



**Collaborative Campaigning for
Food Sovereignty and Environmental Justice**

ANNUAL REPORT 2008

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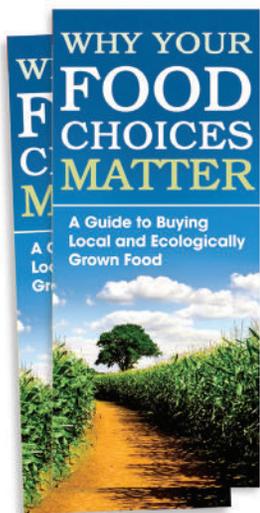
I. Public Education and Awareness

CBAN has a major role to play in public awareness and education on genetic engineering. To begin providing accessible information to consumers on GE foods and Food Sovereignty, CBAN initiated two major public awareness projects in 2008 with CBAN Members, in addition to our other ongoing education work:

Ontario Urban-Rural Exchange: Education on Organics, Ecological Farming and GE

Our project with the National Farmers Union Ontario and the Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario was funded with help from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (an agency of the Government of Ontario) and the Ontario Natural Food-Co-op, with the National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE) generously donating printing.

The project resulted in two popular publications:



▶ **“Farm Update: Genetically Modified Crops in Ontario”** for farmers, published in January. 5000 were distributed at farm shows and rural fairs across the province. The document is also available in French.

▶ The popular color brochure **“Why Your Food Choices Matter: A Guide to Local and Ecologically Produced Food”** was published in November for consumers, at farmers markets in particular. It has some great basic information to help

answer peoples’ questions and includes a large section of information on GE. 6500 were distributed in just 3 months! (For 2009, we have plans to distribute 15,000 more and in the Fall of 2009 CBAN plans to produce a National version of the brochure.)

Dig In! Youth Popular Education Workshop on Food Sovereignty

CBAN, the National Farmers Union Youth and Check Your Head built an innovative and extremely successful project with youth focusing on the new political tool of Food Sovereignty.

86 youth from across Canada applied to participate in the Dig In! Workshop Development Retreat in November in Ottawa. We brought together 11 youth who developed a fantastic popular education workshop on Food

Sovereignty and we tested the new workshop at the Food Secure Canada Assembly just days later, where it was hugely successful. We also experimented with the workshop at the National Farmers Union Convention and the CBAN AGM. The workshop was run 7 times in Nov and Dec! The video from the high stakes game show “Seeds of Love” can be seen at www.cban.ca/digin



Dig In! Workshop Development Retreat participants and organizers, Nov 4, Ottawa

The workshop is now being refined so that it can be offered in a complete Workshop Tool Kit for youth and groups across Canada to use. The workshop is a great tool for familiarizing youth and adult communities with Food Sovereignty as well as a platform for presenting information on GE and other issues, from a global social justice perspective. The project was funded by the Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation.

“The World According to Monsanto”

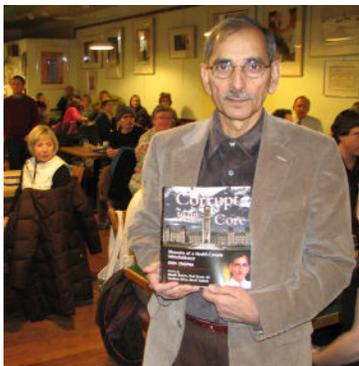
The new documentary was released on DVD in September and by the end of the year, CBAN had sold 90 copies to CBAN Members and the public. CBAN also provided copies to our partner organizations in the South, including the West African farmer coalition COPAGEN. CBAN was invited to co-sponsor and speak at screenings of the film.



CBAN Coordinator Lucy Sharratt (right) met with filmmaker Marie-Monique Robin before the Ottawa premiere of “The World According to Monsanto”

Grassroots Action Tool Kit

CBAN is fundraising to construct a comprehensive Tool Kit of basic information and action materials on GE. There is a great demand for these resources and building our public education materials will be priority in 2009. Thanks to the Carrot Cache for a grant to start this work.



CBAN organized the Ottawa Book Launch of Dr. Shiv Chopra's "Corrupt to the Core: Memoirs of a Health Canada Whistleblower" at the Green Door restaurant. This celebration of Dr. Chopra and his colleagues Drs. Margaret Haydon and Gerard Lambert was a sold out event! The book can be ordered from CBAN.

