

Monsanto Buys 'Terminator' Seeds Company

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Theme: [Biotechnology and GMO](#)

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The United States Government has been financing research on a genetic engineering technology which, when commercialized, will give its owners the power to control the food seed of entire nations or regions. The Government has been working quietly on this technology since 1983. Now, the little-known company that has been working in this genetic research with the Government's US Department of Agriculture—Delta & Pine Land—is about to become part of the world's largest supplier of patented genetically-modified seeds (GMO), Monsanto Corporation of St. Louis, Missouri.

Relations between Monsanto, Delta & Pine Land and the USDA, on closer scrutiny, show the deep and dark side of the much-heralded genetic revolution in agriculture. It proves deep-held suspicions that the Gene Revolution is not about 'solving the world hunger problem' as its advocates claim. It's about handing over control of the seeds for mankind's basic food supply—rice, corn, soybeans, wheat, even fruit, vegetables and cotton—to privately owned corporations. Once the seeds and their use are patented and controlled by one or several private agribusiness multinationals, it will be they who can decide whether or not a particular customer—let's say for argument, China or Brazil or India or Japan—whether they will or won't get the patented seeds from Monsanto, or from one of its licensee GMO partners like Bayer Crop Sciences, Syngenta or DuPont's Pioneer Hi-Bred International.

While most of us don't bother to reflect on where the corn in the box of Kellogg's Corn Flakes or the rice in a box of Uncle Ben's Converted Rice come from, when we grab it from the supermarket shelf, they all must originate with seeds. Seeds can either be taken by a farmer from the previous season's seeds, and planted to produce the next harvest. Or, seeds can be bought new each harvest season, from the companies which sell their seeds.

The advent of commercial GMO seeds in the early 1990's allowed companies like Monsanto, DuPont or Dow Chemicals to go from supplying agriculture chemical herbicides like Roundup, to patenting genetically altered seeds for basic farm crops like corn, rice, soybeans or wheat. For almost a quarter century, since 1983, the US Government has quietly been working to perfect a genetically engineered technique whereby farmers would be forced to turn to their seed supplier each harvest to get new seeds. The seeds would only produce one harvest. After that the seeds from that harvest would commit 'suicide' and be unusable.

There has been much hue and cry, correctly so, that this process, patented 'suicide' seeds, officially termed GURTs (Genetic Use Restriction Technologies), is a threat to poor farmers in developing countries like India or Brazil, who traditionally save their own seeds for the next planting. In fact, GURTs, more popularly referred to as Terminator seeds for the brutal manner in which they kill off plant reproduction possibilities, is a threat to the food security as well of North America, Western Europe, Japan and anywhere Monsanto and its elite cartel

of GMO agribusiness partners enters a market.

The Curious History of Delta & Pine Land

Delta & Pine Land is a company that, despite the pine in its name, has deep roots. Founded in 1888, it has its headquarters at One Cotton Row in Scott, Mississippi, nestled between Goat Island and Choktaw Bar Island on the Mississippi River, near the Arkansas border. However, the people running things at Delta Pine are anything but your typical Mississippi black-dirt cotton farmers.

In 1983, Delta & Pine Land (D&PL) joined with the US Department of Agriculture in a project to develop Terminator seeds. It was one of the earliest experiments with GMO. It was a long-term project. The US Government has been serious about Terminator beginning more than two decades ago.

In March 1998 the US Patent Office granted Patent No. 5,723,765 to Delta & Pine Land for a patent titled, *Control of Plant Gene Expression*. The patent is owned jointly, according to Delta & Pine's Security & Exchange Commission 10K filing, 'by D&PL and the United States of America, as represented by the Secretary of Agriculture.'

The patent has global coverage. To quote further from the official D&PL SEC filing, 'The patent broadly covers all species of plant and seed, both transgenic (GMO-ed) and conventional, for a system designed to allow control of progeny seed viability without harming the crop'(sic).

Then, in a manner reminiscent of Big Brother in George Orwell's novel, *1984*, D&PL claims, 'One application of the technology could be to control unauthorized planting of seed of proprietary varieties...by making such a practice non-economic since non-authorized saved seed will not germinate, and, therefore, would be useless for planting.' D&PL calls the thousand-year-old tradition of farmer-saved seed by the pejorative term, 'brown bagging' as though it is something dirty and corrupt.

