



wake up!! wake up!! It's yer load of crop

FEE.. FI.. FOE.. FUM...

# SchNEWS

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## GM CONTAMI-NATION

**"If Tony Blair gives the green light for GM, then a nation of gardeners will put on their gardening gloves, take GM crops out of the ground and make sure that the people have the last word on protecting our future." – The Green Gloves Pledge.**

Last week the results of the "GM Nation?" public debate were revealed and they showed that the British public overwhelmingly rejected the growing of genetically modified crops in Britain: 86% were unhappy with the idea of eating the stuff and 84% thought they would damage the environment.

The biotech companies are no doubt gutted that their expensive PR and marketing hadn't mislead us all into swallowing their 'GM is great' crap. So what did these biotech bullshitters have to say for themselves? The biggest biotech company in the UK is Bayer CropScience and Paul Rylott, head of the company's BioScience Unit, is also - what a surprise - chair of the Agricultural Biotechnology Council. Now if you haven't got a problem with that, you'll be cool about his appointment earlier this year to the Agriculture and Environment Biotechnology Council (AEBEC), the government's advisory body on GM crops in the environment. He complained that "public meetings do not equal public opinion" which is pretty odd considering him and his chums had filled special consultation focus groups with people who had previously thought that GM might be a good thing. But unfortunately for them even these groups rejected GM crops! The report concluded: "The more people engage in GM issues, the harder their attitudes and more intense their concerns." The report also highlighted the fact no-one trusts the biotech companies with 93% of respondents believing GM technology was driven by profit rather than public interest.

Last week a national day of action against Bayer, saw their phones/faxes/emails blockaded and sites in Cambridge and Widnes targeted. In Widnes the protesters managed to shut down work for a bit. So worried were Bayer that an announcement went over the tannoy to employees to close and lock all doors and windows. Even the security guards locked themselves in their office, which makes one wonder what they're actually paid for... Two protesters managed to speak with the manager who told them "rest assured, you have sent a ripple through Bayer CropScience."

This ripple turned into a wave when a couple of days later Bayer announced that they were pulling out of GM crop trials in Britain - the reason given being that "They

are always ripped up." More proof that direct action works. But this isn't time to get complacent and think that GM crops are dead and buried. For a start Bayer have only announced that they are pulling out of trials until conditions are "more favourable". As the biggest GM crop company in Britain they're also pushing ahead with the commercialisation of GM crops. So the anti-GM campaign is set to roll on, with much 'field work' and many more actions planned.

### Growing Dissent

A recently leaked report assessing the GM farm scale crop trials revealed more surprising good news for anti-GM campaigners - it showed that two out of the three varieties under trial caused significantly more damage to the environment than conventional crops. The full report is due out on the 16<sup>th</sup> October and it seems likely to be a bumper harvest of anti-GM facts. This follows two other reports commissioned by the government, which were critical of GM - showing there was no economic necessity for them and highlighting the potentially dangerous environmental effects. Combined with the public rejection of GM this is causing pro-GM Tony Blair, if not to reverse his policy, then at least to consider slowing down.

However Tony maybe able to avoid making himself even more unpopular if new EU and international trade laws make the banning of GM crops by any country illegal. In Europe there's currently a moratorium on new GM crops being grown, but this is due to end, and the European Commission recently ruled that no country or region can rule itself GM free. This has all come following intense pressure from the US, who are taking the EU to the World Trade Organisation courts saying the moratorium and even labelling food as GM is a barrier to trade. Europe's caution has already cost the American biotech companies an estimated \$30 billion. So if the US gets its way you might never know if you're eating GM foods.

The so-called free market may well force GM crops into the fields and down our throats. To stop this we'll have to take to the fields for a bit of decontamination gardening and targeting the companies producing the unwanted GM products. Time to have a field day, folks!

\* Take up the **Green Gloves Pledge** to decontaminate GM crops: [www.greengloves.org](http://www.greengloves.org) or write to Green Gloves, 16B Cherwell Street, Oxford, OX4 1BG.

\* For more on the **campaign against Bayer** see [www.stopbayergm.org](http://www.stopbayergm.org) or phone 07092 036576

\* **Publicity day against Bayer** - October 11<sup>th</sup>.

