-free farmers will be forced to pick up the tab for GM testing and segregation of their canola or it will be dumped in the GM bin, as happened in Canada," Mr Phelps says.

The latest Bureau of Rural Sciences report also admits:

"... plant-to-plant outcrossing within canola has been found to vary from 12-47 per cent in Australian field experiments. Some long distance pollen transfer is also likely to occur (with) implications for the coexistence of GM canola and non-GM canola or related crops." (Holtzapffel, R, et al. Genetically modified crops, 12/08, P xi) Free at:
<http://affashop.gov.au/product.asp?prodid=14174>

"Monsanto's chosen farming mate Graham Dawson is among a handful of selected growers whose choice of GM canola takes away the GM-free choice from other farmers and shoppers.

"Fewer than one in thousand farmers grew GM but most food processing companies and supermarkets are now pledged to stay GM-free.

"Most Australians will not buy or eat Monsanto GM products so why grow them?" Mr Phelps concludes.

More comment: Bob Phelps 03 9347 4500/0449 769 066