

Good afternoon everyone, I would like to present you with even more GM Free Nannup petition signatures today. I believe we now have a total of around 276. Please note we have 24 farmers signatures on the petition. David and Lisa Vines from Scott River have not been able to sign the petition yet But have indicated their keenness to do so. David has sent in a note which reads:

“As farmers we would like to add our support to keeping Nannup Shire GM free. There are so many reasons why this is so. Amongst them is the fact that this whole GM thing is driven by a chemical company whose product will be used on the Round Up Ready canola crop we are talking about. So little is known about GM crops and with some countries wanting to buy GM Free food, why are we jumping off a cliff to try this out, rather than waiting and seeing where this is all going to end up?

Surely a cautious approach can do no harm? As yet I haven't seen a huge corporate company wanting to do us all a favour when profits are involved!

So let's resist finding out a lesson about GM crops the hard way and be patient and remain GM Free.

Thankyou,
Lisa and David Vines”

To name a few farmer signatories on our petition: Greg and Vanda Cruthers, Brian and Francis Tomas, Bruce and Jane Wild, Alf and Karen Carroll, Mrs Jean Brown, Carl and Ann Cowan, Lloyd Roach (apiarist), Barry and Shirley Worthington , Brian Collet , Steve Ucich and David and Sandra Dunnet. David Dunnet said as he was signing "We don't believe in tampering with Nature.”

His thoughts echo the sentiments of Jim Hightower, former two-time Texas agriculture commissioner who warned way back in June 2004 "For some time, the likes of Monsanto have had their white-smocked engineers tinkering merrily and dangerously with the very DNA of food, genetically modifying the natural composition of things like potatoes so they contain a pesticide in every one of their cells, or altering rice so it contains a diarrhea drug in every bite. This is no mere lab experiment, for unbeknownst to the vast majority of Americans, Monsanto and a handful of other global biotech giants have quietly spread the seeds of these genetically altered Frankenfoods to so many farms over the past decade that about a third of the foods on U.S. supermarket shelves now contain organisms with tampered DNA everything from baby food and milk to products made with soybean and corn.

Thanks to well-placed campaign donations and powerhouse lobbying, this infiltration of our food supply has been done with practically no consumer awareness, since both Bill Clinton's and George W's administrations have

let these foodstuffs be sold in America without so much as a label on them to tell us that we're buying something that our families might prefer to avoid." Kinda ruins the appetite, doesn't it? Not just the fact that Monsanto has infiltrated the bulk of our food chain, but that it clearly believes it has the right to do so with or without our knowledge. It has fought oversight, regulation, labeling and scientific research for years. The arrogance with which multinational biotech corporations such as Monsanto are disrupting and modifying life's natural genetic order -and obtaining patents on everything from seeds to food to animals to humans -- is creepy. The Almighty must surely be watching in slack-jawed amazement."

I hope to show today that a vote to comply with Mr Redman's GM canola "trials" will be the most anti farming action you could take. A very intelligent letter by a Mr Wayne Pech of Gnowangerup is in the Countryman this week titled GM for us if..

Our family runs a farming operation in the Great Southern. If our Business could access a grain crop that had increased yields from better salt, Frost or insect tolerance due to genetic modification then we would most likely use that technology. A plant that has been modified to withstand Roundup is of no use in our farming system. It puts too much pressure on a product that has already been proven resistant in some parts of Australia...Our family is not Anti GM but we would only use the technology if:

- *the product is safe,
- *It is technology that rectifies a problem
- *It is readily accepted by consumers
- *Yields are increased
- *There is an improvement to the bottom line of our business.

It is never too late to start using new technology and we will readily embrace it if all the system checks are met. But once you bring something new into the environment there is no turning back. We are interested in GM under the above conditions but RR canola does not fit that criteria.

I have just received a letter from Houghton Nannup Winery which shows They have a similar stance . that basically they are interested in using Biotechnology in the wine industry if it has something to offer and is proven safe, but until that day their policy is strictly GM Free.

A Huge amount of taxpayers money is spent every year in research and PROMOTION of Genetic engineering. Canada has spent an average of \$700 million every year for decades. Australia and the US would be spending a similar amount.. Its not just Monsantos dollars being spent, its public money, taxpayers money, our money. An example of this type of PR is the ABC. Take a look at the Australian Broadcasting Commissions website and do a search on GM research.you will find 16 Pro GM to one anti GM articles in the first 17... headlines which read:

"Leading Australian researcher says Our Agriculture will die if we don't embrace GM, " The scientist widely regarded as the key developer of

transgenic crops says helping "developing countries battle starvation needs a radical rethink"

"Producers demand the technology to keep up with their competitors"

"Pioneering GM research hopes to make sorghum salt tolerant"

Gustav Nossal , Australia's greatest scientist comes down firmly on the side of GM" we later find out he has shares in a biotech company
Etc etc

Department of Agriculture's FACT sheet on GM, sent to the Nannup Shire Council to convince them that the trials are necessary and safe, is also an example of our taxes at work. The document is a shameful litany of innuendo and half truths. Once again the false claims of higher yields and reduced chemical inputs , the false hopes of frost, drought and salt tolerant Crops are trotted out, just as they have been for 30 years in countries all over the world. But as Canadian Professor of Agronomy Ann Clark asks " where are the frost tolerant strawberries, the corn that fixes nitrogen, the salt tolerant tomatoes we were promised 30 years ago?" She describes GM as a Spectacular Failure, and as the Black hole which swallows up billions of dollars in research and promotion money and delivers NOTHING for farmers or consumers.

