

Terminator Technology

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Sharratt<info@cban.ca><aname="eztoc2951_1" id="eztoc2951_1"><h2>Alert! Correct the Minister!</h2><p>November 2009: Canada's Minister of Agriculture has incorrectly told Chinese officials that Terminator seeds are used in Canada! This is false and leads us to question the Government's understanding of Terminator and commitment to the international moratorium. You can read CBAN's letter to the Minister.</p><p>Correct the Minister of Agriculture and demand that the Government categorically state its opposition to Terminator. Canada needs to ban Terminator.</p><p>On November 5th, the Manitoba Cooperator reported that the Ministers said he told Chinese officials that they need not fear Chinese farmers growing Canadian canola because these seeds will not grow: ?I assured them that with the varieties we have now, it's not going to work because they all have Terminator seeds in them... ?</p><p>This is absolutely wrong as Terminator has never been field tested or commercialized anywhere in the world.</p><p>Apparently Canada's Minister of Agriculture does not know what Terminator technology is, does not know that there is an international moratorium on Terminator, and has not paid attention to the thousands of letters and postcards opposing Terminator sent by Canadians over the past 4 years.</p><p>The Minister's statement leads us to ask: Why is the Minister not correctly informed about this highly controversial GM technology? What is the Government's true position on Terminator? Would the Conservative Government support the use of Terminator seeds if the technology was available?</p><p>Write to Hon. Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food to ask him to categorically state the Government's opposition to Terminator. See below for contact details. Ask the Government to continue supporting the international moratorium and to establish a ban on Terminator in Canada. Ask the Minister to correct this statement to Chinese officials.</p><p>Bill to Ban Terminator! Ask the Prime Minister to support Bill C-353 "Terminator Seed Ban Act" </p><div class="object-left"><div class="content-view-embedded-media"><div class="class-image"><div class="attribute-image"><p></p></div></div></div></div><p>Take Action:</p><p>1. Click here to send an instant email to the Prime Minister</p><p>2. Organizations can click here to endorse the call for a ban - Click here to see the list of Canadian Groups calling for a Ban</p><p>3. Write a personalized letter. Remember: postage is free to you elected officials! You can use your postal code to search for your MPs name and contact details. Below are some key addresses. (Note: The New Democratic Party and the Bloc Québécois have both endorsed the Bill to Ban Terminator in Canada.)</p><p>4. Send a postcard to the Prime Minister or distribute them in your community! To order Ban Terminator postcard send email to btpostcards@usc-canada.org</p><p>5. Send around the email action alert.</p><p>6. Donate to support the campaign - the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network implements the Canadian strategy of the International Ban Terminator Campaign.</p><p>For an update and some basic info scroll down or go to www.banterminator.org for more resources.</p><p>Write a personalized letter to:</p><p>Prime Minister Stephen Harper
80 Wellington Street, Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
Email: HarpeS@parl.gc.ca
Fax: (613) 941 6900 Phone: (613) 992-4211</p><div class="object-right"><div class="content-view-embedded-media"><div class="class-image"><div class="attribute-image"><p></p></div></div></div></div>

