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An invitation to natural and organic food producers: Validate your non-GMO claims to meet buyer demands

Recent industry market research indicates that buyers of natural and organic products want and expect foods without genetically modified organisms (GMOs). Now you can provide non-GMO assurance to your customers through Genetic ID’s GMO testing services.

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Organic & Non-GMO Report recently moved its offices to Eugene, Oregon in the beautiful and fertile Willamette Valley.

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Address: PO Box 51137
Eugene, OR 97405

Phone: 1-541-343-2272, 1-800-854-0586
Fax: 1-541-343-2277

Email and website remain the same:
ken@non-gmoreport.com, www.non-gmoreport.com

To the Point

“There are some things in there to lessen the regulatory burden but also we want to ensure that the organisms are overseen appropriately.”
—Rachel Iadicicco, USDA-APHIS spokeswoman, speaking about controversial proposed changes to regulating genetically modified crops. Her response begs the question: Wasn’t the government’s earlier plan to “lessen the regulatory burden” on the financial markets not such a good idea?

“They’re going to control the world. We thought Hitler was a bad fella ... these guys could show him a thing or two – and they’re creeping up on us quietly without guns or anything like that, but the poison is there.”
—Australian food guru Margaret Fulton, talking about the GM food companies at the launch of the Greenpeace True Food Guide Canola Edition 2009 in Sydney, Australia

“It is good to see this. But it took seven years.”
—Ignacio Chapela, ecologist from the University of California, Berkeley, responding to a recent study finding GMO contamination in native corn in Oaxaca, Mexico. Dr. Chapela reported the same results seven years ago and was pilloried for it by biotechnology proponents. The new study validates—and vindicates—Dr. Chapela’s earlier work.
EXPERT INTERVIEW

Scientist: GM food safety testing is “woefully inadequate”

According to Judy Carman, Ph.D., very little safety testing is done on genetically modified foods, and when it is done, biotechnology companies conduct minimal testing. Dr. Carman says that more extensive independent testing of GM foods is needed to ensure they are safe. Her recommendations seem prophetic in light of a recent Austrian government study that found reduced fertility in mice fed GM corn.

Dr. Carman is director of the Institute of Health and Environmental Research, Inc., a non-profit research institute based in Australia focusing on the safety of genetically modified food. She earned a doctorate degree in medicine from the University of Adelaide in the areas of metabolic regulation, nutritional biochemistry, and cancer. She has investigated outbreaks of disease for an Australian state government.

Ken Roseboro, editor of The Organic & Non-GMO Report, interviewed Dr. Judy Carman during her recent visit to the United States.

Can you tell me a about your research on the health impacts of GM foods?

We are conducting one of the very few long-term, independent animal feeding studies with GM foods. To date, most of these types of studies have been done by biotechnology companies or scientists associated with biotechnology companies.

Of the few independent studies being done, a study by the Austrian government recently made public found reduced fertility in mice fed GM corn. Another recent study done in Italy showed immune system problems in mice fed GM corn.

The studies done by biotechnology companies tend to show no health problems associated with eating GM food. The independent studies are finding adverse effects.

Do you have any comments about the Austrian study showing reduced fertility?

I haven’t had a chance to read it yet. It is interesting that (Russian scientist) Irina Ermakova had similar findings (of reduced fertility) with mice fed GM soy.

It is disturbing that the study showed a gradually worsening effect on mice that ate the GM corn. I am worried that something similar is happening in humans. If it is, it could take many years for problems to become apparent, and by then it could be too late to do anything about it.

What are the challenges of doing this type of research?

There are two major challenges. First, it is very hard to get GM seed to conduct the research. In order to buy GM seed, you have to go to a licensed seed dealer, and sign a technology licensing agreement, which states that you won’t do any research on the seed, which includes agronomic, health, and environmental research. Also, scientists who try to research health impacts of GM food get harassed and intimidated by people with vested interests in GM technology. I’ve had 10 years of abuse from such people who’ve defamed me, driven me out of a university, and tried to get me fired from jobs. With that kind of intimidation, scientists often decide not to do any research. Vested interests have been trying to find out about research I’m doing. They filed a freedom of information request with the Western Australian government to find out. The government denied their request. It could have ended up in court. My research protocol could have been stolen.

Funding for studies looking at health effects of GM foods is difficult to find in the United States. Do you find that universities and organizations in Australia also don’t want to fund such studies?

Yes, it is very difficult to get funding. If you want to do medical research, you have to go to an organization that funds such research. In order to get funding, you need to have a proven track record in that area of research. However, in a new area of research such as GM food safety, no one has a track record, so it is difficult to get the funding. It’s a Catch-22. We are thankful that the Western Australian government gave us funding. The research protocol was sent to 15 scientists worldwide for review and then approved by a steering committee.

If your research finds negative health impacts caused by GM foods, are you prepared to deal with a negative onslaught from biotech proponents?

Yes, I understand what will happen. I’ve been attacked many times. GM food advocates want to make people who do this type of work frightened of losing their jobs to make them stop working on the issue. They can’t get me fired now. I work within my own organization, the Institute of Health and Environmental Research, which I established along with others who are committed to finding out if GM foods are safe to eat.

The behavior of GM food advocates makes me ask, “what are they frightened of?” If they believe GM foods are safe, they
would be confident that I would not find any problems. Instead they are paranoid. What do they know that I don’t know? What are they trying to hide? It makes me more curious and determined to find out.

**GM foods are widely consumed in the United States, and the US government opposes labeling GM foods. What are your thoughts about that?**

The big surprise is the lack of GM food labeling here. In Australia, we hear all the time from the US that you are the land of the free. I find it amazing that Americans have no choice about eating GM foods. The most basic democratic right is being denied to you. For those who don’t want to eat GM food, it is being shoved down your throats against your will because it seems that nearly all foods have ingredients from GM corn or soy.

equivalent non-GM food. The animals should be fed long enough and involve tests that, at a minimum, measure risks of cancer and allergy and threats to reproduction and organ health.

Do you believe that scientific research will conclusively show that GM foods pose significant health risks?

You never know what will happen. Independent research is finally being done and is showing adverse affects. There’s been an avalanche of bad news for the GM industry lately.

**“If proponents of GM foods believe they are safe, they would be confident that I would not find any problems. Instead they are paranoid. What do they know that I don’t know? What are they hiding?”**

With every US citizen exposed to GM foods, if something goes wrong it could go very badly wrong. If one person in a thousand in the US gets sick from GM foods, that’s 300,000 people sick.

**GM food advocates often claim that “no one in the US has ever gotten sick from eating GM foods.”**

It’s rubbish to say that no one ever has ever gotten sick eating GM foods. The fact is that no one knows. Since GM foods have been introduced, millions of Americans have been hospitalized and millions have died, and no one has investigated to see if any of those cases have been due to eating GM foods. The HIV/AIDS epidemic went unnoticed for decades, and the relationship between smoking and lung cancer went undetected for generations.

With the current level of safety testing, if GM foods do cause human health problems, it will be very difficult to determine this, even though there may be many cases of illness.

