

Committee Secretary
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Agriculture and Industry
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Sir/ Madam

Thank you the opportunity to provide a submission into the Agricultural Innovation Inquiry.

My main area of my concern is agricultural practices due to new technology in particular plant genomics (Genetic Engineering) and chemical use.

It has become apparent that the technology relies on data supplied by the biotech corporation seeking approval to grow or release the new GM technology. As the new genetic trait is often a 'trade' secret or shrouded in secrecy and protected by patents, independent scientists are not permitted to test for safety to humans, animals and environment.

We cannot permit biotech corporations to have a share in government owned institutions such as Monsanto owning almost a 20% share in Intergrain. Industry and Government needs to be kept at arm's length to avoid collusion and dishonest conduct.

Independent peer reviewed research must be allowed on all new GM plants and crops particularly if our regulators cannot conduct the research themselves and it must be conducted by an independent third party. Public health, followed by animal and environment safety should be of the utmost importance.

It appears the Gene Technology regulator is rubber stamping all submissions of GM crop releases without proper independent testing.

The testing must also include the chemical often used with the genetically engineered plants. Often this is not being tested or isolated components of the product are being tested such as Glyphosate in Roundup herbicide. The entire process must be tested not isolated components.

Currently no human testing is being conducted to determine absolute safety. There are no double-blind studies being undertaken on humans ingesting GM foods let alone the extra chemical residue present in our food supplies. This is unconscionable behaviour.

Labelling must also be mandatory so that consumers can make a choice.

Farmers wishing to grow organically or who choose not to grow genetically engineered crops must also be protected financially to protect their livelihoods and domestic and international markets. This must be funded by the biotech corporations who stand to make millions in chemical sales from this technology.

Thank you for this valuable opportunity to obtain opinions and feedback from the public and industry at large.

Yours sincerely

Emily Wallis