### CRAPARREST OF THE WEEK

For going to a festie...

The chairman of a pro-Kurdish party in Turkey and a popular rock singer were nicked for attending a controversial Kurdish festival held earlier this month in Germany. Controversial 'cos the festie was apparently organised by the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), a Kurdish separatist rebel group. The prosecution is investigating whether singers and politicians who attended the festie were "aiding an illegal organisation", an offence which can carry a seven-year jail sentence. SchNEWS reckons the prosecution's barking up the wrong tree - they should be chasing after the UK capitalist rebel groups like Mean Fiddler, a legal organisation guilty of organising soulless, money-spinning 'festivals'.

\* **Electronic Blockade of Bayer** - October 13<sup>th</sup> - contact Bayer to tell them what you think of GM food, phone: 01223 870312, fax: 01223 872142 or email: [ukinfo@bayercropscience.com](mailto:ukinfo@bayercropscience.com)

\* **Big Noise Demo**. 13<sup>th</sup> November from 10am outside Bayer's Newbury office, Strawberry Hill, Newbury. Bring whistles, horns, drums, etc. For transport details contact the Stop Bayer campaign. Tickets for transport from Brighton (£5) from The Cowley Club, London Road. Transport from Leeds email: [leedsef@leedsef.org.uk](mailto:leedsef@leedsef.org.uk)

\* **Tractors and Trolleys** against GM in London, October 13<sup>th</sup>. Demo against GM crops - drive a tractor or push a trolley through the streets of London. Info: 0808 800 1111 [www.tractorandtrolley.com](http://www.tractorandtrolley.com)

\* **'Don't Worry It Is Safe to Eat** - the True Story of GM food, BSE and Foot and Mouth' talk by the author Andrew Rowell Sat 1<sup>st</sup> Nov, 11am, at the Cafe' Diplo, French Institute 17, Queensberry Place, SW7 London. Booking in advance helps the organizers £2 non-members/£1 members 0709 234 8726 [monde-diplo-friends@mondediplo.com](mailto:monde-diplo-friends@mondediplo.com)

\* **Corporate Watch** have detailed briefings on the three companies involved in GM crops: Monsanto, Bayer and Syngenta - [www.corporatewatch.org.uk/genetics/genetics.htm](http://www.corporatewatch.org.uk/genetics/genetics.htm)

\* To read the results of the **GM Nation** debate see [www.gmpublicdebate.org.uk](http://www.gmpublicdebate.org.uk)

### TRASH CROPS

Brazil has recently allowed the commercial growing of GM crops. However this is limited to one year and will be limited only to the southern province of Rio Grande do Sul. The farmers will have to sign a document making them responsible for any damage to health or the environment.

Meanwhile three weeks ago while the WTO were meeting in Cancun, Mexico, farmers in India trashed a Monsanto research station in Bangalore. Monsanto India said "One greenhouse was destroyed. We lost valuable plants and are seriously concerned." SchNEWS reckons Monsanto Brazil are gonna have to make a similar statement sometime in the near future.

## BOURNE-LIARS

It's been a busy week for corporations and lobby groups who've been sponsoring fringe events, holding receptions and setting up exhibition stalls at the Neo Labour Party Conference hoping to get special favours from the government.

Friends of the Earth, fed up with all this corporate brown-nosing, have for the second year running dished out the Exposed Awards, highlighting the most environmentally and socially damaging of those on parade in Bournemouth.

Worthy winners the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) won the award for being "extremely backward in its approach to regulation, regularly lobbying against measures to protect the environment (e.g. the Climate Change Levy) or to give people more rights."

Shortly behind in second place was weapons manufacturer BAE Systems, a "master of 'greenwash', having run a massive advertising campaign describing itself as a 'global systems company' which provides 'protection from the storm'", but which in reality is "the world's second largest arms producer and manufactures many of the missiles (containing depleted uranium) that rain down upon the victims of war... BAE has benefited from the war in Iraq but has also been the subject of widely reported allegations of corruption over arms deals with Saudi Arabia."

In third place was supermarket giant Tesco. Tesco held a fringe debate at the Conference "Promising the Earth? Food, Farming and Rural Communities." Tesco has amongst other things been busy shafting farmers and helping to close local shops (Tesco now account for 12% of all sales in the UK) "while making worthless promises in glossy brochures."

