



Media Release - 1st September 2008

Mothers want GM allergy link investigated

At the MADGE (Mothers are Demystifying Genetic Engineering) launch in Daylesford on Friday 29th August, a group of mothers called for an urgent investigation to see if there is a link between the huge rise in food allergies and the introduction of GM foods.

Members of the audience became genetic engineers by throwing slinkies wrapped around tennis balls at plant cells made from lego (K'nex). This demonstrated how DNA is blasted into plant cells and is one of two ways that genes are transferred in genetic manipulation.

"I never realised how random genetic engineering is" said mother of two Lindy. "It was easy to see how the GM process could damage other parts of the DNA."

Gasps were heard as graphs showed that the rise in allergies in children and the wider population exactly mirrors the approvals of GM food in Australia.

MADGE was careful to point out that there may be no connection between the massive increase in allergies and GM food. Based on CSIRO studies of mice, however, a link would be expected. MADGE is calling for an urgent investigation to see if there is so.

MADGE Madeleine Love has been closely examining our Food Regulators approval of GM canola and has found glaring errors in it.

"It is obvious that our regulators do not know exactly what the new proteins in GM canola are. This is important as proteins may cause allergies

"If our regulator doesn't know what new proteins are in our food how can they have tested them to see if they cause allergies?" Madeleine said.

MADGE Jessica Harrison then displayed a shopping basket with food that may contain GM ingredients. Due to the large loopholes in our GM labelling laws most food containing GM ingredients is not labelled.

"In the UK, supermarkets started labelling GM food when their customers demanded it. Contact your shops and food processors and ask them to label all GM food."

Local residents expressed interest in organising a local MADGE group. Fran Murrell said "MADGE is not only concerned with GM food, we are also hoping to encourage a system of happy, healthy eating. How we produce our food affects everything, our health, our environment and the well-being of our families and our farmers. Food is everyone's business."

MADGE was officially launched with a champagne toast. The event was filmed by A Current Affair that is preparing a segment on GM food that will be aired soon.

Ring Fran 0401407944, Jessica 0407307231 or Madeleine 044 776 2284 for more details
MADGE – Mothers are Demystifying Genetic Engineering – www.madge.org.au