



**For Immediate Release: Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January**

## **WA Agriculture Minister using phantom studies and Monsanto data to reassure public over GM canola**

In December last year WA Agriculture Minister, Terry Redman, announced widespread GM "Roundup Ready" canola trials would go ahead this year. <sup>1</sup>

MADGE (Mothers are Demystifying Genetic Engineering) says that Terry Redman's Office has referred people to an empty list of studies on a GM advocacy website, GMO pundit. <sup>2</sup>

The site lists 67 independent studies of GM. <sup>3</sup> However:

- There were no studies on the GM Roundup Ready canola to be trialed in WA.
- The only GM canola study on the list was on an experimental GM canola. It caused weight and thyroid problems in pigs. <sup>4</sup>
- Other studies found damaging effects from GM including recent studies finding:
  - increase in immune cell levels and products associated with allergy in children <sup>5</sup>
  - indications of accelerated liver aging <sup>6</sup>
- The list was compiled by Dr David Tribe of the University of Melbourne. He is a well-known GM advocate.

MADGE researcher Madeleine Love detailed the contents of the list: "This isn't a list of studies showing GM food is safe – it's a random collection on the general topic. A number of the studies report adverse findings."

"This list appears to have been used to create the impression that GM canola has been independently determined to be safe.

"Food Standards Australia New Zealand has approved the GM RR canola on the basis of data provided solely by Monsanto. The WA Agriculture Minister's office is reassuring the public with an empty list on a GM advocacy site. Blind Freddy can see something's wrong."

What GM crop studies ARE on the list?

- Maize (25)
- Soy (10)
- Rice (9)
- Potatoes (6)
- Wheat (4)
- Tomatoes (3)
- Cotton (1)
- Sugar Beets (1)
- Sweet Pepper (1)
- Myrsic Acid-rich Canola (1)
- General (6)

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<sup>1</sup> WA approves GM canola trials <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2008/12/23/2453698.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Dear

Thank you for your email regarding your concerns about GM foods.

As you are aware the Minister has given approval for 1000ha of GM canola trials, the purpose of the trials is to assess the agronomic performance and the ability of the industry to effectively segregate non-GM from GM canola.

Australia has a rigorous regulatory system that ensures only GM crops that have been assessed by the Office of Gene Technology Regulator (OGTR) and Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ), as being safe to human health and the environment are able to be released. Monsanto's RR canola has been assessed by both the OGTR and FSANZ and determined to be safe.

There have also been a number of independent studies on the safety of GM crops, information on these can be found on the following website: (<http://gmopundit.blogspot.com/2007/06/150-published-safety-assessments-on-gm.html>). This web-link is a part of a website that is maintained by Dr David Tribe who is an academic at the Department of Microbiology and Immunology, University of Melbourne. His current area of research is food risk analysis and management and has a particular interest in safety issues on Gene technology.

Thank you for bring this to my attention.

Kind Regards

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<sup>3</sup> The link for the “Independent studies”... <http://gmopundit.blogspot.com/2008/08/rosemary-stanton-wrong-about.html>  
... came from the link provided by Nicole Fernandes:  
<http://gmopundit.blogspot.com/2007/06/150-published-safety-assessments-on-gm.html>

<sup>4</sup> Nutritional assessment of genetically modified rapeseed synthesizing high amounts of mid-chain fatty acids including production responses of growing-finishing pigs. Böhme H et al; Arch Anim Nutr. 2007 Aug;61(4):308-16;  
[http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17760308?ordinalpos=1&itool=EntrezSystem2.PEntrez.Pubmed.Pubmed\\_ResultPanel.Pubmed\\_DefaultReportPanel.Pubmed\\_RVDocSum](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17760308?ordinalpos=1&itool=EntrezSystem2.PEntrez.Pubmed.Pubmed_ResultPanel.Pubmed_DefaultReportPanel.Pubmed_RVDocSum)

<sup>5</sup> “Intestinal and Peripheral Immune Response to MON810 Maize Ingestion in Weaning and Old Mice.” Finamore A et al; *J Agric Food Chem*. 2008 Nov 14. [Epub ahead of print];  
[http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19007233?ordinalpos=1&itool=EntrezSystem2.PEntrez.Pubmed.Pubmed\\_ResultPanel.Pubmed\\_DefaultReportPanel.Pubmed\\_RVDocSum](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19007233?ordinalpos=1&itool=EntrezSystem2.PEntrez.Pubmed.Pubmed_ResultPanel.Pubmed_DefaultReportPanel.Pubmed_RVDocSum)

<sup>6</sup> A long-term study on female mice fed on a genetically modified soybean: effects on liver ageing. Maletesta M et al; *Histochem Cell Biol*. 2008 Nov;130(5):967-77. Epub 2008 Jul 22;  
[http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18648843?ordinalpos=5&itool=EntrezSystem2.PEntrez.Pubmed.Pubmed\\_ResultPanel.Pubmed\\_DefaultReportPanel.Pubmed\\_RVDocSum](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18648843?ordinalpos=5&itool=EntrezSystem2.PEntrez.Pubmed.Pubmed_ResultPanel.Pubmed_DefaultReportPanel.Pubmed_RVDocSum)