



For Immediate Release: November 10, 2009

Housewives Clean Up Contaminating Genes at GM Coexistence Conference Tomorrow

MADGE Australia representatives will be inside and outside the Melbourne Convention Exhibition Centre tomorrow from 9am through the morning.

The MCEC is hosting the "4th International Conference on Coexistence Between Genetically Modified (GM) and non-GM based Agricultural Supply Chains" from November 9-12.

<http://bit.ly/28nkVX>

"There is no coexistence possible between GM canola and GM-free canola" said MADGE Australia's Madeleine Love.

"From the gross contamination that has already been demonstrated in Canada, to the contamination events already witnessed here in Victoria over the last year, we know that contamination of our GM free canola is inevitable."

"We often hear GM proponents saying that pollen contamination drops off '10 meters' from the edge of a GM canola crop; and it does. But it continues on at lower levels for **kilometres**. This has been demonstrated in multiple studies extensively quoted by the Gene Technology Regulator.

"Pollen is carried by wind and insects, seed is transported and dropped by harvestors and trucks; human error is inevitable. There will be GM weeds of many varieties."

"Assuming clean GM free canola seed and soil, contamination levels in the first year will be below the thresholds. But it won't be long before the seed and soil banks are contaminated."

"We know the contamination levels for the official marketing of non-GM canola stands at 0.9%, but consumers who don't want to eat products of GM agriculture don't want any contamination. It cuts off a food source."

"We hope that this Conference won't be used to pretend that someone is looking after the integrity of our GM free canola. The contamination experiences below indicate that motivated private citizens are the only people taking responsibility for cleaning up the GM weeds."

GM Contamination in eastern states – 2008-2009

25th November 2008, Horsham, Victoria

GM Cropwatch visited a GM canola site which had been windrowed . The crops had stayed in the paddock for 3 weeks, which allowed documentation of galahs feeding on

the GM seed. GM Cropwatch technicians found windrowed GM canola plants had blown up to 74 metres along the road from the GM crop site. This was documented and local and rural media covered the discovery.

Monsanto responded by telling the media that GM canola contamination was "always expected and anticipated".

The roadside is managed by Vic Roads, which has no protocols for organising decontamination. The Victorian DPI and Horsham Rural City Council were not willing to be involved. Faced with bureaucratic buck passing, local farmers met 2 days after the discovery and cleaned up the site.

<http://sl.farmonline.com.au/news/state/grains-and-cropping/general/an-unwelcome-blowin/1371915.aspx>

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2008/11/26/2429844.htm>

<http://sl.farmonline.com.au/news/nationalrural/agribusiness-and-general/general/claims-of-gm-canola-contamination-in-vic/1369599.aspx>

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/content/2008/s2430206.htm>

17th September 2009 - GM roadside canola in NSW

Farmer Gai Marshall found canola plants growing along the Riverina Highway near Berrigan NSW. Using test strips, she found 19 of 20 plants along a 20 km stretch of road east of Berrigan were GM.

She believes the plants took root from canola spilled out of trucks on the way to the Finley GM receival point run by Kelly and sons. In 2007 Gai and Dick Marshall tested and confirmed a GM-free status for their seeds stocks. Widespread publicity about the case has failed to prompt any authorities to come forward for a clean-up. The roads authority and the council were not interested. The OGTR, when contacted, said the state agriculture departments should take up the issue.

On 22nd September, Gai Marshall and helpers pulled up as many roadside GM canola plants as possible, an action made necessary by the complete inaction of the authorities.

<http://www.smh.com.au/environment/gm-canola-found-outside-containment-area-20090924-g4s9.html>

<http://www.countrynews.com.au/story.asp?TakeNo=200909281534003>

28th September 2009 - GM roadside canola in Victoria

GM Cropwatch and Geoff Carracher from the Network of Concerned Farmers (NCF) tested roadside canola in the Horsham area, and found 3 GM canola plants.

Testing will be ongoing until the harvest season, when silos receiving GM canola in the west of the state will be monitored for seed spillage.

1st October 2009 - GM canola pollen in honey in Victoria

Greenpeace tested honey samples from hives adjacent to a GM canola crop at Bannockburn, near Geelong.

The samples were found to contain Monsanto's Roundup Ready canola pollen. Consumers buying honey from this hive would be eating GM food without knowing it.

<http://www.greenpeace.org/australia/news-and-events/media/releases/genetic-engineering/greenpeace-finds-honey-contami>

Contacts:	Jessica Harrison	0407 307 231
	Fran Murrell	0401 407 944
	Madeleine Love	0447 762 284