**What type of safety testing do you think should be done on GM crops?**

We need long-term safety tests that are relevant to human health done by people independent of GM vested interests. The safety testing done now is woefully inadequate. Biotechnology companies often don’t even use the whole GM grain in feeding studies. Instead they tend to only use a protein extract that doesn’t even come from the GM plant. The feeding tests are also only done for few days or a few weeks.

Safety tests should involve comparing animals fed GM foods with animals fed the...
A study sponsored by the Austrian Ministries for Agriculture and Health found that mice fed a genetically engineered corn developed by Monsanto Company produced fewer offspring than those fed conventional corn.

**Fewer litters, fewer and smaller offspring, no offspring**

The study was led by Dr. Jürgen Zentek, Professor of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Vienna. For 20 weeks, Dr. Zentek and his team fed mice diets consisting of either 33% genetically engineered (GE) corn, or 33% of a closely related non-GE variety. The diets were otherwise nutritionally equivalent.

Mice fed the GE corn diet had fewer litters, fewer total offspring, smaller offspring, and more females with no offspring, than mice fed the conventional corn. The effects were particularly pronounced in the third and fourth litters, after the mice had consumed the GE corn for a longer period of time. The authors attributed the reduced fertility to the GE corn feed, and said it might be related to unintended effects of the genetic modification process. Dr. Zentek and fellow researchers wrote, “The number of females without litters decreased with time in the GM and ISO group, especially in the fourth generation. In the group fed with [a non-GM corn cultivated in Austria] fewer females were without litters, and accordingly more pups were weaned.” They also wrote that the study was the first investigating a stacked GM event in multigeneration study focusing on mice in reproduction and development.

Dr. Zentek said that further studies are “urgently needed” to corroborate his team’s findings.

“This meticulous study suggests that a popular type of genetically engineered corn may harbor fertility-reducing substances,” said Bill Freese, Science Policy Analyst at the Center for Food Safety and co-author of a peer-reviewed study on GE crop regulation. “It’s no surprise to us that US regulators did not catch this. None of our regulatory agencies require any long-term animal feeding trials before allowing genetically engineered crops on the market.”

Calls for a ban on GE foods

Environmental and consumer
groups called for an immediate moratorium on GE foods. “If this is not reason enough to close down the whole biotech industry once and for all, I am not sure what kind of disaster we are waiting for,” said Dr. Jan van Aken, GE expert at Greenpeace International.

“GM foods are likely responsible for several negative health trends in the US. The government must impose an immediate ban on these dangerous crops,” said Jeffrey Smith, executive director of the Institute for Responsible Technology.

As expected, Monsanto Company, developer of the GE crop in question, criticized the Austrian study, saying it was not peer-reviewed and that it contained “significant flaws in the study reporting and analysis which bring serious question to the validity of the findings.”

Interestingly, the Austrian study was widely reported in Europe, but not in the United States where only the Seattle Post-Intelligencer and the online industry outlet Foodnavigator-USA.com reported the findings.

**Study finds GM corn disturbs immune system of mice**

Italy’s National Institute of Research on Food and Nutrition recently published a report online in the *Journal of Agricultural Food Chemistry* documenting significant disturbances in the immune system of young and old mice that have been fed the genetically modified corn MON 810.

The study evaluated the gut and peripheral immune response to corn in mice in vulnerable conditions—either very young or old. Weaning and old mice were fed a diet containing GM MON810 or its parental control corn or a pellet diet containing a non-GM corn for 30 and 90 days. MON810 maize induced alterations in the percentage of T and B cells and of CD4+, CD8+, γδT, and αβT sub-populations of weaning and old mice fed for 30 or 90 days, respectively, at the gut and peripheral sites. An increase of serum IL-6, IL-13, IL-12p70, and MIP-1β after MON810 feeding was also found. These changes were not detected in the mice fed the non-GM diet.

The researchers said that the study’s findings underscore the importance of considering the gut and peripheral immune response to GM crop ingestion as well as the age of the consumer when evaluating GM crop safety.

A press release issued by the Institute of Science in Society stated, “It is clear that genetic modification is inherently hazardous, as it invariably results in unpredictable and uncontrollable changes in the genome and the epigenome (pattern of gene expression) that impact on safety.”

**Bee learning behavior affected by eating Bt Cry1Ab toxin**

A recent study found that honey bees fed on the active form of purified Cry1Ab protein, the genetically modified protein found in GM Bt corn, can be affected in the learning responses necessary to associate nectar

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GMO or Non GMO? If That is the Question, Eurofins GeneScan can provide the Answer.

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**MARKET NEWS**

### 2009 non-GMO and organic grain production contracts

The following companies will contract with farmers to grow non-GMO and organic grains in 2009.

**ADM Grain Company**
Decatur, Illinois
- Phone: 1-217-451-4955
- Email: h_cooklin@admworld.com
- Contact: Henry Cooklin
- Contracts offered: Non-GMO Soybeans, Non-GMO Corn, food grade soybeans, food grade corn, hard endosperm corn

**Brushvale Seed, Inc.**
Breckenridge, Minnesota
- Phone: 1-218-643-2311
- Contact: Paul Holmen, Jon Miller
- Email: pholmen@brushvale-seed.com, brushseed@rrt.net
- Contracts offered: Non-GMO soybeans for natto, tofu, soymilk, miso, soy sauce and other soy foods

**Citizens LLC**
Charlotte, Michigan
- Phone: 1-605-271-7471, cell: 1-517-231-3259
- Contact: Bruce Wymer
- Email: brucew_citizens@yahoo.com
- Contracts offered: All non-GMO soybeans that meet food grade requirements. Premiums range from 75 cents over CBOT to $2.00 over CBOT. Please contact Bruce with the variety you want to grow to learn the premiums offered

**Clarkson Grain Co., Inc.**
Cerro Gordo, Illinois
- Phone: 1-800-252-1638, 1-217-763-2861
- Email: gary.ellis@clarksongrain.com
- Contact: Gary Ellis, Beth Bennett
- Contracts offered: Non-GMO Pioneer 93B82 variety soybeans, non-GMO white corn varieties

**DeBruce Grain, Inc.**
Creston, Iowa
- Phone: 1-877-274-2676
- Email: dmichaelson@debruce.com
- Contact: Dean Michaelson
- Contracts offered: Non-GMO soybeans

**Grain Millers Specialty Products**
Eden Prairie, Minnesota
- Phone: 1-952-983-1331 (Eden Prairie), 1-507-934-0209 (Saint Peter)
- Email: roger.mortenson@grain-millers.com
- Contact: Eden Prairie – Roger Mortenson, Saint Peter – Shawn Heider
- Contracts offered: Non-GMO Soybeans, variety specific soybeans, proprietary variety soybeans, organic soybeans. Send samples to: Grain Millers Specialty Products, 1502 Gault St., Saint Peter, MN 56082

**Grain Place Foods, Inc.**
Marquette, Nebraska
- Phone: 1-888-714-7246
- Email: dspringer@grainplacefoods.com
- Contact: David Springer
- Contracts offered: Popcorn, peas, barley, oats, millet, soybean, corn

**Huron Commodities, Inc.**
Monticello, Illinois
- Phone: 1-217-762-4500
- Email: jtraub@huron.com

Dehydrogenase enzymes indicate microbial population in soil; a drop in their activity means partially inhibited microbial activity, the study said.

