

Monsanto develops “Genetically Modified Pig”

The patenting of livestock

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Theme: [Biotechnology and GMO](#)

Editor's Note: Greenpeace has covered this issue in several 2005 reports, when [Monsanto launched the GM pigs Patent](#)

“The Earth is flat, pigs were invented by Monsanto, and genetically modified organisms are safe. Right.”

Through more patent perversions such as the earlier “[Terminator Corporations' Suicide Seeds](#)” Monsanto is blatantly continuing their scheme of rounding up the food chain from A to Z!

“One way or another, Monsanto wants to make sure no food is grown that they don't own — and the record shows they don't care if it's safe for the environment or not. Monsanto has aggressively set out to bulldoze environmental concerns about its genetically engineered (GE) seeds at every regulatory level. So why stop in the field? Not content to own the pesticide and the herbicide and the crop, they've made a move on the barnyard by filing two patents which would make the corporate giant the sole owner of that famous Monsanto invention: the pig. “

“The big picture is chilling to anyone who mistrusts Monsanto's record disinterest for environmental safety. And if you're not worried, you should be: central control of food supply has been a standard ingredient for social and political control throughout history. By creating a monopoly position, Monsanto can force dangerous experiments like the release of GMOs into the environment on an unwilling public. They can ensure that GMOs will be sold and consumed wherever they say they will.”

Such blatant abuse can only continue if it is not challenged. Unfortunately, the typical lack of response from the masses and the idle government oversight is precisely why these perversions occur and continue. Sadly the only way to counter these shenanigans is to collectively and openly flaunt these patents ...

[Monsanto Files Patent for New Invention: The Pig – The original is here](#)

It's official. Monsanto Corporation is out to own the world's food supply, the dangers of genetic engineering and reduced biodiversity notwithstanding, as they pig-headedly set about hog-tying farmers with their monopoly plans. We've discovered chilling new evidence of this in recent patents that seek to establish ownership rights over pigs and their offspring. In the crop department, Monsanto is well on their way to dictating what consumers will eat,

what farmers will grow, and how much Monsanto will get paid for seeds. In some cases those seeds are designed not to reproduce sowable offspring. In others, a flock of lawyers stand ready to swoop down on farmers who illegally, or even unknowingly, end up with Monsanto's private property growing in their fields.

One way or another, Monsanto wants to make sure no food is grown that they don't own — and the record shows they don't care if it's safe for the environment or not. Monsanto has aggressively set out to bulldoze environmental concerns about its genetically engineered (GE) seeds at every regulatory level. So why stop in the field? Not content to own the pesticide and the herbicide and the crop, they've made a move on the barnyard by filing two patents which would make the corporate giant the sole owner of that famous Monsanto invention: the pig.

The Monsanto Pig (Patent pending) . . . The patent applications were published in February 2005 at the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) in Geneva. A Greenpeace researcher who monitors patent applications, Christoph Then, uncovered the fact that Monsanto is seeking patents not only on methods of breeding, but on actual breeding herds of pigs as well as the offspring that result. "If these patents are granted, Monsanto can legally prevent breeders and farmers from breeding pigs whose characteristics are described in the patent claims, or force them to pay royalties," says Then. "It's a first step toward the same kind of corporate control of an animal line that Monsanto is aggressively pursuing with various grain and vegetable lines."

There are more than 160 countries and territories mentioned where the patent is sought including Europe, the Russian Federation, Asia (India, China, Philippines) America (USA, Brazil, Mexico), Australia and New Zealand. WIPO itself can only receive applications, not grant patents. The applications are forwarded to regional patent offices.

The patents are based on simple procedures, but are incredibly broad in their claims. In one application (WO 2005/015989 to be precise) Monsanto is describing very general methods of crossbreeding and selection, using artificial insemination and other breeding methods which are already in use. The main "invention" is nothing more than a particular combination of these elements designed to speed up the breeding cycle for selected traits, in order to make the animals more commercially profitable. (Monsanto chirps gleefully about lower fat content and higher nutritional value. But we've looked, and we couldn't find any "Philanthropic altruism" line item in their annual reports, despite the fact that it's an omnipresent factor in their advertising.) According to Then, "I couldn't believe this. I've been reviewing patents for 10 years, and I had to read this three times. Monsanto isn't just seeking a patent for the method, they are seeking a patent on the actual pigs which are bred from this method. It's an astoundingly broad and dangerous claim."

Good breeding always shows . . . Take patent application WO 2005/017204. This refers to pigs in which a certain gene sequence related to faster growth is detected. This is a variation on a natural occurring sequence — Monsanto didn't invent it. It was first identified in mice and humans. Monsanto wants to use the detection of this gene sequence to screen pig populations, in order to find which animals are likely to produce more pork per pound of feed. (And that will be Monsanto Brand genetically-engineered feed grown from Monsanto Brand genetically-engineered seed raised in fields sprayed with Monsanto Brand Roundup Ready herbicide and doused with Monsanto Brand pesticides, of course).

But again, Monsanto wants to own not just the selection and breeding method, not just the information about the genetic indicators, but, if you pardon the expression, the whole hog.

Claim 16 asks for a patent on: "A pig offspring produced by a method ..."

Claim 17 asks for a patent on: "A pig herd having an increased frequency of a specific ...gene..."

Claim 23 asks for a patent on: "A pig population produced by the method..."

Claim 30 asks for a patent on: "A swine herd produced by a method..."

This means the pigs, their offspring, and the use of the genetic information for breeding will be entirely owned by Monsanto, Inc., and any replication or infringement of their patent by man or beast will mean royalties or jail for the offending swine.

Not pig fodder . . . When it comes to profits, pigs are big. Monsanto notes that "The economic impact of the industry in rural America is immense. Annual farm sales typically exceed US\$ 11 billion, while the retail value of pork sold to consumers reaches US\$ 38 billion each year."

At almost every level of food production, Monsanto is seeking a monopoly position. The company once earned its money almost exclusively through agrochemicals. But in the last ten years they've spent about US\$ 10 billion buying up seed producers and companies in other sectors of the agricultural business. Their last big acquisition was Seminis, the biggest producer of vegetable seeds in the world.

Monsanto holds extremely broad patents on seeds . . . most, but not all of them, related to Genetically-Modified Organisms (GMOs). Monsanto has also claimed patent rights on such non-Monsanto inventions as traditionally-bred wheat from India and soy plants from China. Many of these patents apply not only to the use of seeds but all uses of the plants and harvest that result.

Orwellian: "The Earth is flat, pigs were invented by Monsanto, and GMOs are safe." The big picture is chilling to anyone who mistrusts Monsanto's record disinterest for environmental safety. And if you're not worried, you should be: central control of food supply has been a standard ingredient for social and political control throughout history. By creating a monopoly position, Monsanto can force dangerous experiments like the release of GMOs into the environment on an unwilling public. They can ensure that GMOs will be sold and consumed wherever they say they will.

By claiming global monopoly patent rights throughout the entire food chain, Monsanto seeks to make farmers and food producers, and ultimately consumers, entirely dependent and reliant on one single corporate entity for a basic human need. It's the same dependence that Russian peasants had on the Soviet Government following the Russian revolution. The same dependence that French peasants had on Feudal kings during the middle ages. But control of a significant proportion of the global food supply by a single corporation would be unprecedented in human history.

It's time to ensure that doesn't happen. It's time for a global ban of patents on seeds and farm animals. It's time to tell Monsanto we've had enough of this hogwash. -Brian Thomas Fitzgerald

[Tell Monsanto to stop patenting life.](#)

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