

From: Cindy Pawelski <cindyesprit@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 17, 2009 7:48 PM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Comments

Monsanto is notorious in crimes against the environment/agriculture.

I am writing because I am concerned about the lack of competition in agricultural markets.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to comment.

...A few Reasons that Monsanto 's power in agriculture/environment needs to be stopped:

(source; Corporate Watch)

Corporate Crimes:

Monsanto have an impressive history of committing corporate crimes [40]. Recent Monsanto crimes include:

BST

BST or rBGH marketed by Monsanto as Posilac is a genetically engineered hormone designed to make cows produce more milk. Large amounts of research indicate that BST use has serious implications for the health and welfare of dairy cattle, including making cows more prone to mastitis and sores [41].

Because of evidence that BST milk may cause breast cancer, colon cancer and prostate cancer in humans, it is banned in Europe. Monsanto is trying to overturn the ban [42].

Contaminating our food with GM crops

As the market leaders in GM crops it is Monsanto who have been largely responsible for contaminating the global food chain with GM crops. The long term health effects of eating GM crops are as yet unknown.

Contaminating our environment with GM crops

The long term effects of Monsanto's GM crops on the environment are as yet unknown. In areas where RoundUp Ready crops are being grown commercially, herbicide tolerance is being spread to neighbouring crops and wild plants by cross pollination. Rather than reducing the amount of chemicals used in farming RoundUp Ready crops are locking farmers into a chemical dependant farming system [43].

Several scientific studies have suggested that the Bt technology utilised by Monsanto in their Bollgard, YieldGard and NewLeaf insect resistant crops may kill 'non-pest' insects such as the Monarch butterfly [44].

Developing world

Having encountered increasing opposition to GM technology in the developed global north, Monsanto have put more energy into pushing their products in the developing global south. An example of this being the attempt by Monsanto/Mahyco to rush their Bt insect resistant cotton through the Indian government's regulatory process and on to the market. The decision on allowing commercial growing of Bt cotton was postponed for a year in the face massive opposition from Indian farmers and NGOs all over the world [45].

Terminator Technology

Monsanto holds a patent for 'terminator' technology. Terminator technology involves the genetically engineering of plants to produce sterile seeds thus forcing farmers to buy new seed every year, rather than saving their own seed from year to year. Monsanto has said it will not use this technology but still holds the patents and may use it in future [46].

Corporate Bully Boys

Monsanto don't like the thought of anyone publicly disagreeing with them or worse still pulling a fast one on them. Where their GM crops are being grown commercially Monsanto have paid a small army of private investigators to check whether farmers are growing their GM crops without permission. Monsanto have successfully sued a Canadian farmer Percy Schmeiser for supposedly planting GM oil seed rape without a license agreement. Percy claims that he has never planted GM crops on his land and that any GM crops on

his land are a result of cross pollination from GM crops grown on neighbouring farms. He is launching a counter suit against Monsanto [47].

In 1997 2 TV journalists Steve Wilson and Jane Akre who had been making a documentary on the dangers of Monsanto's BST were fired by their employers Fox TV. Fox TV had come under pressure from Monsanto to change the content of the documentary, when Wilson and Akre refused to be muzzled they were sacked [48].

In 1998 Monsanto took out a wide ranging SLAPP (Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation) against activists from Genetix Snowball. At the time Genetix Snowball were engaged in a campaign of accountable, non-violent direct action against GM crops. The injunction was designed to intimidate members of the public into not taking direct action against Monsanto's UK GM field trials [49].

In 1998 the environmental journal the Ecologist was due to publish a special edition attacking Monsanto. However, the Ecologist's printers - Penwells of Saltash, Cornwall, destroyed the 14,000 print run without notice fearing liable action from Monsanto [50].

Climate Change Co-option

Monsanto have seen the potential for new markets for their GM products within the mechanisms of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol on climate change [51]. Since 1998 Monsanto has been one of the principle corporations attempting to hijack the UN climate change negotiations for its own ends. Monsanto claims that its products offer high tech solutions in the battle to reduce CO2 emissions. Monsanto hopes to gain carbon credits in two ways.

1. Monsanto claims that wide spread use of RoundUp Ready crops will reduce the need for ploughing thus keeping large quantities of CO2 locked in the soil. AND MORE Toxins in Food!
2. Monsanto hopes to be a major provider of GM trees for forestry 'carbon sinks' (large areas of forests planted to soak up CO2 emissions). Monsanto are close to commercialising RoundUp Ready trees and are rumoured to be developing carbon absorbing trees and plants.

Cindy Pawelski

, 53202