6UN"/></p></div><div class="attribute-caption" style="width:200px"><p>Pat Mooney from ETC Group joins thousands of farmers protesting Terminator at Brazil UN meeting 2006. The meeting strengthened the UN moratorium.</p></div></div></div><p></p><p>Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, The Honourable Gerry Ritz
House of Commons, Ottawa, ON, K1A0A6 Email: RitzG@parl.gc.ca
Fax: (613) 995-7080 Phone: (613) 996-8472</p><p>Michael Ignatieff, Leader of the Official Opposition
House of Commons Ottawa, ON, K1A0A6 Email: IgnatM@parl.gc.ca
Phone: (613) 995-9364 Fax: (613) 992-5880</p><h3>Basic Information on Terminator</h3><p>What is Terminator? Terminator Technology genetically engineers plants to produce sterile seeds at harvest. It was developed by the multinational seed/agrochemical industry and the US government to prevent farmers from replanting harvested seed and force farmers to buy seed each season instead. Terminator seeds have not yet been field-tested or commercialized. In 2006, Monsanto bought the company (Delta & Pine Land) that owns Terminator greenhouse research.</p><p>Terminator is sometimes called Genetic Use Restriction Technology (GURTs) - the broader term that refers to the use of an external chemical inducer to control the expression of a plant's genetic traits.</p><p>Why is Terminator a problem? The top 10 largest seed companies control half the world's commercial seed market. If Terminator is commercialized, corporations will likely incorporate sterility genes into all their seeds. That's because genetic seed sterilization would secure a much stronger monopoly than patents - instead of suing farmers for saving seed, companies are trying to make it biologically impossible for farmers to reuse harvested seed.</p><p>Canadian farms of all sizes save seeds and this practice is growing as the farm income crisis gets worse each year. Across the world, over 1.4 billion people, primarily small-scale farming families in the developing world, depend on farm-saved seed as their primary seed source. Terminator seeds will force dependence on external seed source and disrupt the age-old practice of farmer seed selection, exchange and breeding - centuries of Indigenous and farmer seed variety development is the foundation of the Canadian seed stock.</p><p>What impact will Terminator seeds have on farmers? Terminator is a major violation of the rights of farmers to save and reuse their own seeds. Through pollen movement in the first generation, Terminator genes could contaminate farmers' crops - farmers might then unknowingly save and reuse seeds that are contaminated and will not germinate. This could also happen if imported grain contains Terminator genes.</p><p>Farmers who depend on humanitarian food aid risk devastating crop loss if they unknowingly use food aid grain containing Terminator genes as seed.</p><p>Terminator would ensure a corporate stranglehold on seeds and result in higher seed prices at a time when farmers are experiencing the worst income crisis in the history of modern agriculture. If Canadian farmers were forced to buy Terminator seed every year, the cost would be crippling. For example, an estimated 90% of Canadian wheat is planted with saved seed - in total, the annual cost to buy this seed would be \$95 million dollars.</p><p>Who holds patents on Terminator? Monsanto could soon conclude a deal to buy Delta & Pine Land (DPL), the world's largest cotton seed company, which jointly holds three US patents on Terminator technology with the US Department of Agriculture. In October 2005, DPL won new Terminator patents in both Europe and Canada. Also, the multinational seed and agrochemical company Syngenta is requesting a Canadian patent on its Terminator potatoes. But Indigenous potato farmers in the Andes of Peru have asked Syngenta to destroy this patent.</p><p>Will Terminator stop genetic contamination? The multinational seed industry is waging a public relations campaign to promote Terminator technology as a means to stop unwanted genetic contamination from genetically engineered (GE) plants (particularly for potential use in GE trees and plants modified to produce drugs and industrial chemicals).</p><p>Escaped genes from GE plants are causing contamination and pose threats to agricultural biodiversity and the livelihoods of farmers. For example, Saskatchewan organic canola farmers are suing Monsanto and Bayer for GE contamination (www.saskorganic.com/oapf).</p><p>Industry argues that engineered sterility would offer a built-in safety feature for GE plants because if genes from a Terminator crop cross-pollinate with related plants nearby, the seed produced from unwanted pollination will be sterile - it will not germinate. But Terminator technology is a complex system involving multiple inserted genes that all work together in a sequence. Scientists warn that Terminator will not be 100% effective. The likelihood of system failure means it could never be a reliable tool for biocontainment? If Terminator is used for biocontainment and fails, it would introduce new, dangerous biosafety risks.</p><p>UPDATE 2009:<p>Victory! Global

Moratorium Upheld!: The international moratorium at the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity was upheld and strengthened in March 2006 thanks to pressure from Canadians and people across the world.

Canada still promotes Terminator: In 2005, the Canadian government tried to overturn the UN moratorium. A leaked memo revealed that the government was preparing to push language to allow field-testing and commercialization. However, in March 2006, public pressure forced the government to agree to strengthen the moratorium. But our government has still not taken a stand against Terminator.

Monsanto Bid to Buy Terminator: In August 2006, Monsanto announced it would buy Delta & Pine Land, the US seed company conducting greenhouse trials of Terminator. In 1999 Monsanto made a public commitment not to commercialize Terminator but? Monsanto does not rule out the potential development and use of one of these technologies in the future.

Syngenta wants a Canadian patent on Terminator potatoes: Multinational corporation Syngenta has applied for a Canadian patent on its Terminator potatoes. But Indigenous farmers in the Andes of Peru are asking Syngenta to denounce this technology.