Other highlights include Nestle sponsoring a fringe meeting by the Foreign Policy Centre. Nestle's 'foreign policy' is one that pushes its powdered baby milk products over breast milk in poor countries where everyday 4,000 babies die from unsafe bottle feeding.

Barclays Bank spoke at a Social Market Foundation fringe meeting on whether 'Labour can bridge the inequality gap.' Not when two of their greedy bastard directors take home over £1.6 million a year.

Not to be outdone the Mobile Operators' Association sponsored a Social Market Foundation fringe meeting on how planning decisions can be speeded up. This lobby group is made up of the big five mobile phone companies who are obviously keen to get mobile phone masts plastered all over the country quick sharp and are fed up with local residents trying to stop them.

\* Copies of "Exposed: Big Business in Bournemouth" from Friends of the Earth 0808 800 1111 [www.foe.co.uk](http://www.foe.co.uk)

\* More on Labour Party conference sponsorship in the latest Private Eye

## SON OF A BEECH

Bellway, the property developers revving up their chainsaws so they can Friar Tuck up the ancient Sherwood Forest in order to build 270 poor quality homes, have been given the go-ahead by the Sheriff of Nottingham to evict the merry protesters living in the beech tree at the centre of the controversy (SchNEWS 415). The 60ft, 300 year old tree is situated on a piece of green that has been used by local residents as a recreation area for over 40 years. With massive local support protesters are preparing an application for village green status, their only remaining option to protect the site. More merry men and women are urgently needed to stay on the site and stop the developers robbing woods from locals. 0789 016 5727 [www.mysite.freemove.com/sherwood\\_camp](http://www.mysite.freemove.com/sherwood_camp)

\* Day trip every Monday to help at the camp. Meet 8am Sumac Centre, 245 Gladstone St., Nottingham

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## FORCE OF WILL

Disgusted by their country's murderous occupation of the Palestinian territories, 27 Israeli air force fighter pilots have signed a letter refusing to participate in operations against civilian targets. This brings the number of refusers in Israel's armed and air forces to 1148.

Desperate to stem a rising refusenik tide, the Israeli authorities have summoned nine of the pilots to disciplinary meetings. If the pilots don't retract their statement, they will be dismissed from serving in the air force. In reaction to a debate on the matter held by the air force's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, the pilots said that "The very same committee that supports an unethical policy that leads to the killings of innocent citizens on both sides, is today attempting to preach morals to us."

Email the pilots letters of support: [info@tayasim.org.il](mailto:info@tayasim.org.il)

More info: [www.refusersolidarity.net](http://www.refusersolidarity.net), [www.gush-shalom.org](http://www.gush-shalom.org)

\* Meanwhile, Yesh Gvul, an Israeli refuser organisation, has gone to the Supreme Court, asking the authorities to launch a criminal investigation into the deaths of 14 innocent civilians who died when an Israeli plane dropped a one-ton bomb on a residential district in Gaza, with the aim of killing senior Hamas leader Salah Shehadeh.

\* GI Special is a weekly resistance round up about opposition to the military by soldiers serving mostly in Iraq but also elsewhere in the world. [www.notinourname.net/troops](http://www.notinourname.net/troops)

## Positive SchNEWS

Z communications consists of a monthly magazine called Z Mag, published since 1988 and crammed full "of critical thinking on political, cultural, social, and economic life in the US", and (SchNEWS favourite) Z Net, a deliciously detailed website updated daily with articles from every continent, covering everything from terror and war to alternatives to capitalism.

