

France Bans GM Corn Amid Mass US Protests against Monsanto

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Amid mass US protests against Monsanto in mid-March, France imposed a temporary moratorium on the planting of Monsanto's genetically modified corn, MON810.

"Due to the proximity of the planting season," said Agriculture Minister Bruno Le Maire along with Francois Fillon, Minister for Ecology and Sustainable Development, in a press release on Friday, authorities "decided to take a precautionary measure to temporarily prohibit the cultivation of maize MON810 on the national territory to protect the environment."

All prior plantings of MON810, trade name YieldGard, become illegal on March 20.

Headquartered in St. Louis, Missouri, Monsanto announced in January that it would not sell genetically modified corn in France due to public opposition.

A [growing list](#) of human health and environmental hazards from GM crops has raised concern over bioengineered food and feed, including a literally explosive growth of a "new" microbe on pig manure:



Likely linked to GM feed served to most livestock in the US, methane-filled "foam" growing on pig manure has resulted in several pig farm explosions since 2001, killing thousands of animals.

"And there's no stopping it," reports the [Daily Mail](#), "the foam has now started growing on one in four farms across the Midwest." Scientists believe a new type of bacteria may have developed.

This comports with plant pathologist [Don Huber's discovery](#) last year of a new pathogen associated with spontaneous abortions in livestock, which has been linked to the use of glyphosate, the main ingredient in Monsanto's Roundup herbicide.

Modified with a Bt protein to kill insects, MON810 is losing its efficacy in the US. The Western rootworm beetle - one of the most serious threats to corn - has [developed resistance](#) to the bacterial toxin in eleven states.

In early March, a group of pro-biotech corn entomologists [sent a letter](#) to the US Environmental Protection Agency warning that insect resistance to genetically modified corn can be halted by planting non-GMO seed. The warning will likely go unheeded as the US Dept. of Agriculture [announced](#) plans to speed up the process of GM approval by 18 months.

Over the past eight months, the European Commission has [approved](#) 11 new transgenic crops. However, EU nations can independently restrict or prohibit the sales of products under certain conditions.

Also on Friday in the US, GM opponents held a nationwide protest against Monsanto. Dressed in hazmat suits, they targeted Congress for its complicity in allowing the dangerous adulterant in the food and feed supply:



Protests continue today across the US, and include an action [against WalMart](#) for planning to sell Monsanto's GM corn this year.

The move to label GMO foods in the US grew stronger last week when 55 Members of Congress [sent a letter](#) to the US Food and Drug Admin demanding the label.

In California, a statewide petition drive is underway to put the labeling initiative on the ballot this November. With [six weeks remaining](#) to collect one million registered voter signatures, the [Label GMOs](#) group got a welcome boost when Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds designed a special seed packet to be used for the campaign.

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