

GMO Maize Triggers Tumors in Rats: New Email Leak Shows How Monsanto Stifles Criticism

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The Seralini debacle is a perfect case study of how industry conspires with cooperative scientists to help bury information that is harmful to its commercial interests.

Monsanto is one of the most hated companies on the planet. ...Unless you ask FORTUNE Magazine, that is. In that case, it's apparently one of the world's [most admired companies](#). But if you actually ask real human beings then it ranks right behind BP and Bank of America as the [third most hated company](#) in the world.

Strange, then, that Monsanto's reputation in the scientific literature is so squeaky clean. Apparently it's just a bunch of science-hating neanderthals who dislike Monsanto's products and all of those squeaky clean couldn't-tell-a-lie, couldn't-hurt-a-fly scientists know better.

Of course, as readers of [this column](#) will know, this seeming conundrum isn't so strange after all. Scientists aren't angels and the things they study (as well as the results they get) are all too often influenced by who's paying for their research. And in the case of the peer-reviewed GMO safety literature, it isn't hard to tie a lot of it back to the biotech companies themselves, Monsanto foremost among them.

If any more proof of this insidious influence were needed, it just arrived. A set of emails obtained under a freedom of information request has exposed the types of tricks that Monsanto does to keep "problematic" studies out of the literature.

First, some background. If you haven't seen it already (or even if you have) go back and re-watch or re-read my ([award-winning](#)) 2013 report on the Seralini Roundup toxicity study, "[Genetic Fallacy: How Monsanto Silences Dissent](#)" and last year's follow-up, "[Study Linking GMOs and Tumors Vindicated Yet Again...MSM Stays Silent.](#)"

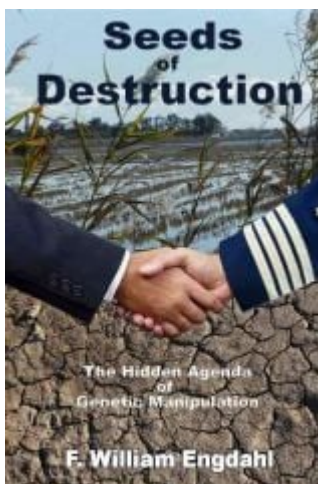
Long story short: French biologist **Dr. Gilles-Éric Séralini** published a feeding study in which rats were fed various levels of Monsanto's GM maize NK603 and the Roundup herbicide it is grown with. The results were shocking: despite having been cleared by an earlier (industry sponsored) study, Seralini's study found liver congestions, necrosis, tumors and early death in rats fed Roundup or GMO corn, separately or combined.

As soon as Seralini's results were announced the biotech industry and their lapdogs in the white lab coats began falling all over themselves, frothing at the mouth, and denouncing the study to anyone and everyone who would listen.

“They used the wrong kind of rats!” they complained. “

And they didn’t use enough rats!” they added. “And...and...uh, the statistical analysis was inadequate!”

As independent researchers like F. William Engdahl [pointed out](#) at the time, these criticisms were invalid because all GMO toxicity studies use the exact same type and number of rats as the Seralini study did. But such quibbles were lost amongst the din and bray of the chattering spokesman for the biotech industry, and eventually enough smoke was generated to allow the journal of Food and Chemical Toxicology (FCT) which published the study to retract it.



[To order F. William Engdahl’s book from GR, click image](#)

You’ll have to see the full report to fully appreciate how unusual this retraction was (even explicitly going against the journal’s own [retraction guidelines](#)), but here’s the upshot. After Seralini’s study was published, the FCT created an entirely new position: “Associate Editor for Biotechnology.” And out of all the people in the world they could have chosen for this new, made-up role, they just happened to choose Richard E. Goodman, who had previously worked in regulatory sciences for Monsanto from 1997 to 2004. After Goodman hopped on board, the journal not only retracted the Seralini study, but also a second, [Brazilian study](#) that showed adverse GMO health effects.

At the time [it was speculated](#) that Goodman’s sudden appearance on the journal’s editorial board was directly linked to the retraction of the biotech-unfriendly studies. It was a reasonable supposition, to be sure, but still just that: supposition. Well, no more.

French journalist Stéphane Foucart dove into the story for [Le Monde](#) and uncovered some damning emails via a freedom of information request. As GMWatch notes in [their article](#) on the scandal:

Foucart writes that emails obtained by USRTK show ‘a remarkable closeness’ between Goodman and his old employer. In reality, however, as Foucart points out, the relationship between Goodman and Monsanto is not so old. Goodman himself wrote in a message of 2012 that ‘50% of [his] salary’ actually comes from a project funded by Monsanto, Bayer, BASF, Dow, DuPont and Syngenta, and consists of establishing a database of food allergens.

In fact, as Foucart goes on to note, shortly before joining the FCT in his made-up position, Goodman had been called out by a Monsanto employee for not being pro-GMO enough in a

newspaper article which quoted him. Goodman went on to issue a formal apology to the six biotech companies (including Monsanto) that funded his work.

But wait, it gets worse! When Seralini's study was published in September 2012, Goodman actually wrote Monsanto asking the firm to provide him with criticisms of the study. He was then secretly hired by Wallace Hayes, the editor of the journal at that time, specifically to organize a response to Seralini's work. Hayes not only sent an email to Monsanto employees informing him of Goodman's appointment to the journal, but specifically wrote: "My request, as editor, and from Professor Goodman, is that those of you who are highly critical of the recent paper by Seralini and his co-authors volunteer as potential reviewers."

From the moment of its publication, the editor of the journal that Seralini's paper was published in was actively conspiring with Monsanto to undermine it. Strange, indeed...if you think that scientists are only interested in the high-minded pursuit of the truth, that is.

The Seralini debacle is a perfect case study of how industry conspires with cooperative scientists to help bury information that is harmful to its commercial interests. But it is not all bad news. Before Seralini's study was retracted, it withstood criticism from no less than seven "expert witnesses" who tried to debunk it in a Filipino courtroom; the "experts" lost and helped contribute to a ban on GMO eggplants in the country. And in 2014 the study [was republished](#) in Environmental Sciences Europe. And Seralini even [won two defamation cases](#) against those who had slandered his research.

In the end, as in so many things, the truth will out. And when it does, it just so happens that those billions of people around the planet who detest Monsanto are on the right side of history. Now if only someone would tell those upstanding "journalists" at FORTUNE.

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