

# 10 Things Monsanto Does Not Want You to Know

## What's wrong with Genetic Engineering?



Genetic engineering refers to a set of technologies used to change the genetic makeup of cells and move genes across species boundaries to produce novel organisms. Once released, these genetically modified organisms (GMOs) can easily spread and interbreed with other organisms, and they are virtually impossible to recall back to the laboratory.

Monsanto provides roughly 90% of GMO seeds in the world. These seeds have been genetically modified to produce their own pesticide or to survive repeated spraying of Monsanto's toxic herbicide Roundup. Monsanto's GMOs are not designed to increase yields to feed the world, but rather to increase Monsanto's profits. Monsanto sells high-priced, patented seeds to farmers who are required to sign contracts stating that they will buy new seeds every year. And as their crops become increasingly herbicide-resistant, Monsanto sells more and more chemicals to farmers who are caught in this vicious cycle.

Due to the enormous political clout of Monsanto, the American public is being denied the right to know whether their foods are genetically engineered or not. Following is a list of 10 facts about Monsanto and GMOs, and how they can adversely affect your health, local farmers, and the planet.

## 1 No GMO Labeling Laws in the US

More than 70% of processed foods in the US contain GMO ingredients. Yet because Monsanto has fought hard to prevent labeling laws in the US, this information is kept from consumers. The US is the only developed country in the world that does not have mandatory GMO labeling laws – even though more than 62 other countries, including Japan, China, Korea, Australia, New Zealand and the entire European Union, have either banned GMOs or have laws requiring mandatory labeling.

## 2 Lack of Adequate Safety Testing

In May 1992, Vice President Dan Quayle announced the FDA's consumer right-to-know policy which stated that GMO foods need not be labeled nor safety-tested. Meanwhile, prominent scientists such as Arpad Pusztai and Gilles-Eric Seralini have publicized alarming research revealing severe damage to animals fed GMO foods.

## 3 Monsanto Puts Small Farmers out of Business

Percy Schmeiser is a Canadian farmer whose canola fields were contaminated with Monsanto's Roundup Ready Canola by pollen from a nearby GMO farm. Monsanto successfully argued in a lawsuit that Schmeiser violated the company's patent rights, and tried to force Schmeiser to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars in damages. This type of biotech bullying is happening all over North America.

## 4 Monsanto Products Pollute the Developing World

According to plant pathologist Don Huber, glyphosate, the active ingredient in Monsanto's Roundup, changes soil ecology, making plants susceptible to diseases that could eventually cause diseases in humans. Glyphosate kills many bacteria, giving other bacteria a competitive advantage. It also makes plants highly susceptible to soil borne diseases. With increasing use of glyphosate, Huber said a number of plant pathogens are "emerging" or "re-emerging," including a number of fusarium and root rot diseases. At the same time that diseases are increasing, glyphosate has a negative effect on a number of beneficial soil organisms, including those that fix nitrogen, mycorrhizae, plant growth promoting organisms and earthworms. Huber's allegations of the impact of glyphosate in soil sterility echo those of Elaine Ingham, a soil ecologist with the Rodale Institute.

## 5 Monsanto in Bed with Government Regulators

A revolving door exists between Monsanto and US regulatory and judicial bodies making key decisions. Justice Clarence Thomas, a former Monsanto lawyer, was the one who wrote the majority opinion on a key Monsanto case. Michael Taylor once worked for the FDA, later represented Monsanto as a lawyer, then returned as the FDA's Deputy Commissioner for Policy when rBGH, a growth hormone used to make dairy cows produce more milk, was granted approval.

## 6 Monsanto Guilty of False Advertising

France's highest court ruled in 2009 that Monsanto had lied about the safety of its weed killer Roundup. The court confirmed an earlier judgment that Monsanto had falsely advertised its herbicide as "biodegradable".

## 7 Consumers Reject Bovine Growth Hormone

In the wake of mass consumer pressure, major retailers such as Safeway, Publix, Wal-Mart, and Kroger banned store brand milk products containing Monsanto's controversial genetically engineered hormone rBGH. Starbucks, under pressure from the OCA and our allies, has likewise banned rBGH milk.

## 8 GMO Crops Do Not Increase Yields

A major UN/World Bank-sponsored report compiled by 400 scientists and endorsed by 58 countries concluded that GM crops have little to offer to the challenges of poverty, hunger, and climate change. Better alternatives are available. The report championed organic farming as the sustainable way forward for developing countries.

## 9 Monsanto Controls US Soy Market

In 1996, when Monsanto began selling Roundup Ready soybeans, only 2% of soybeans in the US contained their patented gene. By 2008, over 90% of soybeans in the US contained Monsanto's gene.

## 10 GMO Foods May Lead to Food Allergies

In March 1999, UK researchers at the York Laboratory were alarmed to discover that reactions to soy had skyrocketed by 50% over the previous year. Genetically modified soy had recently entered the UK from US imports and the soy used in the study was largely GM.

MILLIONS AGAINST  
MONSANTO

HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Read the latest news, join in on Action Alerts, and sign up for OCA's free newsletter at [OrganicConsumers.org](http://OrganicConsumers.org)
- Buy organic foods at your local health food store, co-op or farmers' market.
- Avoid processed foods, especially those containing corn, soy, cottonseed oil and canola, canola and sugar beet sugar unless they are organically certified.
- Call or send a letter to your public officials. Tell them to support labeling and safety testing of GMOs and subsidies to help family farmers make the transition to organic.
- Support local efforts to pass GMO labeling legislation. Join the Right to Know GMO Coalition of States. [righttoknow-gmo.org](http://righttoknow-gmo.org).
- Join the Traitor Brands Boycott and pledge to boycott products whose parent companies poured millions into defeating Prop 37, the CA GMO Labeling Initiative. [orgcns.org/SzMFdi](http://orgcns.org/SzMFdi).

Organic Consumers Association  
[OrganicConsumers.org](http://OrganicConsumers.org)

