

Sanity Prevails: Scotland to Ban the Cultivation of GMO Crops

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Fantastic news; the Scottish government recently announced it will take advantage of the amendment to EU rules and ban the growing of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in the country.

Scotland's Rural Affairs Secretary, [Richard Lochhead](#), stated earlier this month that "the Scottish Government has long-standing concerns about GM[/GMO] crops - concerns that are shared by other European countries and consumers, which should not be dismissed lightly... Scotland is known around the world for our beautiful natural environment - and banning [the] growing [of] GM crops will protect and further enhance our clean, green status."

Mr Lochhead revealed that he has "heard directly from food and drink producers in other countries that are ditching GM because of a consumer backlash", adding that there "is no evidence of significant demand for GM products by Scottish consumers."



At the start of the year, the EU changed its rules on the cultivation of GMO crops by allowing individual governments and devolved administrations to opt out of growing EU-authorized GMO crops. Many people around the world viewed this change as a backdoor for Big-Agri to push their products on the continent, but Scotland has wisely seized the opportunity to ban GMO crops.

Across the border in England however, the government in London is pushing for GMOs to be grown in the country. England could soon be growing GMO crops in the form of [maize](#), [oil seed rape](#) and even [potatoes](#) in the near future.

Hopefully Scotland's decision will help to persuade other governments around Europe and the world to instigate a similar ban (if they haven't already), and ensure that Big-Agri does not get a significant foothold on the continent. [Germany](#) looks like one of the countries that will also choose to ban GMO crops.

Organic Revolution

As the health dangers of GMO foods and herbicides become blatantly apparent for all to see, demand for organic produce is soaring around the world. In the UK last year, sales of organic products increased by [4%](#) according to the Soil Association's 2015 Organic Market Report.

Organic food sales in the United States have [increased](#) from approximately \$11 billion in 2004 to an estimated \$27 billion in 2012, with organic sales expected to reach [\\$35 billion](#) in the US this year.

Demand for organic produce in [Australia](#) is at record levels. Last year's Australian Organic Market Report found that the organic industry is now valued at over \$1.72 billion, representing a 15.4 per cent compound annual growth rate (CAGR) since 2009.

Denmark has launched the "world's most ambitious" organic plan which aims at [doubling organic farming](#) by 2020. The European nation has long been a leader in the market with organic sales increasing by 6.1% from 2013 to 2014.

Toxic GMO

The negative health effects associated with the consumption of GMO foods are literally endless, ranging from cancer to autism, food intolerances to organ failure. Last year, a comprehensive report by The Ministry of Health in Cordoba, Argentina, found that in areas where GMO crops are grown and agro-chemicals are used, [cancer rates are double the national average](#).

Even though the scientific evidence documenting the toxicity of GMO foods is undeniable, proponents of GMOs are still dogmatically supporting the technology. Professor Brian Wynne, an emeritus professor at the University of Lancaster, recently stated that the pro-GMO campaign resembles a "[religious crusade](#)", adding that many have an "obsession with GM."

Ban Monsanto's Roundup!

In March of this year, the World Health Organisation's (WHO) cancer agency - the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) - conducted a study on glyphosate, the main ingredient in the most widely used weedkiller in the world, Monsanto's Roundup - which is heavily sprayed on GMO crops. The IARC study chillingly revealed that glyphosate was "classified as probably [carcinogenic to humans](#)".

The WHO is only the latest in a long line of scientific studies which have proven that Roundup is deeply harmful to human health. A US peer-reviewed study in 2013 which was published in the scientific journal Entropy, linked [Monsanto's Roundup](#) to infertility, cancers and Parkinson's disease amongst other ailments. The authors of the study were Stephanie Seneff, a research scientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and Anthony Samsel, a retired science consultant from Arthur D. Little, Inc. and a former private environmental government contractor. The abstract of the study reads:

Glyphosate enhances the damaging effects of other food borne chemical residues and environmental toxins. Negative impact on the body is insidious and manifests slowly over time as inflammation damages cellular systems throughout the body.....Consequences are most of the diseases and conditions associated with a Western diet, which include gastrointestinal disorders, obesity, diabetes, heart disease, depression, autism, infertility, cancer and Alzheimer's disease.
[\(Samsel and Seneff, 2013\)](#).

Seneff also recently sparked controversy by stating that half of all children in the US will have [autism](#) by 2025 due to Monsanto's Roundup. Evidence indicates that autism spectrum disorders (ASD) are on the rise in the US; with one study conducted in 2014 by the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) discovering that [one in 68](#) US children had an ASD, compared to one in 88 in 2012. Many people would assert that this is a result of more efficient ways to diagnose ASD, an assertion that is true. However, it surely does not account for such dramatic increases in recent years.

Considering the quantity of scientific literature pertaining to the health dangers of Monsanto's Roundup and its main ingredient - glyphosate; nations around the world have instigated bans on the substance and associated products. The Netherlands has [banned](#) Roundup to protect citizens health; Sri Lanka's new President put an immediate [ban](#) on the importation of glyphosate; Two major supermarkets in Switzerland have stopped selling products that contain glyphosate; in addition to France [banning](#) the sale of Roundup from garden centres.

Scotland along with every other country in the world should also implement a ban on Monsanto's Roundup, in addition to investigating the chief scientists and board members of Monsanto, as they have been profiting from selling products that are harmful to human health.

Stop TTIP

In order to ensure Monsanto and other biotech corporate giants are unable to infringe on European nations ability to protect their citizens, the corporate fascist trade deal between the US and EU - the "[undemocratic](#)" Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) - will have to be defeated. This highly surreptitious partnership is only one of many other deals currently being negotiated behind closed doors, with the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the Trade in Services Agreement (TISA) completing the trio of tyrannical pacts.

One of the most controversial aspects of the TTIP and the TPP is the investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS), which Washington is adamantly pushing to be included in the partnerships. The ISDS would allow [corporations to sue national governments](#) if countries implement laws that will infringe on the profits and investments of corporations, not surprisingly leading to widespread opposition by the public - 97 percent of citizens consulted by the EU on ISDS were opposed to it.

As the former Assistant Secretary of the US Treasury for Economic Policy and former associate editor of the Wall Street Journal, Dr. Paul Craig Roberts, explains in his article: [Rule By The Corporations](#), that governments who have passed laws against GMO foods could be sued by multinational corporations if these partnerships are signed:

What the "partnerships" do is to make private corporations immune to the laws of sovereign countries on the grounds that laws of countries adversely impact corporate profits and constitute "restraint of trade." For example, under the Transatlantic Partnership, French laws against GMOs would be overturned as "restraints on trade" by law suits filed by Monsanto. © PCR 2015

The Scottish government's decision to ban the growing of GMO crops is a timely and sensible move, but other legislation needs to be implemented to ensure Scotland's citizens are protected against the dangers of GMOs. Edinburgh needs to place an immediate ban on

glyphosate-based products in addition to rejecting the corporate fascist trade deal, the TTIP. More government subsidized organic farming initiatives would also be an important step in the right direction, as many farmers feel the cost of growing organic foods is an unsustainable business model.

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