II. Campaigning and Research and Monitoring

GE Trees and agrofuels dominated our work in 2008 with hugely successful education and campaign efforts. These two critical issues are bound together and CBAN was a major national presence in sounding the alert.

GE Trees

BACKGROUND

- ▶ CBAN is the only organization in Canada campaigning against GE trees and researching for up-to-date information. As such, CBAN is critically needed and has taken up a leadership role nationally and internationally.
- ▶ CBAN is on the Steering Committee of the North American STOP GE Trees Campaign.



International Press Conference, Bonn, Germany, UN Convention on Biological Diversity, May 20. From Left to Right: Dr Michael Hansen, Consumers Union, USA; Dr. Ricarda Steinbrecher, Federation of German Scientists; Lucy Sharratt, Canadian Biotechnology Action Network; Camila Moreno, Researcher, Terra de Direitos, Brazil; Anne Petermann, Co-Director, Global Justice Ecology Project, North American Focal Point for Global Forest Coalition and Co-coordinator of STOP GE Trees Campaign.

SUMMARY

In 2008, CBAN played a major and much needed role in the international campaign to achieve a UN ban on field tests and commercial plantings of GE trees. This work was enabled by a grant from Patagonia Inc.. CBAN took advantage of the major UN meeting as a unique campaign opportunity, raising public awareness on GE trees in Canada and pressuring the Government to stop field trials.



The International STOP GE Trees Campaign requested the assistance of CBAN in the campaign and Coordinator Lucy Sharratt joined the international team at the UN Convention on Biological Diversity meeting in Germany in May. A ban on GE trees was on the agenda, thanks to the previous work of the campaign. All African countries together proposed and were pushing for this ban.

CBAN was registered as an official NGO Observer at the UN meeting where Coordinator Lucy Sharratt:

- ▶ Spoke from the floor at the UN meeting on behalf of CBAN.
- ▶ Chaired three panel events for government delegates.
- ▶ Spoke at in an international press conference (See Photo).
- ▶ Posted a daily blog (it can be seen at cban.ca/Resources/Topics/GE-Trees/Blog).
- ▶ Issued action alerts to Canadians as well as press releases.
- ▶ Met with the Canadian Delegation on several occasions.
- ▶ Spoke with Government delegates from around the world.
- ▶ Participated in a meeting with Chinese Government delegates.
- ▶ Distributed the Canadian letter and other materials including a report published by CBAN and groups from around the world.

RESULT

- ▶ 47 Canadian groups including some major new allies in the forestry sector signed the CBAN statement requesting a ban on GE trees.
- ▶ The UN meeting did not ban GE trees but new language recognizes the rights of all



countries to establish domestic bans - though the unresolved and core problem is the threat of trans-boundary contamination from GE trees.

- ▶ The Canadian Government is now aware that CBAN is monitoring their research and promotion of GE trees, and will alert the public.

IMPLICATIONS

GE trees are a new frontier for biotech companies. Previously thought to be off limits due to public backlash and obvious contamination impacts, companies are now viewing GE trees as commercially viable biofuel feedstock. Expansion of monoculture tree plantations starting with GE Eucalyptus in the US and Brazil is set to be the first fight.

GE Sugar Beet

BACKGROUND

- ▶ The small company Atlantec BioEnergy (ABC) proposed a biofuels (agrofuels) plant for PEI, to be run on sugar beet.
- ▶ Because Monsanto's new GE sugar beet is expected to dominate the market, this PEI plant would mean new acres of GE sugar beet, especially since sugar beet is currently only grown in Ontario and Alberta.

SUMMARY

The sugar beet agrofuels plant was stopped by CBAN Member, the PEI Coalition for a GMO Free Province. The group ran a successful campaign that included community meetings and lots of media attention. CBAN Coordinator Lucy Sharratt also testified at a House of Commons hearing on biofuels and was interviewed by CBC TV in PEI. The hard work of the PEI grassroots coalition resulted in a commitment from the provincial government to hold consultations before the plant was permitted, and the company subsequently withdrew its attempts to set up in PEI. The company now proposes a plant in Nova Scotia where new CBAN Member Food Action Committee at the Ecology Action Centre in Halifax is learning about the issue to engage in public education and debate.

