

# P.E.I Biofuels Plant Under Fire at House of Commons Agriculture Committee Hearing

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Sharratt<info@cban.ca><p>February 27, 2008</p><p>Ottawa? This week the proposal to build a biofuels plant in PEI came under fire at a hearing of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food that is examining Bill C-33, a Bill that would mandate the use of biofuels in Canada.</p><p>On Monday, February 25, Committee witness Lucy Sharratt, Coordinator of the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network, raised the PEI plant as an illustration of the way in which the rush to invest in biofuels was being used to push genetically engineered (GE) crops onto the market. Sharratt told the Committee that the plant proposal illustrates very clearly the way in which biofuels are being used to open up markets for otherwise unattractive or irrelevant GE crops.</p><p>The PEI plant would produce biofuel from sugar beet. Just this year Monsanto, the largest seed company in the world, announced its intention to sell new genetically engineered sugar beet to farmers in Canada and the United States. Sharratt told the Committee, "In the case of PEI, this biofuels plant is expected to be fueled entirely by Monsanto's new genetically engineered sugar beet. Monsanto posted record profits in 2006 and their gross profit increased each year since 2002.</p><p>Monsanto's Roundup Ready sugar beet is genetically engineered to be herbicide tolerant meaning that the plant can withstand early and frequent spraying of herbicide Roundup. U.S. data shows that the total pounds of herbicides used per acre has been higher for herbicide tolerant crops than for conventional crops and that this number has increased each year.</p><p>We are also concerned that the biofuels rush will be used to push open the door to other new genetically engineered crops, including genetically engineered wheat and GE trees," Sharratt told the Agriculture Committee.<br/>For more information: Lucy Sharratt, Canadian Biotechnology Action Network, 613 241 2267 coordinator@cban.ca</p>