

The Destruction of Food and Agriculture: The Biotech Lobby and Her Majesty's Government's Drive to Force GMOs into Britain

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Region: [Europe](#)

Theme: [Biotechnology and GMO](#), [Global Economy](#)

The UK government and its associated bureaucracy is colluding with powerful global agritech corporations to get genetically modified organisms (GMOs) into Britain (see [here](#)). Politicians and officials whose views of GMOs are based on ignorance or whose statements are distorted as a result of their conflicts of interest have been spearheading this campaign (see [here](#) and [here](#)).

Government departments, academics and industry lobby and media bodies are working to push a pro-GM agenda and weaken regulations regarding GMOs and are engaged in a public relations campaign in an attempt to win over a sceptical public.

Whether via the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) (see [here](#)) or the drive to weaken the regulatory framework by other means (see [here](#)), the GMO biotech sector has Britain and Europe firmly in its sights.

Lawrence Woodward on the Beyond GM website ([here](#)) says the UK government is setting time aside to clear away all obstacles to the introduction of GMOs to English farms. He reports that in a letter to Beyond GM, Defra (Department for Environment and Rural Affairs) junior minister Lord de Mauley, confirmed that:

“We do not expect any commercial planting of GM crops in the UK for at least a few years as no GM crops in the EU approval pipeline are of major interest to UK farmers... the government will ensure that pragmatic rules are in place to segregate GM and non-GM production.”

De Mauley's letter was in response to the Beyond GM initiative 'The Letter from America' ([here](#)), which was delivered to the Prime Minister's office in November. Despite the British public not wanting GM food (see [here](#)), the government's intention is to get GMOs planted in fields and put on plates.

Woodward argues that “pragmatic rules” imply as few and as weak as possible with no rules on liability and nothing to ensure that ‘the polluter pays’ in the event of organic and non-GM crops and habitats being contaminated. He also states that the last time the UK government engaged in a serious consideration of co-existence of GM, organic and non-GM crops it let Scimac, a pro-GMO industry body, write the rules and adopted them wholesale.

According to Woodward, it is likely that in its plenary session on 13th January the European Parliament (EP) will vote in favour of the proposed GMO authorisation process and thereby open up the EU to GM cropping. This so called 'opt-out' regulation will free up countries such as the UK, which in reality want to 'opt-in' and enable genetically engineered crops to be grown on their fields (see [here](#), although the proposed policy has since been modified).

In his article, Woodward notes that the authorisation proposal has already been through a non-transparent process involving a trialogue, where the European Commission (EC), EP and representatives of the Council of Ministers secretly wheel and deal to facilitate the passage of legislation. The process has stripped out all mandatory measures to prevent contamination of non-GM crops and establish liability rules to give non-GMO farmers legal and financial protection.

Woodward argues that it is very likely that research institutions in the UK will gear up their GM crop trials and, using taxpayer money, plant more research field trials to benefit the GMO industry and private patent holders.

Regardless of what may happen in a couple of years from now, Britain's food is already contaminated. GM-fed animal products are in British supermarkets (unlabelled), and GMO products (labelled) are also on the shelves (see [here](#)). Moreover, consumers have little idea of what is being served to them in restaurants.

The UK government is acting as a proxy for the GMO biotech industry. It is attempting to force GMOs into Britain on the back of what it hopes will be an apathetic, ignorant, confused or misinformed public.

GMOs are not needed to feed the world's population (see [here](#)). They represent another phase of intensive, petrochemical agriculture that is causing environmental, health, social and economic devastation across the planet (see [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)). They are not part of a solution for hunger or poverty. As has been well documented, they and the globalised industrial model of trade and agriculture they belong to are part of the problem (see [here](#)).

Under their current ownership, GMOs are being used as a Trojan horse gift to humanity from a US State Department-backed agro-industrial sector that seeks only profit and to further subjugate the rest of the globe to Washington's needs (see [here](#) and [here](#)).

Despite the slick lobbying and PR from Monsanto et al, this isn't about nutrition or 'feeding the world', it's about modifying organisms to create patents that will allow monopolistic control over seeds, markets and the food supply. It's not about objective science stripped of vested interests either (if it were, we would not have [this](#)). It's ultimately about the geopolitics of oil-dependent agriculture and resultant debt, it's ultimately about seed freedom and and it's ultimately about food democracy.

"The world already produces twice as much food as the world needs... we should be focusing on food quality, social justice, sustainability, and environmental protection. But the pursuit of quality and justice would not be profitable to the corporates, so that is not the prime target if indeed it is seriously on the agenda at all... GMOs... are designed expressly to survive in a world drenched in agrochemistry... GMO technology... has been on the stocks for about 30 years and in that time has produced no new food crops of unequivocal value that could not have been produced in the same time at far less cost and in perfect safety by conventional means. Yet the collateral

damage from GMO technology has been enormous... But the downside is denied or air-brushed out, through propaganda and lobbying, at great expense, by those in power." Colin Tudge, biologist and writer (see [here](#)).

Be informed and take action:

<http://beyond-gm.org/our-campaigns/>

<http://www.gmwatch.eu/>

<http://www.grain.org/>

<http://www.stopthecrop.org/>

<http://www.genewatch.org/>

http://indiagminfo.org/?page_id=175

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