Translated into lay language, D&PL officially declares the purpose of its Patent No. 5,723,765, *Control of Plant Gene Expression*, is to prevent farmers who once get trapped into buying transgenic or GMO seeds from a company such as Monsanto or Syngenta, from 'brown bagging' or being able to break free of control of their future crops by Monsanto and friends. As D&PL puts it, their patent gives them 'the prospect of opening significant worldwide seed markets to the sale of transgenic technology in varietal crops in which crop seed currently is saved and used in subsequent seasons as planting seed.'

Instead, the farmer or the country whose farmers depend on Monsanto patented GMO seeds must pay a license fee to Monsanto each year to get new seeds. 'No tickee, no laundry,' as the old Brooklyn poet would say.

Terminator is the answer to the agribusiness dream of controlling world food production. No longer would they need to hire expensive detectives to spy on whether farmers were re-using Monsanto or other GMO patented seed. Terminator corn or soybeans or cotton seeds could be genetically modified to 'commit suicide' after one harvest season. That would automatically prevent farmers from saving and re-using the seed for the next harvest. The technology would be a means of enforcing Monsanto or other GMO patent rights, and forcing payment of farmer use fees not only in developing economies, where patent rights were,

understandably, little respected, but also in industrial OECD countries.

With Terminator patent rights, once a country such as Argentina or Brazil or Iraq or the USA or Canada opened its doors to the spread of GMO patented seeds among its farmers, their food security would be potentially hostage to a private multinational company, a company which, for whatever reasons, especially given its intimate ties to the US Government, might decide to use 'food as a weapon' to compel a US-friendly policy from that country or group of countries.

Sound far-fetched? Go back to what then-Secretary of State Henry Kissinger did in countries like Allende's Chile to force a regime change to a 'US-friendly' Pinochet dictatorship by withholding USAID and private food exports to Chile. Kissinger dubbed it 'food as a weapon.' Terminator is merely the logical next step in food weapon technology.

The role of the US Government in backing and financing Delta & Pine Land's decades of Terminator research is even more revealing. As Kissinger said back in the 1970's, 'Control the oil and you can control entire Continents. Control food and you control people...'

In a June 1998 interview, USDA spokesman, Willard Phelps, defined the US Government policy on Terminator seeds. He explained that USDA wanted the technology to be 'widely licensed and made expeditiously available to many seed companies.' He meant agribusiness GMO giants like Monsanto, DuPont or Dow. The USDA was open about their reasons: They wanted to get Terminator seeds into the developing world where the Rockefeller Foundation had made eventual proliferation of genetically engineered crops the heart of its GMO strategy from the beginnings of its rice genome project in 1984.

USDA's Phelps stated that the US Government's goal in fostering the widest possible development of Terminator technology was 'to increase the value of proprietary seed owned by US seed companies and to open up new markets in Second and Third World countries.'

Under WTO rules on free trade in agriculture, countries are forbidden to impose their own national health restrictions on GMO imports if it is deemed to be an 'unfair trade barrier.' It begins to become clear why it was the US Government and US agribusiness which during the late 1980's pushed at the GATT Uruguay Round for creation of a World Trade Organization, with its supranational arbitrary powers over world agriculture trade. It all fits into a neat picture of patented seeds, forced on reluctant WTO member nations, under threat of WTO sanctions, and now of Terminator or suicide seeds.

A closer look at who runs and owns Delta & Pine Land is instructive.

Arkansas Politics and D&PL

The largest shareholder in D&PL is the Stephens Group of Little Rock, Arkansas. Here is where things become interesting indeed.

The man who is Chairman of the Board of DP&L is Jon E.M. Jacoby, who came to DP&L as representative of the Stephens Group. Jacoby is a Director and Vice Chairman of The Stephens Group LLC, the Arkansas-based private equity firm owned by the Stephens family.

