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## The USDA Paves Way For GM Takeover (Part I)

 Submitted by [Annie White](#) on March 4, 2011 – 10:22 pm [3 Comments](#)


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In the wake of

the USDA's deregulation of GM Alfalfa in January came the approval of two more bioengineered crops in February; Ethanol Corn and Sugar Beets. The news is a great disappointment to those who have been fighting against the GMO takeover for years and to consumers who are, more than ever, mindful of their food's origin. Wherever the GM crops are planted the soil will be pummeled with chemicals. Bioengineered food continues to penetrate the food supply of the country, furthering a decline in health.

The USDA's approval of the crops flies in the face of research showing inferior crop yields and providing evidence of harm to humans and the environment. They have taken no real measures to protect against cross-pollination in spite of the evidential ruin of most corn and soy crops. They have ignored consumers' and more importantly *farmers'* concerns and dismissed opposition from health and environmental organizations. Now it is the consumers and farmers that will pay the price: haven't they lost enough of their health and land all ready?

In 2009, approximately 95 percent of all soybeans and 80 percent of all corn in the U.S. were grown from genetically engineered seeds. Monsanto dominates the production of GM strains, especially in these two of our largest commodities. Rest assured, such control was not by accident. Evidence of underhanded deals to buyers to cut out the competition, display the corporation mega-giant's push for a monopoly. They are also known for going after farms not using their seed by sending out "investigators" to test for Monsanto's patented strains. If one is found, that farmer will face action from Monsanto, even if the seeds or pollination was carried out by nature.

***Last year at least a dozen state attorney generals and the Department of Justice launched investigations on Monsanto regarding antitrust violations.*** Still, the government gives this company the green light to have more control over the food supply and prices when they approve more GM crops.

### **There Is An Obvious Conflict Of Interest In These Approvals**

Keith Mudd, President of the Organization for Competitive Markets issued a supportive statement of the attorney generals' investigations of Monsanto. Here are some highlights from the release:

“We believe the company uses transgenic trait licensing agreements with independent seed companies as a tool to put smaller seed companies at a competitive disadvantage,

“As a result, farmers and smaller seed companies face higher prices, fewer choices and less innovation in the crop seed marketplace.

“Farmers are already struggling with rising fuel and chemical prices, as well as planting problems,” Mudd added. “And now they must contend with higher prices for crop seed with less choice in the market.”

Monsanto maintains a dominant position in the marketplace by acquiring smaller competitors and merging with other companies. Last year, the Department of Justice agreed to allow Monsanto to acquire Delta & Pine Land Company, giving it a 90 percent share of the transgenic cotton seed market.

The company also enters into restrictive licensing agreements with seed dealers that are designed to gain market power, restrict competition, and prevent future innovation and market access by competitors.

“Independent seed companies are essential distribution channels for seed technologies, making up more than a quarter of the market,” said Fred Stokes, OCM's Executive Director. “We believe Monsanto's licensing agreements prohibit stacking its transgenic traits with non-Monsanto traits without any scientific reason. Farmers who prefer regional seed companies and their locally adapted varieties can't access non-Monsanto traits restricted under these contracts. ”

Monsanto is also known to aggressively enforce its licensing agreements through lawsuits that seek to protect its patent rights. At times Monsanto mistakenly targets innocent farmers who undergo undue financial and emotional stress in their effort to avoid costly lawsuits. “Monsanto's behavior has dramatically altered our rural communities,” Stokes said

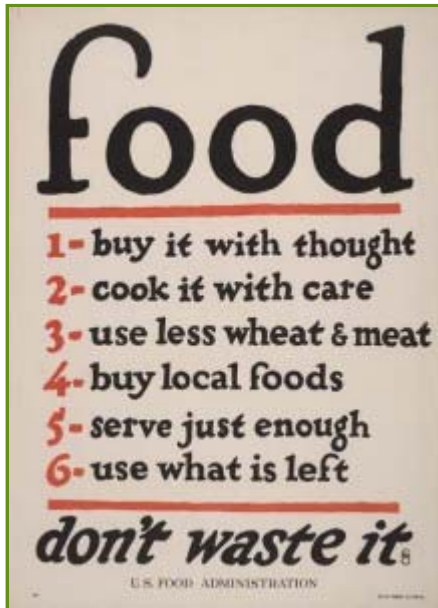
“We hope the state attorneys general will aggressively press this investigation. Control of crop seed must be diverse. This issue is of fundamental importance to the future of American agriculture,” Mudd said. “Farmers and independent seed companies deserve an open and fair seed marketplace. Consumers should not have to shoulder any further increase in food prices.” **[1]**

