

Media Release

Thursday 24 April, 2008

MADGE –GM Crops Planted in Australian Children

Mothers Against GE Crops (MADGE) strongly condemns the planting of Genetically Manipulated Roundup Ready Canola in Victoriaⁱ [1] .

Since this crop was been approved by Food Standards Australia New Zealand in 2000, further studyⁱⁱ [2] has predicted that the two known GM proteins in this crop, “CP4 EPSPS” and “GOX”, are allergens, based on updated risk assessment protocols by the World Health Organisation’s Codex Alimentariusⁱⁱⁱ [3] .

MADGE member Madeleine Love said, "Why are unlabelled GM products, proved by recent research to contain known allergens, allowed in our food and our paddocks? Where will this GM crop turn up in our diets? "

"Why wasn't the release of GM canola into our clean GM free environment delayed until it is proved safe ?"

“CP4 EPSPS has an identical sequence to the known dust mite allergen “Der p 7” estimated to affect about 2 ½ million Australians, and the GOX protein has an identical sequence to the known red shellfish allergen “Tropomyosin”, estimated to affect about 25,000 children and 500,000 adults in this country.”

“This is an exceptionally irresponsible act on the part of our state and federal governments, and indicates the failure of both our regulating bodies, Food Standards Australia New Zealand and the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator.”

“Contrary to statements made by the seed patent owner in their application to FSANZ^{iv} [4], DNA and protein does exist in refined oils and other refined products. The well-being of our children is being put at risk to serve the financial interests of a USA agri-giant.”

“Our children are the guinea pigs in these untested experiments, because as consumers we can’t avoid the unlabelled products of these crops.”

MADGE would like this crop immediately withdrawn and a 5-year Federal ban on the release of GM canola until adequate up-to-date testing has been completed.

i[1] <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2008/04/24/2225982.htm?section=justin>

ii[2] "Screening of transgenic proteins expressed in transgenic food crops for the presence of short amino acid sequences identical to potential, IgE - binding linear epitopes of allergens."

iii[3] Guideline for the conduct of food safety assessment of foods derived from recombinant-DNA plants CAC/GL 45-2003

iv[4] Application A363