“Higher Bt toxin concentration in the root zone of Bt cotton plant could have made conditions unfavorable for certain groups of microbes,” said T. J. Purakayastha, one of the authors of the paper published in the *Journal of Agronomy and Crop Science* (Vol. 194, No. 04). The study also found lower soil respiration rate in Bt cotton soil. Soil respiration is another indicator of biological activity, including that of soil microbes. *(SOURCE: Down to Earth)*

**GM crops negatively impact soil nutrients**

In a recent study, researchers at the Indian Agriculture Research Institute (IARI) said genetically modified Bt cotton may negatively affect beneficial soil microbes and nutrients available to the plants. The IARI researchers compared the behavior of microbes in soil under Bt cotton varieties and non-GM cotton varieties. They found lower activity of certain soil enzymes (called dehydrogenase) in the soil growing Bt cotton compared to that with non-GM cotton.

Dehydrogenase enzymes indicate microbial population in soil; a drop in their activity means partially inhibited microbial activity, the study said.

“Higher Bt toxin concentration in the root zone of Bt cotton plant could have made conditions unfavorable for certain groups of microbes,” said T. J. Purakayastha, one of the authors of the paper published in the *Journal of Agronomy and Crop Science* (Vol. 194, No. 04). The study also found lower soil respiration rate in Bt cotton soil. Soil respiration is another indicator of biological activity, including that of soil microbes. *(SOURCE: Down to Earth)*

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Researchers since it is known to be inhibited by the insecticide imidacloprid.

The finding is particularly interesting since it lends weight to a previous suggestion that Bt toxins may have other, non-lethal effects which become apparent only when the normal (i.e. lethal) effect is absent. If there were to be multiple modes of Bt action then many more non-target organisms would likely be at risk from GM Bt corn. Bt Researcher Angelika Hilbeck says that more research is needed that looks at the impacts of both the Bt toxin and imidaclopid on bee behavior.

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The New Treasure Map
For Specialty Soybean Farmers

Connecting soybean farmers with specialty premium programs has never been easier thanks to the new SoybeanPremiums.org website. Every company offering soybean premium programs is invited to post their information to the site so farmers can learn about the programs available to them.

Funded by the soybean checkoff.
MARKET NEWS
FROM PAGE 8

r.prather@huron.com
• Contact: Jim Traub, Rob Prather
• Contracts offered: Non-GMO soybeans: Pioneer 93B82, 93M52, HCI751, HCI7744, Schillinger 348 & 446; organic soybeans, organic corn, organic wheat: soft wheat, high protein wheat, other organic grains. Delivery points throughout the Midwest

Midwest Organic Farmers Cooperative
Saline, Michigan
• Phone: 1-734-429-9110 or 9109, cell: 1-734-649-7172
• Email: mofc-merle@verizon.net
• Contact: Merle J. Kramer
• Contracts: Organic high protein soybeans (NOP & JAS/EU) (’08 & ’09), organic high protein HRS wheat (JAS/EU) (’08 & ’09), organic feed grade soybeans (’08 & ’09 Crop), organic regular clear hilum soybeans (’08 & ’09 crop), organic soft red and soft white winter wheat (’09 crop), organic spelt - 12% > Protein (’08 & ’09 crop), organic white corn (’08 & ’09 crop), organic edible beans (’09 crop)

Montana Specialty Mills, LLC
Great Falls, Montana
• Phone: 1-406-761-2338
• Contact: Justin Hager
• Email: justin.hager@mtspecialtymills.com
• Contracts offered: Oilseeds, including canola, mustard, flax, safflower, sunflower and other grains

New Organics
Ann Arbor, Michigan
• Phone: 1-888-541-GROW or 1-734-677-5570
• Email: info@neworganics.com

Northland Organic Foods Corp./Northland Seed & Grain Corp.
St. Paul, Minnesota
• Phone: 1-651-221-0855
• Email: soybean@northlandorganic.com or craig@northlandorganic.com
• Contact: Craig Tomera or Greg Lane
• Contracts offered: Organic food- and feed-grade soybeans, organic hard red spring wheat, other organic grains, non-GMO foodgrade soybeans

Pacific Soybean & Grain
San Francisco, California
• Phone: 1-415 433 0867
• Email: info@pacificsoy.com
• Contact: Lina Mesa
• Contracts offered: Soybeans, food-grade—organic and non-GMO

Premium Ag Products Cooperative
Clarence, Missouri
• Phone: 1-660-699-2340
• Email: dimmitt@premiumag-products.com
• Contact: G.W. Dimmitt, C.E.O.
• Contracts offered: Identity-Preserved grains including non-GMO food grade soybeans—light and dark hilum, hi-protein; non-GMO food grade yellow and white corn; food grade grain sorghum

Professional Proteins, Ltd.
Washington, Iowa
• Phone: 1-319-653-6541
• Contact: Brett Sweeting (sales)
• Email: proproteins@iowatelecom.net
• Contracts: Buying organic soybeans. Sales organic soy products (expelled, extruded, oil), organic animal
Maryland co-op seeks members to grow non-GMO soybeans

Chesapeake Fields Farmers Cooperative, based in Chestertown, Maryland, is looking for more members. Currently, the cooperative is made up of 18 members who together have dedicated 1,800 acres of their land to grow specialty non-GMO soybeans.

To join the cooperative, farmers must commit to growing at least 50 acres of soybeans for the cooperative to sell.

“We have more markets than we have beans,” said Hans Schmidt, a co-op member.

Schmidt said cooperative growers have a huge advantage over competitors in the Midwest — the transportation costs for cooperative growers is significantly less than for those in the Midwest. As a result, it is able to provide its growers with a little extra money for participating.

The cooperative sells to about a dozen customers on the East Coast, from Virginia to Maine.

Last year the cooperative harvested 45,000 bushels of soybeans, which were all sold. This year, due to dry weather conditions, 32,000 bushels were harvested, which also have been sold.

For more information about Chesapeake Fields Farmers cooperative, call 1-410-810-2082.

(SOURCE: Americanfarm.com) •

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12
Canadian firm to supply non-GMO specialty proteins

Bio-Extraction, Inc. (BioExx) has announced a sales agreement with global chemical and nutritional conglomerate Helm AG for the purchase and distribution of 70% of non-GMO specialty protein products produced at the BioExx canola processing facility in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada.

Although Helm may purchase all of the specialty proteins from Saskatoon, BioExx can retain up to 30% of total volume for purposes of new market development. In return for its purchase commitment, Helm will be the sole European distributor of specialty proteins produced at the Saskatoon plant, which expects to commence production of its Advantexx70 products in the second quarter of 2009.