While the first lady broke ground on the White House lawn in 2009 to make way for an heirloom vegetable and fruit garden to feed her family and to show children the importance of eating local

organic foods, it seems the President and his administration are bent on destroying such opportunities for the rest of America.

Monsanto tells you that GM seeds are the key to feeding the continual population boom. Government plays right along, paving the way for the company to continue decimating the health, rural farming communities, bio-diversity and the very ability for the Earth to sustain life, as the thin layer of topsoil that nourishes us is destroyed. This is no way to sustain life and its failure is already evident.

The [Worldwatch Institute's "2011 State of the World" report identifies small-scale farming as the answer to world hunger](#), not factory farms.



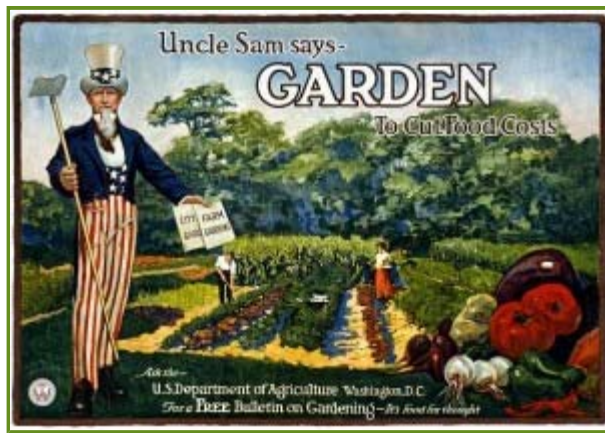
Perhaps the USDA ought to look back to their old slogans of preservation and sustainability. (c. 1917)

The context, and the basis of Worldwatch's Nourishing the Planet project, was this:

Agriculture has come to a crossroads. Nearly a half-century after the Green Revolution, a major share of the human family is still chronically hungry. In addition, much of that revolution's gains have been achieved through highly intensive agriculture that depends heavily on fossil fuels for inputs and energy—and the question of whether the world's croplands can yield more food is being trumped by the question of whether they can do so without compromise to the soils, fresh water, and crop diversity the world depends on.

...because attention has been focused relatively narrowly—on a few types of crops, on a few technologies—entire regions and ecosystems, not to mention myriad varieties of crops and rural ways of life, have been ignored.

Given the limited ability of scientists to find solutions, the finite generosity of donors to support agricultural research, and the overstretched patience of struggling farmers and hungry families, shifting funds and attention in new directions is long overdue.



Americans should turn their attention to this decades old USDA advice and abandon the modern push for massive agriculture.

The ruse that genetically modified crops are intended for feeding the hungry is easy to see through when the USDA-approved crops are not even geared towards nutrition.

GM Alfalfa will be feeding cows, not people – the amount of land and energy it takes to raise animals for food is incredibly inefficient and more people will go hungry so that others can continue their pursuit of gluttony. Feeding animals for food consumes huge amounts of energy and water. It takes two to five times more water to grow grain for an animal than for a human. During global food shortages, while 800 million people a day are living their lives hungry, the majority of crop-producing energies goes to this inefficient practice.

How about the sugar beets? District Court Judge Jeffrey White banned the planting and sales of Monsanto's "Roundup Ready" biotech sugar beets last year in August after determining that their USDA approval in 2005 was illegal. The government never conducted a thorough environmental review before approving the crop. Shortly after White's ruling, though, the USDA issued permits allowing companies to plant seedlings for future GM sugar beet crops. Earthjustice, a consumer group, brought a case against the USDA and asked the judge to order the plants be destroyed, [Judge White ordered that the seedlings "shall be removed from the ground."](#); the action was the first court-ordered destruction of a GM crop.