Monsanto's GE sugar beet was not available for planting in Canada and the US until 2008 when farmers across the US and in Ontario (10,000 acres) planted the seed and harvested in 2008. Ontario farmers sell exclusively to Michigan Sugar in the US. Alberta is the only other place in Canada where farmers grow sugar beet for sugar processing (to the Rogers Sugar/Lantic plant in Taber, Alberta) – but they did not plant GE sugar beet in 2008.

RESULT

The proposed sugar beet biofuels plant for PEI was stopped.

IMPLICATIONS

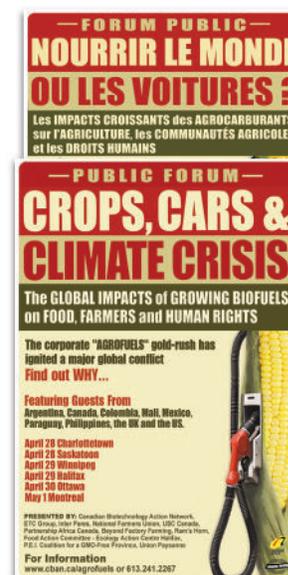
Sugar beet is globally set to be a new feedstock for agrofuels, expanding the planting of this new GE crop. Acceptance of Monsanto's GE sugar beet also opens the door for GE sugar cane.

Agrofuels (biofuels)

BACKGROUND

- ▶ Agrofuels have emerged as a major public relations and research priority for the biotech industry, including major companies like Syngenta and Monsanto, as well as GE tree company Arborgen.
- ▶ The new industry is dramatically increasing the acreage of GE corn as well as promising to increase demand for soy and canola.
- ▶ The hype around agrofuels includes a strong push for GE trees. The public relations of GE trees as future feedstock gave the biotech industry more weight in fighting the ban on GE trees at the UN.
- ▶ The expansion of industrial agriculture and monoculture tree plantations for agrofuels is directly confronting our international partners as a threat to life and livelihood.

SUMMARY



CBAN co-organized the successful 6-city tour "Crops, Cars & Climate Crisis: The global impacts of growing biofuels on food farming and human rights". CBAN staff played a strong role in coordinating the tour with these CBAN Members across the country: USC Canada, Inter Pares, the PEI Coalition for a GMO Free Province, Union Paysanne and the National Farmers Union. Together we organized the events with other partners including Beyond Factory farming, Partnership Africa Canada and CBAN's newest Member the Food Action Committee of the Ecology Action Centre Halifax.

The tour featured 3 teams of 11 speakers from Colombia, Mexico, Paraguay, Argentina, Mali, the Philippines, the

US and UK, with Canadian speakers. The tour kicked off right in the middle of new and intense media attention in Canada about the world food crisis. It also coincided with the Conservative Government's push to pass Bill C-33 to mandate biofuel content in Canada.



1 of 6 events across the country - Saskatoon Evening Event at the Roxy Theatre! Monday April 28 Featuring: Darrin Qualman, National Farmers Union, Saskatoon; Dittit Pelegrina, SEARICE, Philippines; Pat Mooney, ETC Group, Ottawa; Javiera Rulli, Base Investigaciones Sociale, Paraguay.

- ▶ Because of our global work in the STOP GE Trees Campaign, CBAN was among the first groups in Canada to bring the urgent issue of agrofuels forward.
- ▶ CBAN co-organized the 6-city tour "Crops, Cars & Climate Crisis" in Halifax, PEI, Ottawa, Montreal, Saskatoon, Winnipeg.
- ▶ CBAN's website hosted the webpage www.cban.ca/agrofuels for news and updates related to the tour.
- ▶ CBAN Coordinator Lucy Sharratt testified at the House of Commons Agriculture and Agri-Food Committee hearings on biofuels - GE trees and crops in particular.
- ▶ CBAN Coordinator Lucy Sharratt and CBAN volunteers attended the Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO) convention on biofuels in Vancouver Sept 10-12 and brought the research back to CBAN.
- ▶ CBAN with Greenpeace and GE Free BC, organized the public event in Vancouver "Nightmare biofuels: How biotechnology corporations are cashing in on the climate, energy and food crisis to push new dangerous technologies" on Sept 10, reporting back from the BIO convention.

RESULT

Through the tour almost 2000 Canadians in 6 cities directly accessed information and arguments about the new issue of agrofuels.

IMPLICATIONS

Monsanto has joined forces with other corporations to form the "Alliance for Abundant Food and Energy" which shows how serious the biotech companies are about extending their control over seed for both food and fuel.