Advantexx70 is a 70% pure protein concentrate, initially targeted at specialty feed and aquaculture markets, although it may eventually be sold for use in human food products. BioExx's proteins produced in the Saskatoon plant are non-GMO which provides another compelling feature to drive demand and pricing in global markets.

Non-GMO soybeans cost less, more profitable than GM

According to a report from the University of Illinois Extension, non-GMO soybean seed costs will be less than one-half the cost of Monsanto's new genetically modified Roundup Ready 2Yield while producing better revenues.

Below are the cost comparisons for non-GMO soybeans and three GM varieties:
- Non-GMO seed will average $24 per bag and $34 per acre.
- Liberty Link seed will average $34 per bag and $49 per acre.
- Roundup Ready seed will average $37 per bag and $53 per acre.
- Roundup Ready 2Y seed will average $55 per bag and $78 per acre.

Mark Loux, weed specialist at Ohio State University, estimates that soybean yields are 50 bushels per acre, and soybean prices are $9 per bushel, except for a $10.40 premium price for non-GMO beans. Based on those calculations, gross revenue will be $450 per acre, except the non-GMO beans will gross $520.

Poland to remain GMO-free

The Polish government announced in November that the country will remain free of genetically modified organisms; however, scientific institutions will be permitted to conduct research on GMOs. The cabinet decided that specialized laboratories could continue research in such areas as drug testing or investigating genetic diseases, with the proviso that the GMOs must be strictly quarantined from the natural environment and from human beings.

In a related development, the Council of Ministers also announced that it will support restrictions on GMOs in the European Union.

Organic grain prices are steady to lower

Throughout the fall organic grain prices ranged from low to steady on light to moderate demand and offerings. By early December, organic feed corn prices ranged from $8.50 to $10.15 per bushel FOB. Organic food-grade soybeans ranged from $23.75 to $25.00 per bushel FOB, while feed-grade was 21.99 per bushel FOB. Food-grade hard red wheat ranged from $12.85 to $13.60 per bushel FOB and feed-grade was $8.90 to $9.50 per bushel FOB. Organic alfalfa ranged from $190 to $215 per ton.

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<th>Upper Midwest Monthly and Quarterly Organic Prices</th>
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<tr>
<td>Feed Grade Corn</td>
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<td>Feed Grade Peas</td>
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(SOURCE: USDA Department of Agriculture)

Global Organic Alliance, Inc

Contact: Betty Komnen
3185 1st Rd 179
Belleville, OH 43101
P/937-593-1232
F/937-593-5507
Email: globalorganicalliance@Hughes.net
Website: gao-organic.org

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GMA is presently the only US office accredited to perform JAS certifications.
Conference highlights opportunities, challenges of non-GMO market

This is the first of a two-part series on the 2nd International Non-GMO Soy Summit.

If anyone has any doubts about the viability of the global non-GMO market they should talk to Renaud Layadi. Speaking at the 2nd International Non-GMO Soy Summit in Brussels in October, Mr. Layadi, sustainable development project manager, Regional Council of Brittany, said, “There are hundreds of organic labels objecting to GM use, dozens of retailers rejecting GM feed in their private labels, and scores of countries worldwide, as well as regions, counties, and districts banning or discouraging GM use in food or feed.”

130 attendees from all over the world

Mr. Layadi and other leaders of the global non-GMO market met recently in Brussels at the 2nd International Non-GMO Soy Summit to discuss the opportunities and challenges of producing non-GMO food and feed.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14
Conference attendees represented diverse groups and organizations worldwide, including GMO testing laboratories, suppliers of non-GMO soy and derivatives, soy product manufacturers, organic certification firms, biotechnology companies, European government regulatory bodies, nongovernmental organizations, and university agriculture departments.

The two-day conference featured many speakers addressing issues related to securing a global sustainable supply of non-GMO soy. The first day focused on sustainable and non-GMO soy markets in Europe and issues impacting the supply and demand of non-GMO and sustainable soy.

The conference aimed to build upon momentum created by the first Non-GMO Soy Summit also held in Brussels in December 2007.

**Non-GMO respects consumer choice**

“Non-GM cultivation and non-GM feed are a strategic opportunity for European Agriculture but how can it be expressed?” Mr. Layadi asked. He then cited several examples of “winning strategies” for non-GMO food production, including Besh pork production, Comté, France’s largest quality cheese producer, Label Rouge, a French poultry producer, and Tegut, a German retail chain. These companies, Mr. Layadi said, have a vision of sustainable agriculture, produce high-quality products, and are meeting consumer demands. “The GM cartel has always defended free enterprise and the free market, but isn’t free market respecting the choice of consumers?” he asked.

**48 GM-free regions in Europe and growing**

Pascale Loget, vice president of the regional council of Brittany of the European Union Committee of the Regions, gave an overview of Europe’s GM Free Regions Network, which now includes 48 regions. Regions are the equivalent to American states. Four regions from Belgium, Spain, and Croatia joined the network in October bringing the total to 48. “The GM Free Network is one of the most healthy regional organizations dealing with sustainable agriculture in Europe,” Ms. Loget said.

She also said that Europe imports 38 million metric tons of soy per year with 90% of that used for feed. The main suppliers to Europe are the United States, Brazil, and Argentina. “Soy is a major issue for the future strategy of European Farmers,” Ms. Loget said.

**ABRANGE aims to enlarge non-GMO market**

César Borges de Souza, president of ABRANGE (the Brazilian Association of Non-GM Producers) discussed his new organization whose mission is to promote non-GMO agriculture and processing in Brazil and to promote the...
enlargement of the non-GMO market worldwide, among other goals.

Mr. Borges de Souza gave an overview of the non-GMO production of ABRANGE’s members who include AMaggi, Brejeiro, Caramaru, Coca-mar, Imcopa, and Vanguarda. Combined these companies produce 6.25 million metric tons of non-GMO soy.

Mr. Borges de Souza said Brazil is the leading producer of non-GMO soy, producing 25 million metric tons followed by India with 8.5 million tons and China with 8 million tons. Other countries produce 3.5 million tons creating a total of 47 million tons of non-GMO soybeans worldwide. However, according to a report by AgriLogic, the United States alone produced about 5.9 million tons in 2008.

“Ensure a non-GM supply”

Building upon Mr. Borges de Souza’s presentation, Augusto Freire, chief executive office of Cert ID Brazil, demonstrated that there are sufficient supplies of non-GMO soy in Brazil and other countries to meet Europe’s need, contrary to recent announcements by European feed industry members. Cert ID certified more than four million tons of non-GMO soybeans plus more than 3.4 million tons of soy derivatives—oil, meal, proteins, and lecithin—in 2008.

Though plantings of GM soy are increasing in Brazil, Mr. Freire said, “Segregation schemes exist and can be operated and certified to ensure a non-GM supply, if the correct premiums are paid.” He also said that soy production in India and China is also non-GMO.

No coexistence between GM and non-GM

Joseph Stockinger, minister of agriculture of Upper Austria and vice president of the GM Free Regions Network, said that there can be no coexistence of GM and non-GMO farming. “Small-scaled agriculture (of non-GMO farming) makes coexistence nearly impossible,” Mr. Stockinger said.