The ban on planting the Monsanto beets has since been revoked and planting will begin this spring. This puts non-GM crops in jeopardy, all just to feed an unhealthy demand for sugar!

And of course there's ethanol corn. Obviously a crop that is not being grown for human consumption, this approval masquerades as a balance to the corn shortage caused by it's use to create fuel. The folly is that ethanol has become an incredibly inefficient fuel that uses more energy to create than it actually produces. A study by *ES&T* researchers at Michigan State University found that, "It's 36% more efficient to grow grain for food than for fuel..." Author Ilya Gelfand goes on to say "We found that it's not energy-efficient to produce ethanol from grain crops that can serve as food," and that "It's more efficient to produce ethanol from cellulosic feedstocks such as grasses." Funny enough, the report also found that the most efficient crop for biofuels was alfalfa and the least efficient alfalfa use was for cattle feed. **[2]** *The irony is staggering!*

***All of this incredible inefficiency and irresponsibility is a showcase of everything that is wrong in our government.***

Barack Obama, despite promising us “change we can believe in,” packed the USDA and other governmental branches with Monsanto men and biotech cheerleaders such as former Iowa Governor, Tom Vilsack. Named “Biotech Governor of the Year” in 2001 and notorious for flying around in a Monsanto company jet during one of his previous election campaigns, Vilsack now serves as USDA Secretary. Red flags anyone? Michael R. Taylor’s appointment by the Obama administration to the Food and Drug Administration in 2009 generated outrage among many food and agriculture researchers, national health and environmental groups, and activists. From 1998 until 2001 Taylor served as the Vice President for Public Policy at Monsanto Corp. These are clear examples of the revolving door between major corporations and the government.

And from the *Alliance for Natural Health*, “In an article at TruthOut, reporter Mike Ludwig noted that House Committee on Agriculture members pressed Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack to fully deregulate Roundup Ready alfalfa and reject the proposal to geographically isolate it from traditional alfalfa. Upon learning that the USDA had fully deregulated the genetically engineered grain, committee chair Frank Lucas (R-OK) said, ‘I am pleased that USDA used sound science and respected the limit of its statutory authority to make this decision.’”

“Monsanto was one of the top contributors to Lucas’s campaign committee in 2010. A political action committee and individuals associated with Monsanto donated \$11,000 to his campaign last year, and Lucas has received \$1,247,844 from the agribusiness industry during his political career, according to watchdog site OpenSecrets.org. Lucas was elected chairman of the Agriculture Committee in December.”**[3]**

***These approvals aren’t about anything but control and profit and are being carried out quite deliberately.***

Part II will take a closer look at the detriment these approvals will cause and how you can defend against it (to be linked here soon)!

~Health Freedoms

Sources:

[1] [http://www.competitivemarkets.com/index.php?Itemid=50&id=168&option=com\\_content&task=view](http://www.competitivemarkets.com/index.php?Itemid=50&id=168&option=com_content&task=view)

[2] <http://pubs.acs.org/doi/full/10.1021/es1011302>

[3] <http://www.anh-usa.org/now-usda-has-deregulated-genetically-engineered-bio-fuel-corn/>

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-  *Danielle says:*  
[March 6, 2011 at 2:38 pm](#)  

Truly frightening!!!! What will our earth look like, feel like, be like in just 10 yrs. due to evil Monsanto?  
Will me and my child be alive or dead from the effects of Monsantos poisoning of all it touches?

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-  *snappir says:*  
[March 7, 2011 at 9:02 am](#)  

the only way to fight this Mafia Cartel, is to spread the information to all the millions of people who still live in the dark, and have no slightest idea that their favorite snack of popcorn or cooked corn....is not real, it's poisoned. Tell everyone you see in the supermarket buying this

crap, or in other ways. The more people will buy organic the more demand will be, and in turn it will KILL MONSANTO.

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- *Rinda Thomas* says:

[March 7, 2011 at 9:41 am](#)

Ludicrous, amazes me how those causing this do not care... they have families too..... greed is a sickness..... disgusting.....

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