

Monsanto's Biotech Public Relations Makeover: Lubricating the Wheels of the GMO Trojan Horse

By [Colin Todhunter](#)

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Theme: [Biotechnology and GMO](#), [Media Disinformation](#)

Monsanto believes it is having trouble getting its message across to the public. Last year, it began a makeover. It realised that it and GMOs have an image problem.

According to the Holmes Report, an information service following the public relations industry, Monsanto has embarked on an international campaign by upgrading its association with Fleishman Hillard, one of the biggest public relations firms in the US.

On the gmoinside.org website, it states that a series of videos produced for Monsanto promote the company's contributions to US farms, agricultural sustainability, the job market and the wide array of food choices. Monsanto is also participating in 'GMO Answers', a website launched in September 2013 by the Council for Biotechnology Information. Part of an industry-wide effort, which involves BASF, Bayer CropScience, Dow AgroSciences, DuPont, Monsanto and Syngenta, the site allows visitors to ask questions relating to all facets of GMOs, which are then answered by 'experts'. The GMO biotech sector is also hoping to team up with NGOs and government-backed bodies to develop a more strategic approach to promoting GMOs.

In Britain, the Agricultural Biotechnology Centre, the Science Media Centre and senior politicians and officials have been collaborating to change the public's negative perceptions of GMOs [1].

With people calling it the most evil company on the planet, 'marching against Monsanto' and Frankenfood becoming a common term in the mass media to describe GMOs, Monsanto has also reorganised its senior public relations (PR) staff and is also linking up with influential bloggers and the media outlet Conde Nast publishing house in an attempt to sell sustainability and GMOs to a sceptical public [2,3]. It has reportedly dangled substantial amounts of cash in front of respected food critics and celebrity chefs in an attempt to drag them into the rebranding process.

As usual, the message it is trying to get across is that Monsanto has the global population's best interests at heart and GM food is the solution to solving the world's food problems. With an increasing world population, the message is that GMOs will deliver increased yields. More food can be grown on less land. No problem, just sit back and give the GM biotech sector access to your agriculture.

To the uninformed, the pro-GM PR sounds highly appealing. Anti-GMO activists are dismissed as being Luddites or anti-big business and ideologically driven - because who in their right mind would oppose such frontier technology? Millions go hungry and those anti-GMO people are by implication taking the food from their stomachs. They are disgusting

enemies of the poor, ignorant enemies of technology and science.

At the end of my articles on GMOs, I usually provide a long list of references/reports/links to back my claims that science does not support what the GM biotech sector claims its products deliver in terms of yields, decreased petrochemical inputs and effects on health, nutrition and the environment. I also tend to provide a list of references/reports/links that show traditional agriculture holds the key to feeding the world.

Take just one example, for instance. In India, its population is over 1.2 billion and heading towards 1.3 billion. That is over four times the population of the US on a much smaller land mass. And what is the cliché often forwarded? “Too many mouths to feed, too little land.”

Well here are some facts, courtesy of environmentalist Viva Kermani’s website/blog:

“India has been self-sufficient in food staples for over a decade and more than that for cereals. Today, the country grows about 100 million tons (mt) of rice, 95 mt of wheat, 170 mt of vegetables, 85 mt of fruit, 40 mt of coarse cereals and 18 mt of pulses (refer to the Economic Survey for the data). These totals ensure that our farmers grow enough to feed all Indians well with food staples. We have 66 mt of grain, two-and-a-half times the required buffer stock (on January 1, 2013). The country has reached this stage through, first and foremost, the knowledge and skill of our farmers who have bred and saved seed themselves and exchanged their seed in ways that made our fields so bio-diverse.” [4]

India can feed itself. The problem is that not enough people get sufficient food because of storage, corruption and distribution problems as well as the restructuring of agriculture as a result of economic liberalisation and a shift to (GM) cash crops for export [5]. Other possible factors contribute to mass malnutrition in India as well [6].