The Stephens Group prides itself on being the nation's largest investment bank outside Wall Street, based, of all places, in little ol' Little Rock, in hillbilly land, Arkansas, one of the poorest states in the United States. Stephens Inc. is also one of the biggest institutional

shareholders in 30 large multinationals including the Arkansas based firms **Tyson Food**, the world's largest chicken industrial factory operation and the infamous Arkansas giant, **Wal-Mart**.

Jackson Stephens, who founded the group with his brother, Witt, were more than just lucky Arkansas bankers and billionaires. Stephens evidently built his career and fortune by being connected to the 'right' people. He was a US Naval Academy classmate of Jimmy Carter and during the Georgia bank scandals of President Carter's Office of Management & Budget chief, Bert Lance, it was Jack Stephens who stepped in to bail Lance out of an extremely embarrassing financial debacle with Lance's old bank, National Bank of Georgia.

How Stephens helped Jimmy Carter's fellow Georgia buddy, Lance, is the interesting part. Stephens introduced Lance to a Pakistani businessman, Agha Hasan Abedi. Abedi was the founder of a curious Luxembourg-registered, London-based bank called BCCI.

In 1990, BCCI was convicted of money laundering for the Columbian Cocaine Cartels in Miami.

In October, 1992, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee released an 800-page report on the BCCI collapse. They called the BCCI scandal, 'the largest case of organized crime in history, spanning over some 72 nations,' adding that it represented an 'international financial crime on a massive and global scale,' and that the bank 'systematically bribed world leaders and political figures throughout the world.'

The Senate report concluded that among the provable charges against BCCI were 'BCCI's criminality, including fraud...involving billions of dollars; money laundering in Europe, Africa, Asia, and the America; BCCI's bribery of officials in most of those locations; its support of terrorism, arms trafficking, and the sale of nuclear technologies; its management of prostitution; its commission and facilitation of income tax evasion, smuggling, and illegal immigration; its illicit purchases of banks and real estate; and a panoply of financial crimes limited only by the imagination of its officers and customers.'

Jackson Stephens was no casual business acquaintance of BCCI's Agha Hasan Abedi. In response to the concerns over Jackson Stephens' involvement in BCCI, the Ohio Attorney General noted in a 1993 report, 'Stephens' name has been linked to securities violations that allegedly occurred when the Bank of Commerce and Credit International (BCCI), a foreign bank dominated by Pakistani financier Agha Hasan Abedi, acquired stock and control over the Washington-based First American Bank.' In 1991, Stephens joined BCCI investor Mochtar Riady in buying BCCI's former Hong Kong subsidiary from its liquidators.

The Stephens Group was well-connected to another interesting Asian banking group, the billionaire Indonesian Riady family of Moktar and his son James Riady, who own the Lippo Bank in Indonesia. The Riadys are Chinese-Indonesian businessmen who, of all places, moved to Arkansas in the 1970's, despite holding billions of assets in Asia. Stephens and Riady hit it off and soon Stephens and Riady bought a bank in Hong Kong. Stephens then invited Riady to invest in a Little Rock, Arkansas bank called Worthen.

BCCI and Jackson Stephens, chairman of the Stephens Group of Arkansas were well known to one another. Stephens Group board member, Jon E.M. Jacoby, today Chairman of Delta & Pine Land, and still a Vice Director of The Stephens Group, was a very senior, trusted member of the Stephens' inside circle for more than 35 years.

Jackson Stephens' Stephens Group financially staked Sam Walton when he started Wal-Mart in 1970. Stephens also financed Tyson Foods to become the agribusiness global giant it is today. Jon Jacoby, as senior executive of the Stephens Group, had arranged the 1970 Wal-Mart deal. Jon E.M. Jacoby and Jackson Stephens went way back.

Jacoby was Vice President of Stephens Inc. in the early 1990's, shortly after the BCCI scandals and early into the Presidency of another Jackson Stephens protégé, former Arkansas Governor and recipient of Stephens' political largess, William Jefferson Clinton.

When an Arkansas reporter questioned Jacoby on allegations of Clinton's alleged corruption as Governor of Arkansas, Jacoby quipped, "You see a girl walking down the street. You can say, 'There goes a beautiful girl' or 'There goes a whore.' What the hell's the difference? They've both got legs."

