Monsanto Charged With Crimes Against Humanity

If you’re sick and tired of Monsanto’s scheming to monopolize the food supply with patented crops, and their insistence on poisoning your family and the planet as a matter of business, you’re far from alone.

Last month, the Center for Biological Diversity’s annual “Dodo Award” went to Monsanto for its reckless peddling of glyphosate, a carcinogen that’s driving loss of wildlife and diversity around the globe.

Earlier this year, dozens of food, farming, and environmental justice groups announced they will put Monsanto on trial for “crimes against nature and humanity” on October 16, 2016 (World Food Day), in The Hague, Netherlands.

The steering committee1 for the Monsanto Tribunal includes Vandana Shiva, Corinne Lepage (former environment minister of France), Gilles-Éric Séralini (toxicologist researching toxicities of GMOs and glyphosate), and Olivier De Schutter (former UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food), among others.

As noted by Andre Leu, president of the International Foundation for Organic Agriculture (IFOAM):2

“Monsanto is able to ignore the human and environmental damage caused by its products, and maintain its devastating activities through a strategy of systemic concealment:

By lobbying regulatory agencies and governments, by resorting to lying and corruption, by financing fraudulent scientific studies, by pressuring independent scientists, and by manipulating the press and media.

Monsanto’s history reads like a text-book case of impunity, benefiting transnational corporations and their executives, whose activities contribute to climate and biosphere crises and threaten the safety of the planet.”

To raise the €1 million needed to finance the trial, the Monsanto Tribunal Foundation is using online crowd funding. You can make a donation on MonsantoTribunal.org’s website.3
Monsanto CEO Hides Behind Same Old Lame Talking Points

CBS This Morning recently interviewed Monsanto CEO Hugh Grant about the lack of transparency when it comes to foods containing genetically engineered (GE) ingredients, and why the company spent $10 million to defeat GMO labeling in Colorado and Oregon alone.

Grant was noncommittal, clinging to vague and already well-refuted talking points, including the idea that GMO labeling will increase costs and cause more confusion than it resolves, were individual states permitted to enact their own labeling laws.

They didn't have time to address why Monsanto uses paid shills to launch attacks against 14-year-old girls.

He also denied that Roundup, Monsanto’s top-selling herbicide, which all of their Roundup Ready seeds are engineered to withstand, is at all hazardous to health, saying he’s “very comfortable” with Roundup’s safety.

Those in agreement with that sentiment are getting fewer, however. In March 2015, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), which is the research arm of the World Health Organization (WHO), determined glyphosate, the active ingredient in Roundup, to be a “probable carcinogen” (Class 2A).

Since then, several lawsuits have been filed against Monsanto by agricultural workers claiming their cancers were caused by exposure to Roundup.

According to other recent research, glyphosate may also promote antibiotic resistance by disrupting gut bacteria and dysregulating manganese utilization; manganese accumulation in bile acids allows Salmonella to gain a stronghold there.

To say that we “require” tools like patented GE seeds and carcinogenic, soil-wrecking chemicals to feed the world in coming decades is beyond disingenuous!

Actor Calls Monsanto Chief on His Nonsense

While that CBS interview was taking place, “Hulk” actor and environmental activist Mark Ruffalo was waiting behind the scenes, preparing for his own appearance on the CBS morning show.

As Grant came into the Green Room after his segment, Ruffalo grabbed the opportunity to give Grant a piece of his mind. In his blog, Ruffalo recounts the events of that chance meeting:

“... Approaching someone like this isn’t really my thing. But, being so well behaved all the time doesn’t seem to be helping people. It made me really uncomfortable to do it ... [But we] must act out of our comfort zones for things to change.

We must call out the people who are doing horrible things when they do them. Hugh Grant must be made to feel uncomfortable for what he allows his company to do in the world ...
He came through the Green Room door ready to do high fives with his press agent and I simply told him this: ‘You are wrong. You are engaged in monopolizing food. You are poisoning people. You are killing small farms. You are killing bees. What you are doing is dead wrong.’

A bead of sweat broke out on his head. ‘Well, what I think we are doing is good’ ... When people get paid the kind of money he gets paid, their thinking becomes incredibly clouded, and the first thing to go is their morality.

He says Monsanto needs to do a better job with their messaging. Hugh, it’s not your messaging that makes you and your company horrible. It’s the horrible stuff you guys do that makes you and your company horrible ...

No matter how much jumping around you do on morning shows (where no one can really nail you down for the horrible stuff you do) you will still always be horrible, and people will always greet you the way I did, when you go around trying to cover up the fact that you are horrible.”

