

Canadian Sugar Company Chooses Genetically Modified Sugar Beet

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Sharratt<info@cban.ca><p>LanticInc.acceptsMonsanto?sGMsugar despite consumer concern s</p><p>For Immediate Release Wednesday April 15, 2009</p><p>Ottawa?A coalition of 18 environmental, public advocacy and consumer groups, under the umbrella of the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network, (1) today revealed that Canadian company Rogers Sugar/Lantic Inc. has chosen to accept genetically modified (GM) sugar beet in their sugar products.</p><p>GM (also called GE or genetically engineered) sugar beets have just been planted for the first time in Alberta because the sugar company Lantic Inc. has decided to accept the GM beets. Sugar beets are processed in only one place in Canada: the Rogers Sugar/Lantic plant in Taber, Alberta. (2) The sugar beet is genetically modified by Monsanto to be tolerant to the company's brand name herbicide Roundup.</p><p>It is incredibly disappointing that an established Canadian brand would ignore consumer concerns about GM sugar, said Erin Nichols of the Society for a GE Free BC. Canadians who don't want to eat Monsanto's GM food will have to stop buying Rogers Sugar and Lantic brand sugar products.</p><p>The sugar company failed to respond to over 4000 emails, letters and cards sent in February and March from people across Canada urging them to reject the GM sugar beet and remain GM-

Free. The company also refused to meet with the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network.</p><p>It's hard to believe that this Canadian company would contaminate its brands with Monsanto's GM sugar and the controversy over genetic modification, said Lucy Sharratt, Coordinator of the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network. Major Lantic customers like Cadbury should be really uneasy about using Lantic's GM sugar.</p><p>Approximately 10% of Lantic sugar comes from sugar beet and the rest from imported cane sugar. Monsanto worked behind the scenes for years to reverse a previous consensus in the North American sugar industry against GM sugar because the biotech company wants to genetically modify sugarcane and control this major crop as well, said Sharratt. Lantic has played right into Monsanto's hands and it is Canadian consumers that will suffer. Monsanto is the largest seed company in the world and owns approximately 90% of all the GM seeds sown across the world.</p><p>The Canadian Biotechnology Action Network (CBAN) is now sponsoring a registry for companies in Canada that refuse to buy GM sugar. Over 70 companies have already signed the registry in the US. CBAN is also calling on consumers to avoid Rogers Sugar/Lantic brands and write to Cadbury (a Lantic customer) with their concerns about GM sugar.</p><p>-30-

<p>For more information: Lucy Sharratt, 613 241 2267 ext 5 coordinator@cban.ca www.cban.ca/sugarbeet; Erin Nichols, Society for a GE Free BC, 604-742-0545 or Cell 778-928-

1373</p><p>(1) Canadian Biotechnology Action Network Members are: ACT for the Earth (Toronto), Biofreedom (Edmonton), Canadian Organic Growers, Check Your Head, Coalition for Safe Food (B.C.), Council of Canadians, Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario, Food Action Committee of Ecology Action Centre Halifax, GE Free Yukon, Gene Action (Toronto), Greenpeace Canada, InterPares, National Farmers Union, P.E.I. Coalition for a GMO-

Free Province, Saskatchewan Organic Directorate, Society for a G.E. Free B.C., Union Paysanne, USCC Canada.</p><p>(2) Rogers Sugar and Lantic brands are familiar consumer brands of refined sugar in Canada, last year the two merged into the one company Lantic Inc.</p>