Arkansas politics is known for its colorful metaphors and its colorful politicians like William Jefferson Clinton. It's good to get a little of the flavor of this Arkansas colorfulness to get a better picture of Delta & Pine Land.

Stephens Group, Tyson Farms and Other Arkansas Fairy Tales

A tangled web of relations links the Stephens Group and Delta & Pine Land of Scott, Mississippi with another satellite in the agribusiness orbit of the influential Stephens Group. The Stephens Group is also linked intimately with Arkansas-based Tyson Foods, the US' largest agribusiness processor of industrialized chicken meat, and arguably one of its most unsanitary ones.

Tyson Foods curiously emerged from the recent Avian Flu (H5N1) virus scare as a winner, using the lie that their factory farm mass-bred assembly-line chickens were more 'sanitary' than free-roaming small farm chickens of Asia.

Washington Administrations, at least since the Presidency of Bill Clinton, seem to have a love affair of some sort with Tyson Foods.

It began when Clinton sought to name an Arkansas crony, Mike Espy, to be his Secretary of Agriculture. Before Clinton could submit Espy's name to the Senate for confirmation, however, Espy was sent to Arkansas for a meeting that would decide if Espy had the right stuff. The meeting was with Don Tyson, head of Tyson Foods.

Tyson apparently concluded that Espy indeed had the right stuff, at least as far as Tyson was concerned. Soon after being named head of USDA, Espy enacted measures significantly weakening Federal chicken waste and contamination standards. That opened the floodgates for expansion of Tyson Foods chicken factory farms into the huge concentrations of chicken waste and rivers overflowing with toxic pollution in Arkansas and beyond.

The *Wall Street Journal* on May 28, 2003 reviewed the allegations surrounding then-President Clinton and his wife, Hillary. They detailed some relevant points from the Clintons' Arkansas days:

1977

Hillary Rodham Clinton joins the Rose Law Firm. Jackson Stephens joins with former Carter administration budget director Bert Lance and a group of Mideast investors-later identified

as key figures in the corrupt Bank of Credit & Commerce International-in an unsuccessful attempt to acquire Financial General Bankshares in Washington, D.C

1978

October: Mrs. Clinton, now a partner at the Rose Firm, begins a series of commodities trades under the guidance of Tyson Foods executive Jim Blair, earning nearly \$100,000. (author's emphasis). The trades are not revealed until March 1994.

November: Bill Clinton is elected Governor of Arkansas.

The Rose law firm was the house law firm of Jackson Stephens' Stephens Group investment bank in Little Rock. To be the corporate law firm of the Stephens Group was no casual affair. It implied a deep trust relationship and perhaps more. As one crony of Jackson Stephens put it at that time, 'Jackson Stephens? He's the man who owns Arkansas.'

The head of the prestigious Rose law firm in Little Rock in those days was C. Joseph Giroir jr. In 1977 Giroir hired a young lawyer named Hillary Clinton to work for Rose. It was all one cozy Arkansas-Indonesia family back then.

The *Wall Street Journal* commentary on the Clinton years had the following entry for 1987, as Clinton was still Arkansas Governor:

1987:

Officials at investment giant Stephens Inc., including longtime Clinton friend, David Edwards, take steps to rescue Harken Energy, a struggling Texas oil company with George W. Bush on its board. Over the next three years, Mr. Edwards brings BCCI-linked investors and advisers into Harken deals. One of them, Abdullah Bakhsh, purchases \$10 million in shares of Stephens-dominated Worthen Bank. (author's emphasis).

Jackson Stephens' political largesse was non-partisan: Democrats Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton, and then Republican George W. Bush, the man now in the White House as Monsanto seeks approval to take over the Stephens Group's Delta & pine land.

In December 1992, just after Clinton had been elected President in a campaign financed at critical points by Jackson Stephens and friends, including the Indonesian-American Riady family, Vince Foster, an Arkansas friend of the Clinton's, and a law partner at Hillary's Rose law firm, met James McDougal. Foster arranged for McDougal to buy the Clintons' remaining shares in Whitewater Development Co. That land deal was focus of Congressional investigation of the Clintons. McDougal was loaned the money for the purchase by Tyson Foods counsel Jim Blair, the long-time Clinton friend and commodities adviser who in 1978 had 'tutored' Hillary in her fabulously successful commodities speculation. The loan by Tyson's Jim Blair to McDougal was never repaid.

