

# Nestlé: Stop Trying to Patent the Fennel Flower

By [Sum Of Us](#)

Theme: [Science and Medicine](#)

Global Research, November 30, 2014

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*Nigella sativa* — more commonly known as fennel flower — has been used as a cure-all remedy for over a thousand years. It treats everything from vomiting to fevers to skin diseases, and has been widely available in impoverished communities across the Middle East and Asia.

But now Nestlé is claiming to own it, and filing patent claims around the world to try and take control over the natural cure of the fennel flower and turn it into a costly private drug.

Tell Nestlé: Stop trying to patent a natural cure

In a paper published last year, Nestlé scientists claimed to “discover” what much of the world has known for millennia: that nigella sativa extract could be used for “nutritional interventions in humans with food allergy”.

But instead of creating an artificial substitute, or fighting to make sure the remedy was widely available, Nestlé is attempting to create a nigella sativa monopoly and gain the ability to sue anyone using it without Nestlé’s permission. Nestlé has filed patent applications — which are currently pending — around the world.

Prior to Nestlé’s outlandish patent claim, researchers in developing nations such as Egypt and Pakistan had already published studies on the same curative powers Nestlé is claiming as its own. And Nestlé has done this before — in 2011, it tried to claim credit for using cow’s milk as a laxative, despite the fact that such knowledge had been in Indian medical texts for a thousand years.

Don’t let Nestlé turn a traditional cure into a corporate cash cow.

We know Nestlé doesn’t care about ethics. After all, this is the corporation that poisoned its milk with melamine, purchases cocoa from plantations that use child slave labor, and launched a breast milk substitute campaign in the 1970s that contributed to the suffering and deaths of thousands of babies from poor communities.

But we also know that Nestlé is sensitive to public outcry, and that it’s been beaten at the patent game before. If we act fast, we can put enough pressure on Nestlé to get it to drop its patent plans before they harm anyone — but if we want any chance at affecting Nestlé’s decision, we have to speak out now!

[Sign the petition here.](#)

More Information:

Third World Network (PDF): [Food giant Nestlé claims to have invented stomach soothing use of habbat al-barakah \(Nigella sativa\)](#), 6 July, 2012

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