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MADGE calls for education about Monsanto

Agri-chemical giant Monsanto has announced that it is 'educating' Australian consumers about the widely rejected GM foods to increase their acceptance [\[i\]](#), but voluntary organisation MADGE is calling for education about Monsanto.

As the owner of ~90% of planted GM crops MADGE says that Monsanto has a fundamental incentive to promote its products, and is asking Australian consumers to notify it of Monsanto's 'educational' material.

"We are so accustomed to explaining away misinformation on GM food and crops that it's really just business as usual" said Madeleine Love of MADGE. "Monsanto has more incentive to 'sell' rather than 'educate'."

"Phrases such as 'feeding a hungry world', 'reducing pesticides', 'coping with climate change', 'increasing yields', 'providing choice' or 'improved nutrition' may indicate a Monsanto 'education' campaign."

"Such ambitions may appear virtuous, but there is no evidence to suggest that patented GM crops are capable of mitigating any adverse human or environmental circumstances. Documented experience of the past suggests exactly the reverse. "

"Based on recent upheld charges on Monsanto (end of the release), there is little reason to believe that the welfare of Australian consumers and farmers, struggling world peoples or a healthy environment is a concern of any priority to the Company."

"Years of research by journalist author Marie Monique Robin went into detailing Monsanto's most outrageous record in her just published book "The World According to Monsanto", which included the names of the people responsible."

Fran Murrell said "There is a reason for Monsanto to 'educate' now."

"The WA government has allowed Monsanto access to a large number of Australian wheat varieties in return for access to Monsanto's research technology. The ambition will be to get patented Monsanto GM traits into Australian wheat. GM wheat would have to be labelled, and Monsanto knows that consumers would reject it."

“Agriculture Minister Terry Redman seems oblivious to Monsanto’s agricultural record:

- Under investigation by the Department of Justice for anti-competitive behaviour towards US farmers <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/6327dfda-a3ef-11df-9e3a-00144feabdc0.html>
- Under investigation by West Virginian officials over unfair and deceptive practices over marketing its new GM soybean seeds. http://current.com/news/92513345_west-virginia-investigating-monsanto-for-consumer-fraud.htm
- Monsanto is handing out test kits and chemicals to destroy GM canola that has developed into weeds in California http://westernfarmpress.com/news_archive/rr-canola-evolves-into-vexing-weed-0820/index1.html”

“Far more useful traits have been developed through non-GM research, and people should not feel obliged to consume GM products that have neither been determined to be safe, nor shown to be contributing to broader world issues.”

Monsanto’s Recent Record:

- Reported in the Washington Post on 23rd February 2002; “An Alabama jury yesterday found that Monsanto Co. engaged in “outrageous” behavior by releasing tons of PCBs into the city of Anniston and covering up its actions for decades, handing 3,500 local residents a huge victory in a landmark environmental lawsuit.

The jury in Gadsden, Ala., a town 20 miles from Anniston, held Monsanto and its corporate successors liable on all six counts it considered: negligence, wantonness, suppression of the truth, nuisance, trespass and outrage. Under Alabama law, the rare claim of outrage typically requires conduct “so outrageous in character and extreme in degree as to go beyond all possible bounds of decency so as to be regarded as atrocious and utterly intolerable in civilized society.” [\[ii\]](#)

- On 7th January 2005 the news broke that Monsanto had been fined \$1.5million for bribing an Indonesian official, in a bid to avoid environmental impact studies [\[iii\]](#). On the 6th January 2005 the US United States Department of Justice, Criminal Division, Fraud Section, charged MONSANTO COMPANY with
 - violating the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, 15 U.S.C. § 78dd-1, and
 - making false entries into its books and records, in violation of Title 15, United States Code, § 78m(b)(2) & (5) [\[iv\]](#).

Monsanto suffered three years of monitoring before the Deferred Prosecution Agreement was filed on 3rd April 2008 [\[v\]](#).

- In 2007 Monsanto was fined by a French court for misleading the public about the safety of Roundup, and the verdict was confirmed in 2009 [\[vi\]](#). This followed a

similar accusation of misleading advertising in 1996 by the Attorney General of the State of New York, Consumer Frauds and Protection Bureau & Environmental Protection Bureau[vii].

- In Oct 2009 US ABC news reported that Monsanto was being investigated by the US Department of Justice on Anti-trust issues related to possible monopolistic practices. On 14th January Monsanto announced that the Dept of Justice had issued a civil investigative demand (CID) requesting information[viii].
- Covalence Ethical Quote system once again ranked Monsanto last on their ethical listing of multinationals; Monsanto was 581st behind companies such as Haliburton, and Philip Morris[ix].
- On 9th February 2010 the news broke that a former Managing Director of Monsanto India admitted that in his time Monsanto falsified scientific evidence for regulatory approval[x].
- On 8th July 2010 Monsanto was fined \$2.5m by the US FDA for mislabelling their genetically engineered pesticides[xi].
- Over the last few days of July into early August 2010 and continuing, a series of class actions have been announced against Monsanto on behalf of investors, typically alleging that the defendants failed to disclose material adverse facts about the Company's true financial condition, business and prospects.[xii]

MADGE urges that anyone who eats, and intends to continue to do so, educate themselves and others about Monsanto as quickly as possible.

[i] Monsanto steps up its campaign for acceptance of GM

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/content/201008/s2996789.htm>

[ii] <http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A54914-2002Feb22?language=printer> ;

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn?pagename=article&contentId=A46648-2001Dec31>

[iii] <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/4153635.stm>

[iv] <http://www.law.virginia.edu/pdf/faculty/garrett/monsanto.pdf>;

http://www.usdoj.gov/opa/pr/2005/January/05_crm_008.htm;

[v] <http://www.justice.gov/criminal/fraud/fcpa/cases/docs/03-04-08monsanto-dismiss-prejudice.pdf>

[vi] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roundup#False_advertising_and_scientific_fraud

[vii] <http://www.mindfully.org/Pesticide/Monsanto-v-AGNYnov96.htm>

[viii] <http://monsanto.mediaroom.com/index.php?s=43&item=793>

[ix] <http://www.covalence.ch/index.php/ethical-rankings/across-sectors/>

[x]

<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/site/Story/83093/India/Monsanto+%27faked%27+data+for+approvals+claims+its+ex-chief.html>

[xi] Monsanto fine largest over mislabeled pesticide

<http://chicagobreakingbusiness.com/2010/07/monsanto-fine-largest-over-mislabeled-pesticide.html>

[xii] http://pr-usa.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=450985&Itemid=31

http://www.marketwatch.com/story/the-briscoe-law-firm-pllc-and-cash-powers-taylor-llp-announce-the-investigation-of-possible-breaches-of-fiduciary-duties-by-the-officers-and-directors-of-monsanto-company-2010-08-04?reflink=MW_news_stmp

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<http://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20100729007122/en>