Monsanto Pays Scientists to Support Roundup Safety

On the list of “horrible” things Monsanto does on a regular basis: paying scientists to develop support for its toxins. When the IARC concluded that glyphosate is a probable carcinogen, Monsanto was quick to demand a retraction, charging the internationally recognized experts with conducting “junk science.” This time the charge didn’t stick, however — probably because the IARC is considered the global gold standard for carcinogenicity studies.

Soon thereafter, the company hired the “one-stop shop” consulting firm Intertek Scientific & Regulatory Consultancy to assemble a panel of scientists to refute the IARC’s determination. Ten of the 16 scientists on the panel have worked as consultants for Monsanto in the past, and two are former Monsanto employees. Needless to say, the outcome of this panel’s “investigation” was clearly foreseeable right from the start.

As reported by Reuters:

“The group said that the WHO’s International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) misinterpreted or incorrectly weighted some of the data it reviewed and ignored other data before classifying glyphosate as a probable human carcinogen, according to an abstract of its findings. ‘Thus, none of the results from a very large database, using different methodologies, provides evidence of, or a potential mechanism for, human carcinogenesis,’ the abstract said.”

90 Percent of Americans Want to Know If Their Food Is GE

According to the Grocery Manufacturers Association (GMA), 80 percent of the foods on your grocery store’s shelves contain GMOs (now referred to as GE by the FD), but virtually none of them are labeled.

As concerns about pesticide toxicity and other potential health hazards associated with
GE foods grow, more and more people want to know what’s in the food they buy. According to a December 2015 poll, 9 out of 10 Americans now want mandatory labeling for GE foods.

Moreover, nearly the same amount of people (88 percent) want that information to be clearly listed on the food label, rather than having to use a smartphone to scan a QR code to find the information — a completely unworkable situation when you have a cart full of food packages to scan through!

But, inconvenience isn’t the only drawback with using QR codes, which are promoted as a “compromise” in lieu of mandatory GE labeling.

In a recent blog post, the Environmental Working Group (EWG) lists a total of 10 reasons why the Smart Label proposal can’t work and must be rejected. First of all, the Smart Label would have no rules governing what constitutes a GE ingredient. The program is also completely voluntary, so food companies can elect to include a QR code on the package or not.

And, they can elect to reveal whether the product contains GE ingredients or not on the product's Website. There’s also no enforcement, so you have no way of knowing whether the company’s Website is providing you with accurate and full disclosure.

Moreover, there’s no deadline for when companies would have to provide QR codes on their food packages. As noted by Lisa Archer, Food and Technology Program Director at Friends of the Earth:

“GMO labeling via QR code technology is unworkable, threatens privacy, and is discriminatory since more than a third of Americans, many of which are low-income, or live in rural areas with poor internet access, don’t own smartphones. FDA’s approval of GMO salmon makes it all the more urgent that Congress require mandatory, universally accessible GMO labeling that any consumer can read on the package when they’re choosing what to feed their families.”

Please Contact Your Senators to Oppose DARK Act Policy Rider

The poll reveals GE labeling has majority support from all political parties — Democrats, Republicans, and independents — and even a majority of people who view GMOs favorably want GE foods to be labeled. As noted in a press release by Just Label It!

“The poll, commissioned by a coalition of consumer and environmental groups, comes at a timely moment. In Congress, some lawmakers want to add a provision to the omnibus spending bill that would block states from requiring GE labels for produce and processed food, as would the so-called DARK Act passed by the House last summer.”

On November 30, 2015, a broad coalition of more than 290 environmental, farming, and fishing groups, as well as food companies sent a letter to Congressional leaders, opposing the plan to add a DARK Act Policy Rider to the “must pass” omnibus appropriations bill, which would preempt state laws that require disclosure of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in food.
Luckily, the rider was not attached despite millions of dollars spent by junk food manufacturers and biotech groups like Monsanto. There was a rider that demanded labeling for genetically engineered salmon, so a partial win for advocates has already occurred - but why just label salmon?

They now plan to throw everything at a dedicated bill in January to preempt labeling by using these ridiculous QR codes.

Tell them that QR codes are not a viable substitute for GMO labeling. In fact, QR codes or Smart Labels are inherently discriminatory since you cannot use them unless you own a smartphone, which nearly half of Americans in rural and poor areas don’t.21

The DARK Act preempts state rights and violates individual rights, and the implementation of a voluntary Smart Label program does absolutely nothing to change that. Tell them that you, along with 90 percent of the American people, demand clear labeling of GMOs, and that the DARK Act Policy Rider must not be allowed to be added to the appropriations bill.

You can also find your Senators’ contact information by calling the Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121. A phone call has greater impact than an email, but a face-to-face meeting is usually the most impactful of all.

In addition to contacting the two Senators representing your state, you can also sign the Food Democracy Now!’s petition, addressed to members of Congress, the FDA, and the President Obama.
[+] Sources and References

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