No sooner did Bill and Hillary Clinton move into the White House, and the Tyson Foods-approved Mike Espy took over as US Secretary of Agriculture, than Hillary's former law partner, Joseph Giroir, set up a corporation. It was called Arkansas International Development Corporation (AIDC). In fact, it appears that the AIDC was set up to do joint ventures with the Indonesian Lippo Group of the business partners of Jackson Stephens,

Mokhtar and James Riady.

The Arkansas International Development Corporation brokered a deal between Indonesia's Lippo Group and Arkansas' Tyson Foods that opened Indonesia to import Tyson Foods industrially-produced Arkansas factory farm chickens. One food Indonesia does not need to import is certainly chickens. The cheap Arkansas imports destroyed the fragile economy of domestic Indonesian small family chicken farmers.

Another project of AIDC was to issue bonds to build an airport in the Arkansas backwoods for the sole purpose of shipping Tyson Farms chickens to Indonesia. Recall that Clinton's wife had been profiting from the trading advice of Tyson Foods since October 1978, a month before her husband became Governor.

Under the Clinton Presidency, agribusiness, especially agribusiness tied to the Stephens' interests, made huge advances.

Agriculture Secretary Espy was forced to resign in October 1994, and was indicted on charges of accepting bribes and other gratuities. Among the charges against him were making false statements, concealing money from prohibited sources, illegal gratuities, illegal contributions, falsifying records, interstate transportation of stolen property, money laundering, and illegal dispersal of USDA subsidies. The largest corporate offender was Tyson Foods. Tyson had illegally offered Espy \$12,000 in airplane rides, football tickets and other payoffs. Espy got off because the law makes it easier to convict a briber than a bribee. Tyson paid the government \$6 million to close its case.

Tyson had been enthusiastic supporters of the Clinton family for years. In 1994, *Time* reported that a senior pilot for Tyson, Joe Henrickson, had been grilled for three days by the Espy Independent Prosecutor, Dan Smaltz, and FBI agents. They grilled the Tyson pilot about earlier transfers of cash to the (Arkansas) Governor's (Bill Clinton) mansion. According to *Time*, Henrickson claimed to have carried white envelopes containing a quarter-inch stack of \$100 bills on six occasions.

Time magazine reported that, 'In one case, [Henrickson claimed] a Tyson executive handed him an envelope of cash in the company's aircraft hanger in Fayetteville and said, 'This is for Governor Clinton.' Arkansas has its political traditions and the Stephens and Tyson families are evidently skilled practitioners of that art.

The real interest in Jacoby's Delta & Pine Land

By now the question comes, what is so attractive about the Stephens Group's Delta & Pine Land that Monsanto makes its second bid to add it to its global genetically-engineered seeds empire?

It's the patent Delta & Pine Land, together with the US Government, holds—Patent No. 5,723,765, titled, *Control of Plant Gene Expression*. The USDA through its Agricultural Research Service (USDA-ARS) in Lubbock, Texas, as already noted, has worked with Delta & Pine Land since 1983 to perfect Terminator GMO technology. Patent No. 5,723,765 is the patent for Terminator technology.

One year later, in early 1999 Monsanto, the largest producer of GMO seeds and related agri-chemicals, announced it was acquiring Delta & Pine Land along with Delta's Terminator patents.

In October 1999, however, following a worldwide storm of protest against Terminator seeds that threatened the very future of the Rockefeller Foundation's 'Gene Revolution' Dr. Gordon Conway, President of the prestigious Rockefeller Foundation, met privately with the Board of Directors of Monsanto. Conway convinced Monsanto that for the long-term future of their GMO Project, they must go public to indicate to a worried world that it would not 'commercialize' Terminator. Development of the genetic revolution and genetic engineering as a research area had been the project of the Rockefeller Foundation over decades, along with researchers in the family's Rockefeller University.

The Anglo-Swiss Syngenta joined with Monsanto in declaring solemnly that they would also not commercialize their work on GURTS or Terminator suicide seed technology.

