

?SmartStax? Genetic Corn Really Safe?

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Newcornshouldbecanned
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Source:CanadianBiotechActionNetwork</p><p>HealthCanadadidnotconductafoodsafetyassessmentfortheneight-

traitgeneticallyengineered(GEorgeneticallymodified,GM)corncalled?SmartStax?.RatherthanaddresstheclearneedtostoptheintroductionofMonsantoandDow?s?SmartStax?inourfooduntilscientifictestingisdone,HealthCanadahascomeouttoattackthosewhoexposedourgovernment?s inadequatelyoutdatedregulations.Inaddition,inauthorizing?SmartStax?,CanadaclearlyignoredtheUnitedNations?CodexGuidelineontheneedtocarryouttests.</p><p>Inastatementreleasedonlytojournalistslastnight,HealthCanadaferredtoourinterpretationoftheUNCodexGuidelineonFoodSafetyAssessmentforGEPlantsas?erroneous?.Thisimpliesthatnotonlyarewewrongbutthatwemaybedeliberatelymisleading.Thisisthecase.Infact,HealthCanadaiswrong.</p><p>Intheirstatement,HealthCanadasays thatthereis no mentionof?stackedtraits?intheinternationalCodexGuideline.ButtheGuidelineexplicitlyreferstotheconventionalbreedingofrecombinantDNAplants?thisshowstackedtraitGEplantslike?SmartStax?aremade.HealthCanadashouldknowthis.IfHealthCanadaisnotclear,wearehappytoexplainthescienceandtechnicalitiestoourregulatorsandadvisehemonhowtoreformourregulatorysystem.</p><p>TheproblemforHealthCanadaandthegovernmentgenerallyisthattheirregulationsforGEfoods,whattheycall?NovelFoods??acategorythataalsoincludesnon-

GEfoods,aredeliberatelylimitedtoassessingthesafetyof?NovelTraits?.BecauseHealthCanadahaspreviouslyapprovedtheeighttraits thatarenowcombinedtogetherin?SmartStax?,thesystemdoesnotflagthatthereisanythingnewabouttheeight-

traitGEcrop.Science,theprecautionaryprincipleandCodexsaydifferent.</p><p>Codexgoessofarastosaythatunintendedeffectsmayarisefromstackedtraitcrops.This iswhy,throughCodex,governmentsincludingCanadaagreedthatafullsafetyassessmentofstackedtraitGEcropsisrequired.EvenHealthCanadaactuallyacknowledgesthatunintendedeffectscanoccur,theyjustaren?tpreparedtolookforthemandstatethat,?Iftherewasachange,thecompanywouldhavetoprovidethenecessaryinformationtoHealthCanada.?TotrustcompanieslikeMonsanto-thatareinthebusinessofselling?SmartStax?-

toprovidesafetyinformationislikeputtingthewolfinchargeofthesheep?swelfare!</p><p>HealthCanadaishidingbehindanissuethatsoundstechnicalinthehopethatnoonewillnoticeorcare.WethinkthatCanadianscare.</p><p>HealthCanada?sregulationsof?NovelFoods?aredeliberatelydesignedtomissGEcropsslike?SmartStax?.?SmartStax?wasnotassessedbyHealthCanadabecause,accordingtoCanada?sshakyregulations,eight-

traitstogetherdonotconstitutea?NovelFood?.AccordingtoCanadians,HealthCanada needstopayattentiontoallGEcrops.AccordingtoCodex,HealthCanada needstoconductafullsafetyassessment.</p><p>GeneticengineeringisacomplexsciencebutHealthCanadahasnotkeptup.HealthCanadaandtheCanadianFoodInspectionAgencyhavenevergrappledfullywithgeneticengineering.Byconstructingaproductapprovalprocessthat islimitedtoevaluatingthe?novelty?ofGETraitsratherthanthe complexitiesoftheprocessofgeneticengineering,theFederalgovernmentsupports quickerGEapprovalsfortheadvantageofcorporationslikeMonsanto.Butwith?SmartStax?,governmentdepartmentshavecomeupagainstthedeliberatelimitationsoftheirownregulations.</p><p>TherehasneverbeenademocraticdebateovertheintroductionofGEcropsandfoods inCanada,thereisnomandatorylabelingofGEingredientsand,despite58recommendationsforchange fromtheRoyalSocietyofCanadaPanelin2001,therehasneverbeenanattempttoreformourregulatorysystem.What isHealthCanada waitingforbeforetheyactresponsibly?Anotherhealthcrisis,thistimecausedbytheuntestedreleaseofGEfoods?Thetimeforsystem-

widereformisobviouslynow.</p><p>LucySharrattfortheCanadianBiotechActionNetwork
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