

## SOME OF SLOW FOOD'S ACTIONS ON GMOs

### Australia

The Slow Food Perth Convivium organizes seminars and created a blog on the theme of GMO foods.

The Slow Food Melbourne Convivium organizes talks and film screenings on the topic and is involved in the protest against the Victorian government's decision to allow GMO cultivation.

For information: Slow Food Perth - info@slowfoodperth.org.au

Slow Food Melbourne - melbourne.victoria@slowfoodaustralia.com.au

### Germany

The Bavarian Anti-GMO food community, coordinated by Christoph Fischer, is a network of citizens that organizes activities to protest against GMOs, including rallies, Eat-Ins, etc.

For information: info@zivlicourage.ro

### Iceland

Dominique Jónsson Pledel, convivium leader of Slow Food Reykjavik, has created an anti-GMO Facebook group.

For information: dominique@simnet.is

### Italy

Slow Food Italy, together with other agricultural and environmental organizations, consumers and grassroots movements, together representing millions of Italians, is part of the Task Force for a GMO-Free Italy.

For information: centrostudi@slowfood.it

### Mexico

In January 2010 Slow Food Tehuacan Mixteca Popoloca Convivium launched a campaign to protect their traditional varieties of corn following the government's decision to allow multinationals to plant the country's first GMO crops.

For information: raulhernandez@alternativas.org.mx

Tell us about your work and join the Stop GMO campaign

Visit our website

www.slowfood.com

### Russia

Alexander Baranov, convivium leader of Slow Food Mosca-Kovcheg, presides over the national association for genetic security that promotes biological security at the legislative level and organizes campaigns to raise awareness among consumers.

For information: asbaranoff@yandex.ru

### Spain

Terres de Lleida Convivium has been campaigning against the cultivation of GMOs together with the Spanish association Tangènics foral for several years. In June 2009, the convivium joined forces with the environmental movement Som lo que sembrem in a hunger strike outside the Catalan parliament.

For information: info@slowfoodterresde lleida.com

### Uruguay

Slow Food Canario convivium is working in support of a new law that would ban the cultivation, including experimental open air plantings, of genetically modified soya and corn and is also lobbying for obligatory labeling legislation for all GMO products.

For information: laura.rosano@gmail.com

### Sweden

Member of the Slow Food Skane Nordest Convivium committee, Akiko Frid is an expert on GMOs, collaborates with Greenpeace and participates in the Commission on GMOs in the European Parliament.

For information: akiko.frid@gmail.com



# GMO

# STOP THE BIG SCAM!

**STOP GMOs**

With genetically modified organisms (GMOs), we risk transforming our food into a patented commodity controlled by a few multinationals, and stripping farmers and consumers of their rights.

GMOs are unreliable from a scientific point of view, inefficient in economic terms and unsustainable in an environmental analysis. Little is known about them from a health perspective and from a technical standpoint they are obsolete.

## **Why do we want our land and our table to be free of GMOs?**

### **GMOs don't feed the world**

99% of GMO crops are not destined for human food, but rather for animal feed and biofuels. Land dedicated to growing GMOs is being expanded at the expense of food production.

### **It is not true that they are more productive**

GMOs have not increased productivity. According to official data from the United States Department of Agriculture, there has been no recorded increase in the soya and corn yield following the introduction of GMOs to American agriculture.

### **They do not reduce the use of chemical products**

Genetically modified plants are resistant to specific herbicides. For example, Monsanto sells genetically modified corn seeds and also sells Roundup Ready, an extremely potent herbicide that is the only one able to be used with cultivation of this corn. However, using Roundup on the GMO fields doesn't eliminate all of the weeds: some resist the herbicide and this resistance is strengthened with each generation. These weeds become problematic and new chemical products must be invented to deal with them.

### **They impoverish biodiversity**

GMOs require larger areas of land and intensive monoculture cultivation to reduce production costs. This in turn means farmers are displaced from their land and cultures and traditional knowledge are lost.

### **They allow multinationals to control food**

The multinational companies that patent and produce GMO seeds control the majority of the seed market and often also produce herbicides and fertilizers.

### **They compromise food sovereignty for communities**

How can organic, biodynamic and conventional farmers be sure that their crops haven't been contaminated? The spread, even limited, of GMO cultivation in open fields will change the quality and state of our agriculture, taking away our freedom to choose what we cultivate and eat.

### **They compromise freedom of choice for consumers**

At the international level, labeling laws regarding GMO products lack uniformity and are insufficient. In Africa and Asia no legislation exists at all. In America there is no acknowledged difference between products containing GMOs and conventional products, and therefore it is not deemed necessary to inform consumers of the presence of GMOs. In Europe, producers are obliged to declare the presence of GMOs if in a quantity above 0.9%. However, also in Europe the majority of animal feeds commercially available contain genetically modified soya, but it is not obligatory to declare derivative products such as milk or meat on the label.

#### **What are GMOs?**

A GMO is an organism in which a gene belonging to one species is transferred to the DNA of another – for example a bacterium to a plant. This process cannot occur in nature through breeding or natural genetic cross over.

#### **What aren't they?**

Supporters of GMOs would like to make consumers believe that they have always existed. In reality they are intentionally confusing the genetic engineering that produces GMOs with other biotechnologies such as grafting, interbreeding, seed propagation, etc. These techniques, some of which are thousands of years old, actually underlie the fundamental developments made by agriculture and humanity itself. GMOs are born exclusively in laboratories; there is no way in which they can be created in nature.

14 million agriculturists across 25 nations plant genetically modified seeds on 134 million hectares. (2009 data).

Of the crops grown worldwide, GMOs represent 77% of the soya, 49% of cotton, 26% of corn and 21% of rapeseed. This is a clear sign of the great decrease in biodiversity on cultivated land.

In the first phase of GMO cultivation, between 1996 and 2005, they were used primarily across the Americas. Since 2006 however, the greatest growth has occurred in Asia and Africa.

GMOs have been around for 30 years, with the first GMO plant dating back to 1981. But after a great amount of research, in practice only four GMO plants are being used commercially – soya, cotton, corn and rapeseed – and only two characteristics have been integrated: tolerance to herbicides and resistance to insects.