

# Widespread Call Issued to Stop GM Alfalfa in Canada

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Sharratt<info@cban.ca><p>80groupstofightthecommercializationofgeneticallymodifiedalfalfa</p><p>PressReleaseApril28,2009</p><p><a href="/Resources/Topics/GE-Crops-and-Foods-Not-on-the-Market/Alfalfa/Signatories-to-No-to-GMO-Alfalfa" target="\_self">Clickheretoseethefulllistofsignatories.</a></p><p>Ottawa?Today,80groupsincludingfarmerassociationsandfoodbusinessesfromacrossCanadajoinedthegrowingcalltostoptheintroductionandfield-

testingofgeneticallymodified(GM)alfalfa.</p><p>ThealfalfainquestionisgeneticallymodifiedbyMonsanto to betoleranttothecompany'sbrandnameherbicideRoundup. AlfalfawouldbethefirstperennialGMcrop onthemarket.</p><p>?Thecontaminationofalfalfawouldbeinevitableandirreversible. We'vealready seenanendtoorganiccanoladuettoGMcontaminationandwecan'taffordtolosealfalfa,?saidArnoldTayloroftheSaskatchewanOrganicDirectorate. ?Becauseit'spollinatedbybees,genesfromMonsanto'sGMalfalfawouldspreadoutofcontrol. ?</p><p>Alfalfaisanimportantcropforallfarmers,bothorganicandconventional,asasoilbuilderbyfixingnitrogen,asaclean-

upcroptoendweedinfestations,andasfeedfordairy cattleandotheranimals. "Farmersuniversally seeone reasonforGMalfalfa. Monsantoistheonlybeneficiary. ThecompanywouldgainbysellingmoreRoundup andbycontrollingyetanothercropthroughitsgenepatents, whichinallotherRoundupReadycropsinCanada, havedisallowedfarmersfromsavingseed,"saidTerryBoehm,VicePresidentoftheNational FarmersUnion.</p><p>GMalfalfawasapprovedbytheCanadiangovernmentin2005butcannotbecommercializeduntilMonsantoandForageGeneticsInternationalseekandmeetregistrationrequirementsforthevariety. IntheU.S.,aFederalcourtrevokedapprovalforGMalfalfa,rulingthatafullenvironmentalassessmentwasneeded,citingriskstofarmersandtheenvironment.</p><p>The80groupsthat signedthe'NottoGMAlfalfa'letterincludefarmerassociations,farmbusinesses,sproutingandseedcompanies,foodretailers, andpublicinterestgroups. Thegroupsopposethesale,tradeandproductionofGMalfalfaandareaskingtheCanadianFoodInspectionAgencyto reassessitsapprovalofGMalfalfa.</p><p>?Theresponsefromdiverse groups acrossCanada insupportofthispositionishuge. ThisisonlythebeginningofstrongoppositiontoGMalfalfaasthereissomuchatstakeforconsumersandfarmersalike,?saidLucySharratt, CoordinatoroftheCanadianBiotechnologyActionNetwork,acoalitionof18groups. ?ThegovernmentmustrecognizethepredictableanddevastatingenvironmentalandeconomiccostsofGMalfalfaand revokeapprovalnow, ratherthanwaituntilafteritstoolateandfarmershavelosttheircropsandlivelihoodstocontamination. ?</p><p>CarmenWakelingofEatmoreSprouts&GreensLtd.inBCsaidthat,"Overtime,theavailabilityofcertifiedorganicalfalfaseedwoulddisappear,creatingseverechallengesforseedandsproutgrowers. Ultimately,GMalfalfawouldhavemajorrepercussionsoncertifiedorganicfoodproducersthroughoutCanadaandtheU.S.,nomatterwhattheyaremakingorgrowing".</p><p>UrbanconsumersareextremelyconcernedabouttheintroductionofGMalfalfa. ?CanadianconsumersarebecomingmoreandmoreeducatedaboutGMfoodsandareincreasinglylookingfororganicproducts,?saidDagFalck,OrganicProgramManagerforNature'sPath,amajormanufactureroforganiccerealsinNorthAmerica. ?It'sessentialthatweensureconsumersretaintheoptiontobuynon-

GMfoods."</p><p>?Ourcustomersareveryclearthattheydon'twanttoeatGMfoods,andthatincludeshoney,milkandmeatthatwouldbeaffectedbyGMalfalfa,?saidJulieDanilukofTheBigCarrotfoodstoreinToronto.</p><p>The80groupswillworktogethertostopthecommercializationofGMalfalfainCanadaandhaveformeda'NottoGMAlfalfa'campaigntoprotectthecrop.</p><p>-30-

</p><p>Formoreinformation:<br/>ArnoldTaylor,SaskatchewanOrganicDirectorate,cell:306-241-6126or306-252-2783;<br/>TerryBoehm,Vice-President,NationalFarmersUnion,306-255-2880or306-257-3689;<br/>LucySharratt,Coordinator,CanadianBiotechnologyActionNetwork,6132412267ext5,coordinator@cban.ca;<br/>DagFalck,OrganicProgramManager,Nature'sPath,2503792244;<br/>JulieDaniluk,TheBigCarrot,416-771-4496.</p>