ALL the improvements in crops we've seen have been a result of Traditional plant breeding. A relatively small amount of our taxes and money raised from farmer's levies has produced the wonderful improvements in plants we've seen in the last 20 years... advances like rust resistant cereal crops, the beginnings of a salt tolerant wheat, higher yielding varieties. Other Plant breeding technologies, such as Marker assisted Selection (Non GM genetic mapping) are widely expected to boost global agricultural productivity more effectively and safely than GM.

But guess what? Plant research funding was slashed in the recent budget, and that is happening everywhere. There is one thing we would be glad if they would spend money on before any more GM research proceeds and that is a human health study regards GM foods. Never anywhere in the world has ONE been completed. And yet we are told over and over again that GM food has been eaten for years and has never caused an illness. Well, do the health study, we want to see that. We don't know that the skyrocketing rates of asthma, eczema, anaphylactic shock, food allergies and cancer experienced in the last 15 years concurrently with the introduction of GM food has nothing to do with GM food. But they won't allow the studies on animals or people.
Now why is that ??

FSANZ pretend they do the studies but they don't, they do assessments, which means they simply read the applicant company data. I don't have time to expose all the fiction in the The FACT sheet today but I can't resist pointing out just one: It states The EU has started buying

Canadian canola again, which we know is all GM. We are led to think that the EU has gotten over its well founded fear of eating GM food, right? Perhaps not:

The majority of canola in Europe is used for biofuels, not food. It's highly likely that this is where the Canadian GM canola is going because most European retailers and major food manufacturers have GM-free private standards in their supplier contracts. That hasn't changed. There is no evidence that either European consumers or retailers have changed their minds about that.

So what has billions of dollars and decades of GM research done for farmers? In Canada , everybody grows Round Up Ready canola because they have no other choice now. The seed trade is consolidated into a very few hands, the corporations like Monsanto and Bayer. They offer 49 varieties of canola to the farmers, 1 out of 49 varieties is Non GM. And you'd be mad to grow the non GM variety because canola is the most contaminating crop.

With Canola there is 35% outcrossing and there is no way you can keep GM out of your fields, so you would be risking a lawsuit from Monsanto. Anyway they did a survey of farmers to gauge what farmers rank as the risks and the benefits of GM. The best feature at Number 1 is the simplification of controlling weeds. The survey ranks profitability last at number 10. On the risks of growing GM farmers put threat of litigation the highest risk . Loss of markets was ranked second.

So if they don't make any money growing GM why do they do it? Well the Crops are subsidised, so it doesn't matter in US or Canada that you lose \$100.00 an acre , which is what GM crops do. The Canadian taxpayer foots that bill.

Monsanto gains again as the taxpayer virtually pays for the RoundUp. You've got to admire these corporations for their cleverness.

But it is very different here in Australia where neither farmers nor Crops are subsidized. Contrary to Pro GM claims that thousands of farmers will take up the technology in NSW this year, how many farmers turned up to The Monsanto briefing for those intending to grow GM canola in 2010? How Many do you think? Five. It's a dud! Gullible farmers who leapt in and grew it have gone into shock at the poor results they saw on their own properties. But sadly they have irreversibly contaminated their state and caused permanently lowered incomes and higher costs for all non GM farmers. Australia joins the Small number of GM growing countries alongside the US and Canada. Canola is the most contaminating crop of the 4 commercially grown GM crops.

Monsanto has achieved its aim of contaminating one side of our continent. They must not get away with it here. These trials are meant to contaminate our state. South Australia continues to rigorously protect its GM free status for economic reasons alone. To deliver the GM seed to the 17 fools who are

hosting trials here, the trucks had to go up into the Northern territory, they had to skirt the borders of South Australia because it is not allowed to be transported through that state.

Another smart state is Tasmania. Last week Tasmania decided to extend its Moratorium till 2014 Said Bob Phelps: "We congratulate all Tasmanians on keeping their state GM-free for at least five more years. The Tasmanian inquiry into GM reached all-party agreement that the ban should stay.

"This consensus was based on clear evidence that commercial GM releases pose unacceptable hazards and costs. "Tasmania's decision will protect the integrity of its clean, green brand and increased sales of top quality GM-free foods in Australia and around the world, at premium prices.

"In contrast, NSW, Victoria and WA have sacrificed the independence of their farmers to the GM giants and the reputation of their food products. "They are promoting failed and dangerous GM technology that offers nothing to farmers or shoppers. "They ignored the evidence that GM is a failed technology and accepted GM industry propaganda, allowing GM contamination of their environments and the food supply."

The vast majority of the population of Nannup is now adamant that Nannup remains a GM Free shire. Nannup people are brilliant when they get going, you know, and they do feel pretty stropky about this issue. They feel very protective about their land, and about their children's health, They've got a real pride in this country being clean, green, and 100 per cent natural. That's what many of us growers have branded ourselves on and if we accept GMOs here, we're going to lose our reputation as first class food producers overnight.

I have a dream that I wake up one morning not so far away, I check my Emails and I see this one:

"GM Trial crops to be ploughed in" Due to overwhelming community opposition to the GM trials the Mr Barnett announced today he will reinstate WA's GM status by ordering that the GM trial crops are ploughed in before they pollinate. Thousands of canola growers are delighted with the news, as are consumer groups around the world.

My dream is shared by many shires and many people here in Nannup as you can see today, and Councillors, your vote today can help make our dreams for a GM Free state a reality. Your vote will create the world these little people here will live in. If you are in any doubt or don't feel properly informed, the precautionary principle should apply. Your yes vote to a GM Free Nannup will honour your communities wishes.