He discussed the need to replace the European Commission’s coexistence recommendations with mandatory rules that would address contamination issues and the need for long-term risk assessment on GM crops.

The allowable GM thresholds on seed, which has not yet been established by the EU, should be as low as possible at 0.1%, Mr. Stockinger said.

EU citizens worried about GMOs

Claudia Fenor, deputy managing director, TNS Opinion in Brussels, described how European public opinion remains opposed to GMOs. A 2005 Eurobarometer Survey found that 62% of Europeans are worried about GMOs in food and drinks. The survey also found that 58% of Europeans are opposed to the use of GMOs while only 21% favor their use. GMO opposition is strongest in Slovenia, Cyprus, Greece, Austria, and Finland.

Less media interest, low public awareness

Jonathan Bayne, technical development and regulatory affairs controller at UK-based Musgrave Retail Partners discussed sustainable non-GMO soy from the retailers’ perspective. Mr. Bayne quoted Soil

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16
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Oops! GM cotton gets into food supply

G.M.O. TRIAL
RESTRICTED AREA DO NOT ENTER

An unauthorized strain of GM cotton contaminated the US food supply.

INTERNATIONAL NON-GMO CONFERENCE
FROM PAGE 15

Association statistics showing that 30% of United Kingdom soy imports for animal feed are GM.

Media interest in GM foods has declined while “consumer awareness is low to zero,” he said.

Mr. Bayne said that some of the challenges facing retailers related to ensuring non-GMO foods, include the availability of non-GMO ingredients, increased costs, commitments from farmers, and safeguards to prevent contamination.

(Part two of this series focuses on sustainable, non-GMO soy markets in Europe and current issues impacting supply and demand of sustainable, non-GMO.)

Oops! GM cotton gets into food supply

For the sixth time since 2000, a genetically modified crop not approved for food use has entered the US food supply.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Drug Administration, and the Environmental Protection Agency recently announced that an experimental variety of GM cottonseed developed by Monsanto has entered the US food system illegally. According to the agencies, Monsanto harvested the unapproved cottonseed in error and allowed it to mix with approved animal feed that animals have already eaten.

About a quarter-ton of the unapproved cottonseed was combined with about 55 metric tons of commercial cotton
growing nearby, said Eric Flamm, a senior adviser at the Food and Drug Administration.

The mixture, which was grown near Lamesa in West Texas, was then stored along with 18,200 metric tons of commercial cotton seed in a warehouse. About half the crop was processed into cottonseed oil and cotton meal to use as animal feed before officials at Monsanto Company, developer of the GM cotton, realized the mistake.

Flamm told reporters, “We’re talking about a very small amount, but nevertheless, a material that contains a pesticidal substance and has not been authorized for food or feed use.”

The government agencies quickly announced that “there is no food or feed safety concern” from the contamination incident.

“USDA incapable of protecting our food”

Others were not so impressed by government assurances. “This incident and a string of others that have come to light over the past two years show that the USDA is fundamentally incapable of protecting our food,” said Karen Perry Stillerman, a food analyst at the Union of Concerned Scientists.

Meanwhile, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) said that more oversight and coordination is needed among federal agencies to prevent unapproved releases of GM crops into the environment and food supply.

“Findings are very grave”

For the second time in seven years, research has confirmed the unauthorized incursion of genetically modified material into native corn in Mexico’s Oaxaca state.

For the second time in seven years, research has confirmed the unauthorized incursion of genetically modified material into native corn in Mexico’s Oaxaca state.

The study validates the findings of University of California ecologist Ignacio Chapela, who in 2001 published a paper about the presence of transgenes in native corn in Oaxaca, but was then pilloried by biotechnology proponents who criticized his findings.

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CONTINUED ON PAGE 18 ➤
An article with details of the research appeared in the journal Molecular Ecology (MEC). The study was headed by Dr. Elena Álvarez-Buylla from the university’s Institute of Ecology, in collaboration with students and researchers from Mexico, the US, and the Netherlands.

A press release from UNAM stated, “These findings are very grave as they reveal the high likelihood of the dispersion of GM corn in unauthorized areas. This event confirms that transgenic varieties have managed to contaminate native maize varieties even in regions as remote as the northern highlands of Oaxaca even though there is a moratorium on the planting of transgenic maize in Mexico.”

GMOs spread so easily Dr. Álvarez-Buylla said, “The contamination of native maize varieties could have negative consequences for the future plans of improvement of this grain. Furthermore, there is the preoccupation of the possible contamination of the food chain by bio-reactor transgenes which are not apt for human consumption (such as solvents, plastics, experimental chemicals, and pharmacological varieties); which could end maize’s feeding role.”

“The importance of the study is not in the impact of the transgenes themselves, but in the fact that their spread has occurred so easily,” said Norman Ellstrand, plant geneticist at the University of California in Riverside.

In 2001, Mr. Chapela published a paper in Nature magazine detailing the contamination of Oaxaca’s native corn by GMOs. “It is good to see this. But it took seven years,” he said. (SOURCE: Nature)

Chile added to roster of countries contaminated by GMOs

The University of Chile’s Institute for Nutrition and Food Technology (INTA) has detected the presence of genetic contamination in samples of conventional corn. The samples were collected from 30 fields in the Region of O’Higgins in early 2008. GMOs were detected in four samples growing near fields of genetically modified corn being cultivated for seed export.

“This study shows for the first time that contamination does occur in the fields in Chile. This is a very serious situation as the contaminated corn was grown illegally, and was not approved for seeds by the Agriculture and Livestock Service (SAG), nor for human consumption,” said Maria Isabel Mansur of Fundación Sociedades Sustenables. “The question is who will take responsibility? Who will pay for this contamination?”

In 2007 SAG approved nearly 62,000 acres of transgenic crops in Chile, mostly for corn seed export. (SOURCE: Global Information Network)

Netherlands: GM soy detected in organic mash

The General Inspection Service of the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture found genetically modified soy in samples of organic mash taken in 2006 and 2007. Eighteen percent of the 62 samples were contaminated, but at levels below the EU threshold of 0.9%. Two samples containing more than 0.9% GM content were not labeled as GM, even though they were required by law to be labeled.

Both of the samples that fell outside accepted parameters were taken from mash based on soy. An investigation determined that the admixtures were unintended.

The General Inspection Service and the Dutch Food Safety Authority plan corrective measures, including measures to minimize risks of contamination throughout the food chain; the European Commission has been asked to reconsider guidelines for dealing with adventitious contaminations. (SOURCE: Co-Extra)
Organic farming may be best solution to global food security

Methods proven worldwide can sustain farmer profits, address hunger and malnutrition, and restore ecological health

To best feed the world, a growing number of researchers, development experts, farming groups and environmentalists are calling for new emphasis on sustainable agricultural practices that make a sharp break from current policies.

“Organic Green Revolution”
A newly released Rodale Institute research paper reviewing replicated research shows that the latest scientific approaches in organic agriculture offer affordable, immediately usable and universally accessible ways to improve yields and access to nutritional food in developing countries. “The Organic Green Revolution” paper is available online.