Ban Terminator

Canadians continued to send letters and postcards pressing the Canadian Government for a ban on Terminator Technology but, with Parliament in constant flux, there was no major campaign rallying point such as the Private Members Bill.

Regulation

CBAN continued to participate in the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's National Forum on Seed consultations, notably meetings on "Seed Modernization" (changes to Variety Registration) and Plants with Novel Traits (the category the Canadian Government uses to regulate GE crops). CBAN coordinated our responses to these issues with the National Farmers Union, the Saskatchewan Organic Directorate and the Canadian Organic Growers.

GE FREE

On November 3, due to the work of GE Free Kootenays, the City of Nelson passed a GE-Free Resolution stating that it does not support the cultivation of genetically engineered plants and trees in the Municipality. www.cban.ca/GE-Free-Zones

GE Alfalfa

BACKGROUND

- ▶ Monsanto's Roundup Ready Alfalfa was approved for environmental release and human safety in 2005 but it is not yet legal to sell in Canada since Monsanto has yet to request Variety Registration.
- ▶ The Canadian Food Inspection Agency is working to significantly change the Variety Registration system – this would allow Monsanto an opening to have their GE Alfalfa approved quickly.

RESULT

In 2008, CBAN worked with Member the Saskatchewan Organic Directorate to build a plan for the "No to GMO Alfalfa Campaign".

International Solidarity

CBAN continues to strengthen our collaboration with COPAGEN, the Coalition for the Protection of African Genetic Heritage (which has member groups in 9 countries). Lise Latrémouille from USC Canada represented CBAN at COPAGEN's annual forum in Niamey, Niger. COPAGEN is the main force of resistance to the introduction of GE crops to West Africa. Their victories include a renewed ban on GE in the country of Bénin.

Capacity and Institution Building

- ▶ CBAN's Membership is its core strength and we were happy to welcome the addition of the Food Action Committee of Ecology Action Centre, Halifax this year.
- ▶ The CBAN News and Action listserv continues to grow.
- ▶ Our AGM was extended to two days of meetings and trainings.
- ▶ CBAN's website continues to be a critical campaign resource where the latest information is posted.

Thank you to our funders in 2008

The Big Carrot

Carrot Cache

The Green Door Restaurant, Ottawa

Ontario Trillium Foundation, an agency of the Government of Ontario

Ontario Natural Food-Coop

Patagonia Inc.

Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation

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Rights & Democracy

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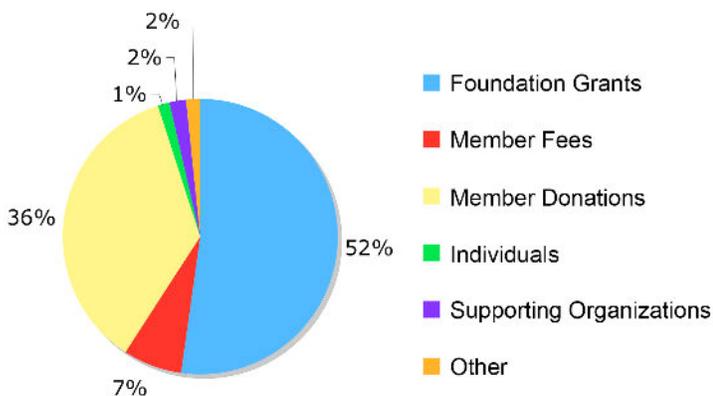
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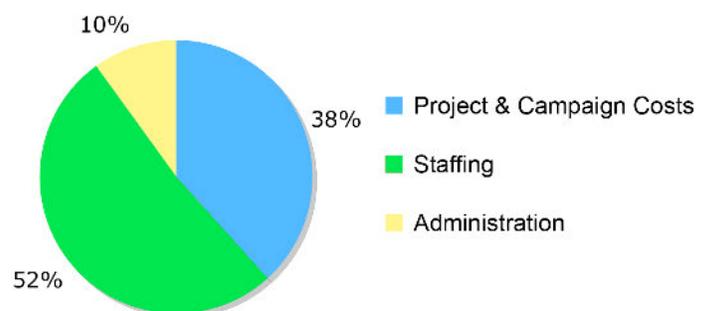
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2008 CBAN Expenses \$90,697



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