



Mothers Demand GM and Food Allergy Investigation. Is Australia's Phenomenal Increase in Food Allergy due to Genetically Modified Food?

MADGE (Mothers Are Demystifying GE) are demanding to know if the dramatic increase in food allergy is due to the introduction of unlabelled GM food, following the release of their GM food and Food Allergy report [<http://www.madge.org.au/Docs/allergy-report.pdf>].

Australian children aged 0-4 are five times more likely to suffer food related anaphylaxis (severe allergy) than in 1995 (1).

GM foods were introduced into Australia in 1996 but GM additives may have been in our food before this (2). Evidence suggesting GM foods could be "cross-priming" i.e causing people to become allergic to natural foods, is detailed in MADGE's report.

The European Food Safety Authority has warned that people allergic to prawns, shrimp and lobster may be allergic to Roundup Ready canola. Red shellfish is the second most common food allergen in a survey of young Australian adults(3).

Monsanto's Roundup Ready GM canola has been planted in Victoria and NSW this year.

"I find it hard to stomach that our food regulator FSANZ did no independent testing on this GM canola. Instead they passed it as safe on the basis of Monsanto's own tests" said MADGE co-founder Fran Murrell.

"There may be no link between GM food and allergies but our report shows why we need proper allergy tests done immediately on GM food. Our children's health is too important to delay this vital research."

"Food allergy rates in other countries appear to be linked to their policy on GM food" said Madeleine Love, principal allergy researcher at MADGE. "Our preliminary numbers are suggesting that Norway's babies and toddlers are nine times less likely to have food anaphylaxis than Australian children. So far no GMO products have been approved as food or as ingredients in food in Norway.(6)

MADGE's report in full here <http://www.madge.org.au/Docs/allergy-report.pdf>

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(1) Paediatric food allergy trends in a community-based specialist allergy practice, 1995-2006, Raymond J Mullins, MJA Vol. 186 No. 12 pp 618-621

(2) Various sources. Genetically modified foods and their approval status; Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ); <http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/foodmatters/gmfoods/gmcurrentapplication1030.cfm>
Monsanto's crop approval documents contained advice that we were eating GM food for years before the products were officially 'approved' - GM soy since Dec 1996, GM cotton from 1996, GM canola "several years", GM corn for some period.

(3) Prevalence of food allergies in young adults and their relationship to asthma, nasal allergies, and eczema; Woods RK; Ann Allergy Asthma Immunol. 2002 Feb;88(2):183-9 <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11868923>

(6) The Norwegian Food Standards body: Mattilsynet www.mattilsynet.no