A recent report cited in the paper from the UN Environmental Programme (UNEP) noted that not only can organic agriculture feed the world but it may be the only way we can solve the growing problem of hunger in developing countries. UNEP states that its extensive study “challenges the popular myth that organic agriculture cannot increase agricultural productivity.” In an analysis of 114 farming projects in 24 African countries, the UNEP reported that organic or near-organic practices resulted in a yield increase of more than 100 percent.

Protects and restores soil and environmental health
An Organic Green Revolution, using integrated farming practices such as cover crops, organic no-till and composting, not only substantially improves yields but it also protects and restores soil and environmental health.

“Yield data just by itself makes the case for a focused and persistent move to organic farming systems,” explains Dr. Tim LaSalle, co-author of the report and CEO of the Rodale Institute, a 60-year-old research and education nonprofit.

“When we also consider that organic systems are building the health of the soil, sequestering CO2, cleaning up the waterways, and returning more economic yield to the farmer, the argument for an Organic Green Revolution becomes overwhelming. Since these methods build the soil they also increase drought and flood resistance as well as adaptability to climate change,” Mr. LaSalle added.

The term “Green Revolution” took hold in the 1960s to describe the combination of fertilizer, hybrid varieties and pesticides applied to single-crop fields to achieve maximum yield. Yet “the so-called Green Revolution was anything but green,” says LaSalle. “Initial production benefits have declined and societal costs increased. A paradigm shift, rather than incremental change, is therefore needed in the way we grow, buy and eat our food. The Organic Green Revolution provides that needed shift.”

Nearly a billion people undernourished
A number of independent research studies shows that the commodity-oriented Green Revolution has not, and cannot, feed the world sustainably, the paper reports. Some 923 million people are seriously undernourished, and 25,000 people die each day from starvation.

The Rodale Institute paper cites a major 2008 study which assessed results from 286 farms in 57 countries, finding that small farmers increased their crop yields by an average of 79 percent by using environmentally sustainable techniques, including organic farming and crop rotation. Organically managed soils have more physical soil structure, preventing erosion; more permeability, for healthier microorganisms; and more availability of nutrients, which are vital for crop productivity.

One solution to global warming
Furthermore, these soils sequester carbon in soil from carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, making organic farming the most available strategy to fight global warming.

The data and analyses compiled in the “Organic Green Revolution” report make a compelling case that organic agricultural practices are established, commercially successful and applicable at any scale of operation as shown by farmers across the United States—from family market farms to commercial operations of thousands of acres. Regenerative organic techniques can adapt to virtually any location, make best use of local inputs, and creatively transform carbon-based waste streams into valuable products.

Updating government agricultural policy that currently perpetuates unsustainable practices to a strategy appropriate to these times by providing incentives for ecological restoration could include paying farmers and other land managers for the soil carbon they store rather than the volume of commodities that they produce.

“The Organic Green Revolution” is online at www.rodalinearstitute.org/files/GreenRevUP.pdf.
The financial crisis showed the need for countries to rebuild local and diverse food systems to become independent from global turmoil, says Indian physicist and environmental activist Vandana Shiva.

"The lesson to be learned from the financial meltdown is that the world is at a tipping point," Shiva told Reuters while promoting her new book Soil not Oil.

"When one thread rips somewhere its effect is felt around the world," said Shiva, a board member of the International Forum on Globalization, which examines the effects of globalization on local economies and communities.

Shiva said industrial farmers were running short on funds to buy pesticides and fertilizers amid reduced lending and borrowing worldwide but switching to small-scale, organic farming would eliminate the need to buy chemicals.

Shiva, who received her Ph.D. in physics at the University of Western Ontario, argued that diverse, organic farming was the answer to climate change and world hunger.

She said a quarter of greenhouse gases were emitted by industrially farmed crops and livestock, a figure that could be reduced to zero by switching to organic farming.

"The world needs to shift from consumptive energy such as fossil fuels to regenerative energy," Shiva continued, adding that governments should allow and support "the rebuilding of local food sovereignty."

(Source: Reuters)
A purple tomato, genetically modified by British scientists for higher levels of antioxidants, has been widely touted as a “possible cancer preventative.” However, many articles praising the GM tomato failed to mention numerous conventional fruits and vegetables with high levels of cancer-fighting antioxidants.

The purple tomato was created by splicing genes from the snapdragon flower, resulting in higher levels of anthocyanines. The GM tomatoes were fed to laboratory mice that had been also been genetically modified—in this case to lack the p53 “genome guardian” gene that protects against cancer. Researchers reported that the mice eating the GM tomatoes lived an average of 40 days longer than p53-deficient mice subsisting on a standard diet.

The study did not address questions about the long-term safety of GM foods for human consumption; nor was the purple tomato tested alongside well-known natural antioxidants, such as blackberries, blueberries, currants, and many other dark red and purple fruits rich in anthocyanine. None of the articles mentioned the existence of natural, organic purple heirloom tomatoes, already rich in anthocyanine and safe for human consumption.

Meanwhile, an Italian research team has announced the creation—using traditional breeding techniques—of the “Sun Black,” a purple tomato that combines the nutritional elements of tomatoes, black grapes, and blackberries in a single food source.

(Source: Natural News, ANSA)
that consumers want them. He cites the continuing growth in the sales of organic foods as evidence to the contrary. (SOURCE: Des Moines Register)

Broad coalition overwhelmingly opposes GE papaya

The STOP GE Trees Campaign comprises 137 organizations worldwide that have united in a demand for a global ban on all genetically engineered trees. The Campaign joined forces with the Sierra Club, the Center for Food Safety, and Florida Organic Growers to oppose the USDA’s proposal to allow GE papaya to be commercially grown in Florida. The public response included 12,000 opposed, with only 17 people submitting statements in support.

Dr. Neil Carman, of the Sierra Club’s Biotechnology Committee, cited a previous case study in which commercialization of GE papaya in Hawaii resulted in a 50 percent contamination of backyard and organic papaya within a few years: “The use of GE papaya trees in Hawaii caused a rapid contamination of backyard and organic papaya. The USDA admits that release of GE papaya in Florida will also cause contamination, yet they continue to pursue it. They argue such contamination would be beneficial, ignoring the fact that it could wipe out the organic papaya farmers in Florida. In addition, their Environmental Assessment was completely inadequate.”

GM crops reach 9% of global primary crop production

Genetically modified crops reached 9 percent of global primary crop production in 2007, bringing the total GM land area up to 114.3 million hectares, according to Worldwatch Institute estimates published in the latest Vital Signs Update. The United States continues to be the global leader in production, accounting for half of all GM crop area.

GM production has been on the rise since the crops were first introduced more than a decade ago, and it now includes 23 countries. But controversy over the benefits of genetic modification continues, including questions about the technology’s ability to deliver on promises of enhanced yields and nutrition.

“GM crops are definitely not a silver bullet,” said Alice McKeown, a researcher for the Worldwatch Institute. “They sound good on paper, but we have yet to see glowing results.”