Arun Shrivastava notes that India (and thus the world) doesn’t need modern technology of poisonous pesticides, destructive fertilizers and patented GE seeds that can’t match 1890 or even 1760 AD yields in India [7]. And poisonous and destructive they have certainly been if we take the health and environmental catastrophe affecting Punjab in India – the original ‘poster boy’ of the green revolution [8].

Since the ‘green revolution’ there has been an ongoing attempt to strip farmers of their knowledge and expertise:

“... their legitimate claims to being scientists, innovators, natural resource stewards, seed savers and hybridisation experts. Instead, they were reduced to becoming recipients of technical fixes and consumers of the poisonous products of a growing agricultural inputs industry.” (Viva Kermani)

De-skilling ordinary people and stripping away traditional knowledge were essential for enslaving factory workers and binding them to a strict division of labour during the early stages of the Industrial Revolution in England. Within a generation or so, most people had lost the knowledge and skills of their parents or grandparents’ generation. In various parts of the globe, a similar process has happened or is happening to many farmers who remain on the land. They are becoming corporate-controlled workers whose traditional knowledge, seeds and skills will be lost to subsequent generations.

Through deliberate contamination [9], devious trade deals [10], intimidation [11], co-optation of scientists and politicians [1] and infiltration of official bodies [12], GMOs are now present or scheduled to be present in many countries.

GMOs are potentially a weapon of mass destruction masquerading as a benign and altruistic product of mass consumption for the hungry millions. Control the seed and you control the food supply and the people. Control what is in the seed and you control the nature of that food and the live and death of people [13]. Rebranding GMOs and nice-sounding words about 'feeding the world' are intended to lubricate the wheels of the GMO Trojan horse. Once inside a nation's borders, a nation would potentially lose control of its food to a major US corporation armed with its patented seeds and intellectual property rights.

Monsanto has top level links with the military [14]. It is actively backed by the US State Department [15]. GMOs are not required to feed the world. GMOs are integral to US geopolitical dominance.

Notes

[1] <http://www.globalresearch.ca/monsanto-syngenta-and-bayer-cropscience-the-gmo-biotech-sector-cant-win-the-scientific-debate-the-options-are-co-option-deception-and-collusion/5381725>

[2] <http://america.aljazeera.com/opinions/2014/8/food-agriculturemonsantogmoadvertising.html>

[3] <http://m.motherjones.com/tom-philpott/2014/08/monsanto-and-conde-nast-offered-big-bucks-writers-pr-project>

[4] <http://vivakermani.blogspot.in/2014/07/gm-food-crops-why-india-must-say-no.html>

[5] <http://www.cam.ac.uk/research/news/new-evidence-of-suicide-epidemic-among-indias-marginalised-farmers>

[6] <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Indias-poor-sanitation-linked-to-malnutrition/articleshow/38573266.cms>

[7] <http://www.globalresearch.ca/india-genetically-modified-seeds-agricultural-productivity-and-political-fraud/5328227>

[8] <http://www.deccanherald.com/content/309654/punjab-transformation-food-bowl-cancer.html>

[9] http://www.organicconsumers.org/ge/monsanto_contamination_eu.cfm

[10] <http://corporateeurope.org/trade/2013/05/open-door-gmos-take-action-eu-us-free-trade-agreement>

[11] <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jan/03/wikileaks-us-eu-gm-crops>

[12] <http://rense.com/general33/fd.htm>

[13] <http://www.globalresearch.ca/genetic-engineering-eugenics-and-the-ideology-of-the-rich/5329025>

[14] <http://www.theanalystreport.net/2014/07/03/monsantos-insidious-gm0-food-and-its-dark-connections-to-the-military-industrial-complex/>

[15] <http://rt.com/usa/wikileaks-monsanto-cables-report-273/>

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Articles by: [Colin Todhunter](#)

About the author:

Colin Todhunter is an extensively published independent writer and former social policy researcher. Originally from the UK, he has spent many years in India. His website is www.colintodhunter.com
https://twitter.com/colin_todhunter

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