Now they're proposing a daily subscription-only on-line paper with up to 20 essays a day to choose from. However, they need to know if people would be willing to financially support it. To check out the site and the online poll go to [www.zmag.org](http://www.zmag.org)

## SchNEWS in brief

Get along to the Rio Cinema in Hackney this Saturday (4) to see the Pete Shaughnessy film "With endless love". Film starts 11pm at 107 Kingsland High Street, Hackney E8, its £7 and also showing is a film about schizophrenia, "Some voices." Side Cinema in Newcastle are also showing Pete's film on 28<sup>th</sup> October [www.SideCinema.com](http://www.SideCinema.com) 'Mad Pride' Pete tragically killed himself late last year. For more on the man [www.peteshaugnessy.org.uk](http://www.peteshaugnessy.org.uk) For copies of the video: [www.madpride.org.uk](http://www.madpride.org.uk) \*\* Hastings anti-war activists are hosting a conference: **Waging War - Making Peace**, Saturday Oct 18th at the White Rock Theatre on the seafront (free/donation). Also a fundraising funk/ska/soul gig at the Carlisle Pub, Hastings, this Sunday (5) (£3/4). 01424 429795 \*\* **We Interrupt This Empire** - a hard hitting anti-war video from the USA is being shown at the Downview, opposite West Worthing station, next Tuesday (7) 7.45pm. \*\* Palestinian HipHop band **DAM** will be touring the UK over the next couple of weeks with gigs at the Scala, London (9) Malcolm X Centre, Bristol (10) The Drum, Birmingham (12) Bluecoat Arts Centre, Liverpool (14), Brighton Gloucester (15) Fibbers Club, York (16) and Mechanics Theatre, Burnley (18). For more details on the tour 07919 134144, [damtour@eml.cc](mailto:damtour@eml.cc)

## Inside SchNEWS

On the night of the 15th of September five raids occurred in Barcelona; six anarchists were arrested; one has since been released. Charges include sending a book-bomb, urban terrorism, planning two assassinations, illegal possession of firearms, arson attacks and belonging to a terrorist group. They allegedly "took part in a campaign of urban attacks in Barcelona in March." The infamously violent and corrupt Guardia Civil claims to have found a revolver, a gun, different chemical materials, timer devices and two manuals for the production of explosives.

The investigation, which is still officially open, concerns connections with two Italian anarchists already in prison in Spain and with groups active in other European countries - apparently illegal?! They're also being charged with the unexploded letter bomb which was sent to the Greek embassy in Madrid to protest the arrests in Thessaloniki. The five now find themselves isolated without the possibility of communication either with their lawyers or with their families. They are being treated under Spain's "licence to torture" anti-terrorist laws, which recently saw the editor of the Basque magazine 'Egunkaria' tortured while in custody.

This is part of an ongoing campaign against anarchist groups in Spain which started almost a year ago with the arrest of 4 people in Valencia, followed by four more 10 months later. Repression also hit Barcelona with 4 arrests in February of this year and one in the same operation in Almeria. The mass media and government fuel public hysteria with trumped up stories of connections to ETA or Al Qaeda, misinformation and smear campaigns. Police figures have been quoted without questioning and the detained have also had their photos, names and addresses released, against the privacy codes which protect those awaiting trial.

For more information, names, addresses, and contact details check out: [www.alasbarricadas.org/barcelona/ingles.html](http://www.alasbarricadas.org/barcelona/ingles.html) There are also bank account details for an urgent appeal for money to pay bail and legal costs.

\* Kastro Dakduk, a Syrian living in Greece, was one of several people beaten up and arrested under false charges at protests against the EU conference in Thessaloiki, Greece in June (see SchNEWS 413). Currently on remand in Greece and faces a long prison sentence. The Greek authorities plan to deport him back to Syria. If deported, Kastro's life would be in danger as he fled Syria to escape persecution for his political beliefs. Fighting for his life, Kastro has now gone on hunger strike. For updated information please email: [thessaloniki prisoners@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:thessaloniki prisoners@yahoo.co.uk)

Please write letters of support to: Kratoumeno Kastro Dakduk, Dikastikes Flylakes Diavation, T.K. 540 12, Thessaloniki GREECE [Be sure to include a return address on the back of the envelope]

## ...and finally...

Ever thought that prison's a drag? That's what Brazilian prisoner, Moacir Pacagnan, reckoned when he attempted to escape from the bland concrete of a Sao Paulo prison wearing a wig, fake breasts, high heels and drowned in mascara. The pretty prisoner would've waltzed to freedom had it not been for the fact that he couldn't manage the breasts and the heels. According to a prison spokesman he looked like "a beautiful woman" but "walked like a duck." So the dolled-up jailbird got dragged back to his cage.

### Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers not to send Bayer round the bend with prank calls asking them to modify their position. Honest!