That 1999 announcement took enormous pressure off of Monsanto and the agribusiness GMO giants, allowing them to advance the proliferation of their patented GMO seeds globally. Terminator could come later, once farmers and entire national agriculture areas like North America or Argentina or India had been taken over by GMO crops. Then, of course, it would be too late. The Rockefeller-Monsanto 1999 press conference was clearly application of classic Lenin Bolshevik tactics—*Two Steps Forward, One Step Back...*

Despite the Monsanto declaration of a moratorium on Terminator development, the US Government and the again independent Delta & Pine Land refused to drop their Terminator development.

In 2000, a year after the Monsanto Terminator moratorium announcement, the Clinton Administration's USDA Secretary, Dan Glickman, refused repeated efforts by various agriculture and NGO organizations to drop the Government's support for Terminator or GURTs. His Department's feeble excuse for not dropping support for the work with Delta & Pine Land was that it allowed the US Government to put 'leverage' on D&PL to 'protect the public interest.' Six years later it became clear: the only leverage the US Government had put on D&PL's commercialization efforts on GURTs had been to lever it into commercial reality.

Delta Vice President, Harry Collins, declared at the time in a press interview in the *Agra/Industrial Biotechnology Legal Letter*, 'We've continued right on with work on the Technology Protection System (TPS or Terminator). We never really slowed down. We're on target, moving ahead to commercialize it. We never really backed off.'

Nor did their partner, the United States Department of Agriculture, back down on Terminator after 1999. In 2001 the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) website announced: 'USDA has no plans to introduce TPS into any germplasm...Our involvement has been to help develop the technology, not to assist companies to use it.' As if to say, 'see, our hands are clean.' Then they went on to say the USDA was, 'committed to making the [Terminator] technology as widely available as possible, so that its benefits will accrue to all segments of society (sic)...ARS intends to do research on other applications of this unique gene control discovery...When new applications are at the appropriate stage of development, this technology will also be transferred to the private sector for commercial application.' Terminator was alive and well inside the Washington bureaucracy.

In 2001, the USDA and Delta & Pine executed a Commercialization Agreement for Terminator, its infamous Patent No. 5,723,765. The Government and Delta & Pine Land were not at all concerned about worldwide outcry against Terminator.

That announcement came two years after Monsanto had dropped its planned takeover of D&PL, with its Terminator patents.

The world was left with the (misleading) impression that Terminator was dead. Reality was it was anything but dead. Seven years later, long after public outcry against Terminator technology had died down, Monsanto re-entered and bought Delta & Pine Land and its Terminator patents.

Delta & Pine Land's global net

The key scientific member of the Delta & Pine Land board since 1993 has been Dr. Nam-Hai Chua. Chua, 62, is also head of the Rockefeller University Plant Molecular Biology Laboratory in New York, and has been for over 25 years, the labs which are at the heart of the Rockefeller Foundation's decades-long development, and spending of more than \$100 millions of its own research grants to create their Gene Revolution. Until 1995, Chua was also a scientific consultant to Monsanto Corporation, as well as to DuPont's Pioneer Hi-Bred International. Chua is at the heart of Rockefeller's Gene Revolution. And, clearly, Delta & Pine Land and their research on Terminator have been in the center of that work.

Delta & Pine Land is well-placed globally to proliferate its suicide seeds now, with the corporate and financial clout of the giant Monsanto company. Delta & Pine already has subsidiaries including D&PL Argentina, D&PL China, D&PL China PTE in Singapore, Deltapine Paraguay, Delta Pine de Mexico, Deltapine Australia, Hebei Ji Dai Cottonseed Technology Company in China, CDM Mandiyu in Argentina, Delta and Pine Land Hellas in Greece, D&M Brazil Agodao of Brazil, D&PL India, D&PL Mauritius Ltd.

This vast global network combined with Monsanto's dominant position in the GMO seeds and agri-chemicals market along with the unique DP&L Patent No. 5,723,765, *Control of Plant Gene Expression*, now give Monsanto and its close friends in Washington an enormous advance in their plans to dominate world food and plant seed use.

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