CONSUMER NEWS

Non-GMO Shopping Guide now available

According to the Institute for Responsible Technology, there are now 65 documented health risks associated with the consumption of GMOs in food products. Consumers who are concerned about avoiding such hazards—and particularly those who are just learning about them—have a new resource available to help with healthier choices in the marketplace. The Institute’s Campaign for Healthier Eating in America has made its Non-GMO Shopping Guide available free online.

Here are three simple tips from the Guide:
- Oils: Replace oils from the four major GM oil crops (corn, cotton, canola, and soy) with other readily available oils, such as olive, safflower, grape seed, or peanut.
- Dairy: Avoid buying products from cows fed with GM corn and soybeans, or injected with bovine growth hormone (rBST or rBGH).
- Sweeteners: Avoid corn sweeteners made from GM corn, like high fructose corn syrup. Shun beet sugar that started showing up in hundreds of your favorite products beginning with the 2008 crop. Buy cane sugar products instead.

Buying organic products is a great way to avoid GMOs.

For further information, and to download the free Guide: www.responsibletechnology.org.

Americans want labels on food from GM animals

A recent poll by Consumer Reports found that 95% of Americans agree that food products made from genetically engineered animals should be labeled as such. Another 94% said that meat and dairy products from cloned animals should also be labeled as such. In addition, 58% of consumers polled are concerned about eating meat or milk products from cloned or genetically engineered animals.

Regarding the controversial bovine growth hormone,
rBGH, 93% of consumers polled agree that dairies that produce milk and milk products without rBGH should be allowed to label their products as being free of these hormones. Another 70% of consumers polled are concerned about dairy cows being given synthetic growth hormones such as rBGH. (SOURCE: Consumer Reports)

NON-GMO PROJECT NEWS

First ever organic and Non-GMO Project joint inspections judged a success

Organic inspectors with Quality Assurance International (QAI) recently completed the first three on-site inspections for the Non-GMO Project’s Product Verification Program, with more inspections scheduled soon. The inspections occurred in conjunction with the participating companies’ annual organic inspections, reducing costs and labor. R.W. Garcia, SK Food, and WholeSoy & Co. are the first companies to go through these joint inspections.

According to Allan Perkins of R.W. Garcia, the joint inspections offer “a big time and cost savings way to participate. You can achieve both certifications with one auditor and one audit. The organic and Non-GMO Project audits fit well together.” Aaron Skyberg of SK Foods agrees, saying, “We were very pleased to be able to combine our organic and non-GMO verification inspections.” Ted Nordquist, founder and CEO of WholeSoy & Co. adds that he thinks combining the inspections is “an excellent idea, and our suppliers feel the same way.”

The onsite audit is second in the Non-GMO Project’s two-step verification process. Prior to inspection, all companies undergo a document-based review of GMO avoidance practices like traceability, segregation, and testing at critical control points. This information is compared with the consensus-based Non-GMO Project Standard in order to assess compliance.

350 products enrolled to date

More than 350 food products are enrolled in the Non-GMO Project’s verification program. Participating companies include Whole Foods Market, which enrolled its “365” and other private label products; Blue Marble Brands, which includes Mediterranean Organ-
NON-GMO PROJECT NEWS
FROM PAGE 23

The continued availability of genetically modified foods.
The program fills a gap left by lack of government oversight in the labeling of GMO foods. As project executive director Megan Thompson explains, “Poll after poll shows that the public wants to know whether or not the food they’re eating contains GMOs. In fact, according to a CBS/New York Times poll from last summer, 53% of Americans said they would not buy food that has been genetically modified.”

The Project’s major accomplishment came in March 2008, with the adoption of the Non-GMO Project Standard. This consensus-based document is North America’s first independent, third party standard for production systems designed to avoid GMOs. The Standard is a public document (available at www.nongmoproject.org), and a schedule of semi-annual comment periods ensures that it stays current, reflecting a balance of meaningfulness and achievability.

A “Non-GMO Project Verified Seal” will begin appearing on retail packages beginning in October 2009. In the meantime, a list of participating companies and the 350 plus enrolled products can be found on the Project’s website: www.nongmoproject.org.

REGULATORY NEWS

Controversy erupts over Obama’s USDA ag secretary pick

While many organic supporters blast Vilsack selection, a few suggest holding fire

President-elect Barack Obama’s selection of former Iowa governor Tom Vilsack as secretary of the US Department of Agriculture was blasted by supporters of organic food, saying the choice maintains the agribusiness status quo with its emphasis on GMOs and CAFOs (confined animal feeding operations) as opposed to needed change to sustainable agricultural methods. But, at least two other supporters were willing to give Vilsack a chance.

Vilsack’s record shows support for agribusiness. In 2005 as Iowa’s governor, he signed a bill that would prohibit local control over genetically modified seed. His support of GMOs earned him “Governor of the Year” in 2001 from the Biotechnology Industry Organization.

Obama even cited Mr. Vilsack’s support for “biotech” as an example of his qualifications for leading the USDA.

Organic supporters had hoped that Obama would choose a progressive ag secretary, such as Fred Kirschenmann, distinguished fellow at the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture at Iowa State University, or Chuck Hassebrook, Executive Director, Center for Rural Affairs, Lyons, NE.

supports organics and GM food labeling?

However, John Crabtree, development and outreach officer for the Center for Rural Affairs, believes Vilsack can bring needed changes to the USDA. He says Vilsack wants to cut controversial farm subsidies that support vast monocultures of GM soy and corn. He also says Vilsack wants to protect organic farmers and organic production systems and supports “labeling to provide consumers a stronger voice in the marketplace.”

A few years ago at a food conference at Iowa State University, Vilsack also expressed support for labeling GM foods.

Crabtree also said that Vilsack supports placing liability for GMO contamination of organic crops on biotechnology companies, processors, or


According to Joe Dickson, quality standards and organic programs coordinator for Whole Foods Market, “We’ve partnered with The Non-GMO Project because we want to offer shoppers a consistent and meaningful ‘non-GMO’ choice for products without genetic engineering or recombinant DNA technologies. Whole Foods Market strongly supports The Non-GMO Project as a means to ensure the continued availability of verified non-GMO food in North America.”

Arran Stephens, founder and CEO of Nature’s Path Organic Foods, another Non-GMO participating company, says “Our company enrolled in the Non-GMO Project as a founding member because we believe that verification and measurement in a credible and scientific way is essential to any systematic efforts to control the problem of GMO contamination.”

Provides non-GMO food choices

The Non-GMO Project was founded on a belief that people have the right to choose whether or not they consume genetically modified foods. The Project’s major accomplishment came in March 2008, with the adoption of the Non-GMO Project Standard. This consensus-based document is North America’s first independent, third party standard for production systems designed to avoid GMOs. The Standard is a public document (available at www.nongmoproject.org), and a schedule of semi-annual comment periods ensures that it stays current, reflecting a balance of meaningfulness and achievability.

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Crabtree also said that Vilsack supports placing liability for GMO contamination of organic crops on biotechnology companies, processors, or
handlers responsible for such problems. While he has disagreed with Vilsack over biotechnology issues, Crabtree writes, “I am encouraged by his open-minded approach and willingness to learn from past experience and mistakes alike.”

**Vilsack’s opportunity**

Jim Harkness, president of the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, says Vilsack faces many challenges including meeting consumer demand for more organic, locally produced, and healthier food when government programs offer little support.

Harkness says Vilsack has an opportunity to address such concerns. “But these are unconventional times, and with his charge to implement the national vision for agriculture of President-elect Obama, he has an opportunity to address the concerns of farmers—big and small, organic and conventional—and consumers, as well as environmental challenges facing the country.”

Crabtree believes Vilsack can provide the leadership “to help create a future for rural America with thriving family farms and ranches and vibrant rural communities.”

**Groups concerned about USDA attempt to ease GMO regulations**

Watchdog groups are alarmed about efforts by the US Department of Agriculture to ease restrictions on genetically modified crops in the last days of the Bush administration.

“USDA is laying the statutory groundwork to eliminate a lot of genetically modified plants from any regulation at all, even at the field test stage,” said Center for Food Science policy analyst Bill Freese.

Also a matter of concern: language that would formalize an existing policy of “just not minding” low levels of contamination by unauthorized crops, rather than requiring remedial action.

Spokeswoman Rachel Iadico of the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) said that the agency’s goals were to ensure safe development and application of some genetically-engineered organisms while reducing the “regulatory burden.”

Of particular concern to biotech critics is language in the proposed changes that stipulates that “all state and local laws or regulations that are inconsistent…(with APHIS rules) will be preempted.”

(Source: Reuters)

**Secret plan revealed to boost GMO production in Europe**

Confidential documents leaked from a series of private meetings involving representatives of 27 European governments have disclosed a plan to accelerate the implementation of GM crop cultivation throughout Europe. The documents also reveal a plan to “deal with” public resistance by having “agricultural representatives” and “industry” be more vocal in opposing the “vested interests” of environmentalists.

The secret meetings were convened by the pro-GM President of the Commission, Jose Manuel Barroso. Neither the membership, objectives, or outcomes of the meeting were made public. However, confidential documents were obtained by the British publication, The Independent.

According to Helen Holder of Friends of the Earth Europe: “Barroso’s aim is to get GM into Europe as quickly as possible. So he is going straight to prime ministers and presidents to tell them to step on their ministers and get them into line.”

(Source: The Independent)

**EU approves Monsanto’s new GM soybean despite opposition**

The European Commission recently—and quickly—approved Monsanto’s Roundup Ready2Yield soybean for import into the EU. This followed a failed vote by the EU farm ministers to approve the genetically modified soybean in mid-November.

Thirteen countries voted for approval: Belgium, Britain, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, the Czech Republic and Netherlands. Eight voted against—Austria, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta and Poland. The rest abstained.

Despite the failure to approve the GM soybean, the EC rubberstamped approval just two weeks later. The EC usually takes several months to rubberstamp such approvals after EU ministers fail to approve a GM crop. The EC acted quickly, perhaps under pressure from the US and its own feed producers who believe that insufficient supplies of non-GMO soy are available to meet their needs.

(Source: Reuters)

**CONFERENCES/TRADESHOWS**

**Leading sustainability groups host Organicology**

From February 26 to 28, 2009, the organic food and farming sector will gather in Portland, OR, to study and discuss a sustainable food future during a three-day conference called Organicology. Organicology will offer intensive workshops, networking, a trade show and key notes from a diverse array of the world’s foremost food and farming experts. The first-time event is presented by Oregon Tilth, Organic Seed Alliance, the Food Trade Sustainability Leadership Association, and Organically Grown Company and will be held at the Doubletree Lloyd Center.

Speakers include Dr. Vandana Shiva, Director of the Research Foundation for Science, Technology, and Natural
Resource Policy; Paul Roberts, author of The End of Food and The End of Oil; Claire Hope Cummings, author of Uncertain Peril: Genetic Engineering and the Future of Seeds; and Frederick L. Kirschenmann, a Distinguished Fellow for the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture at Iowa State University.

For more information, visit www.organicology.org or contact Oregon Tilth at 1-503-378-0690.

MOSES Organic Farming Conference celebrates 20th anniversary

Thousands of farmers will travel to La Crosse, Wisconsin, February 26 – 28, 2009, to share stories and swap organic production tips at the 20th annual Organic Farming Conference (OFC) organized by the Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES). The MOSES Organic Farming Conference is the largest organic farming conference in the country.

The 20th annual OFC, held at the La Crosse Center, will feature over 60 organic farming workshops and 140 exhibitors. Attendees will eat outstanding organic meals and revel in quality entertainment, food and farming films, inspiring speakers and the opportunity to talk with many of the best and brightest organic farmers and farming advocates in the country.

Preceding the conference will be the MOSES Organic University, which will offer ten day-long intensive courses focusing on specific organic farming issues and practices and featuring some of the most current and best in organic research and production practices.

Go to the MOSES website for information and to register at: www.mosesorganic.org

Super Active Oxygen technology purifies air

Environmental Protection Technologies has recently obtained the Industrial and Commercial marketing rights to the Super Active Oxygen technology which was originally patented under the name Aran® back in 1965. This technology is by far the most effective method of air purification available because the machines generate highly charged allotropes of oxygen that have tremendous power to kill/oxidize all forms of bacteria and toxic chemicals. The machines do not filter air but saturate the treated atmosphere with higher forms of oxygen and as a result of killing bacteria and oxidizing chemicals it eliminates odors. The machines have no moving parts and there are no filters, bulbs or other parts that need to be maintained. The machines carry an unconditional parts and labor 4-year warranty, with an option for an unconditional 25 year parts and labor warranty.

There are many uses for these machines both for the purification of air and water, including killing mold and mildew and eliminating odors resulting from chemical outgassing, chlorine, and other harsh chemicals. The machines have been shown to be effective in killing molds in grain storage and can be used to disinfect and remove odors from confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs), among many other applications.

For more information contact Charles B. Morenus, director of business development, 888-204-5954 or email: EPTmorenus@lisco.com; www.EPT-LLC.com.

OCIA receives praise during ANSI audit

Auditors from the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) visited the Organic Crop Improvement Association (OCIA) October 27th-29th and extended praise to many of the departments that make up OCIA International. Those commended by ANSI included OCIA’s Inspection Services Department, Certification Decision Team, Training Department and Director of Accreditation, and Certification Specialists and Coordinators. OCIA’s on-line Quality system was praised and the auditors were pleased about how it allows the Regional Offices to be connected to OCIA’s system.

Indiana Crop Improvement Association approved to test for Agrisure® traits

Indiana Crop Improvement Association (ICIA) has met the Syngenta proficiency requirements and will now be added to the list of approved testing labs that GreenLeaf Genetics LLC and Syngenta Seeds, Inc. licensees may utilize for conducting the following event purity tests: MIR604 ELISA, Bt11 Liberty bioassay, and GA21 glyphosate bioassay.

For more information, please call 765-523-2535 or 866-899-2518.
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