

# CANADIAN BIOTECHNOLOGY ACTION NETWORK

ANNUAL REPORT 2012



## CBAN MEMBERS

**ACT for the Earth (Toronto), Canadian Organic Growers, Check Your Head, Council of Canadians, Ecological Farmers of Ontario, Food Action Committee of Ecology Action Centre (Halifax), GE Free Yukon, GeneAction (Toronto), Greenpeace Canada, Inter Pares, National Farmers Union, P.E.I. Coalition for a GMO-Free Province, Saskatchewan Organic Directorate, Society for a G.E. Free B.C., Union Paysanne, USC Canada, Vigilance OGM.**



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## Canadian Biotechnology Action Network Annual Report 2012

The Canadian Biotechnology Action Network (CBAN), a project of Tides Canada Initiatives, works hand in hand with farmer, environmental, community and social justice organizations, and with the concerned public to research and monitor, educate and mobilize, and create strategic opportunities for grassroots action on the issue of genetic engineering in food and farming.

FOR MORE DETAILS, PLEASE CONTACT:

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# Stronger Together!

**CBAN STAFF:** Towards the end of 2012, thanks to additional support provided by CBAN member group Inter Pares, CBAN's one permanent staff person, Coordinator Lucy Sharratt, moved from working four days a week to five. Also, thanks to Beyond Factory Farming, Paul Slomp worked with Lucy on the Stop "Enviropig" Campaign. This extra capacity was perfectly timed and ensured the success of the campaign!

## I. Campaigning and Research and Monitoring

### Campaign Success: CBAN Stopped "Enviropig"!

CBAN stopped the first GM food animal from reaching the market.

CBAN worked closely with Beyond Factory Farming and with our member groups, particularly the National Farmers Union, to secure the end of the so-called "Enviropig." CBAN's direct interventions with decision-makers at the university and in the farming community supported strategically timed grassroots actions and public pressure.

Thanks to support from Beyond Factory Farming, CBAN was able to hire Paul Slomp – grassfed beef producer and National Farmers Union activist - on a part-time basis, to help support and accelerate the campaign. The Enviropig was stopped when the hog producer group Ontario Pork withdrew their funding and the pig's developers closed down the project at the University of Guelph.

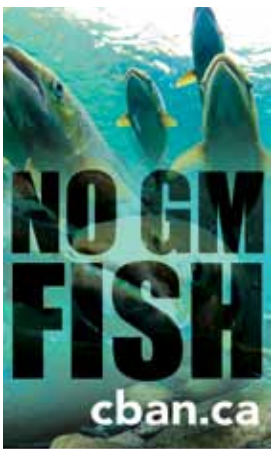
Our victory over the Enviropig exposed the futility of GM animal experimentation. It also showed, once again, that Canadians are prepared to fight genetically engineered food, crops and animals – and win. We can stop genetic engineering. We are already succeeding!



*Lucy Sharratt and Paul Slomp announce the end of Enviropig at the CBAN press conference on Parliament Hill, April 2*

## THIS IS ONE OF MANY IMPORTANT SUCCESSES

Stopping Enviropig is the fifth major success for Canadians in the global struggle against genetic engineering. We have also stopped Monsanto's Bovine Growth Hormone in Canada (1999) and Monsanto's GM insect resistant "New Leaf" potatoes (2005). In 2004, we stopped Monsanto's GM herbicide-tolerant "Roundup Ready" wheat with our US friends. (However, the industry is trying hard to push GM wheat again and we may need to re-activate our campaign.) In 2006, Canadian action was also a critical part of the international movement that strengthened the UN moratorium on Terminator technology (GM sterile seed technology). We have proven time and time again that, in the absence of democratic decision-making on genetic engineering, we can make change happen. Our successes in Canada have an important and lasting global impact.



### GM Fish

Now that we have stopped the GM pig, the GM Atlantic salmon could be the first GM food animal approved in the world.

The small U.S. company AquaBounty wants approval for its GM Atlantic salmon, and it plans to produce all the GM fish eggs in PEI! However, CBAN and its member groups, particularly the PEI Coalition for a GMO-Free Province, are dedicated to stopping the GM fish.

Early in the year, CBAN's Coordinator was interviewed on CTV, and moderated a panel on aquaculture at the Canadian Organic Growers Toronto Conference. Following a major public events tour of Atlantic Canada in late 2011, CBAN continued to work closely with US colleagues to monitor developments and research the issue.

### Stop GM Alfalfa

In 2013, CBAN intensified the campaign to Stop GM Alfalfa.

In February CBAN launched a fantastic 3-minute animated video on GM alfalfa. Huge thanks to professional animator and organic farmer Nathan Carey, as well as to Maureen Kirkpatrick and the late Patrick Conner of The Big Carrot in Toronto, who were the voices in the video. Thanks so much to Smiley Guy Studios in Toronto!

The film was sponsored by the following organizations and businesses that provided matching financial support:

- The Big Carrot Natural Market Toronto  
[www.thebigcarrot.ca](http://www.thebigcarrot.ca)
- De Dell Seeds Incorporated (the only Non-GMO Seed Corn Company in Canada and the only Seed Corn Company producing Certified Organic seed corn in Canada.) [www.dedellseeds.com](http://www.dedellseeds.com)



Patrick Conner  
at Smiley Guy  
Studios, Toronto

### In Memory of Patrick Conner

In 2012, we mourned the death of our dear friend and colleague Patrick Conner. Patrick worked at The Big Carrot Natural Food Market in Toronto and worked closely with CBAN for many years. He was a great support to the campaigns and CBAN. Thanks for everything Patrick!



- Green Being Farm [www.greenbeingfarm.ca](http://www.greenbeingfarm.ca)
- Nature's Path Foods [www.naturespath.com](http://www.naturespath.com)
- The Organic Council of Ontario [www.organiccouncil.ca](http://www.organiccouncil.ca)
- Smiley Guy Studios [www.smileyguy.com](http://www.smileyguy.com)
- Organic Agriculture Protection Fund of the Saskatchewan Organic Directorate [www.oapf.saskorganic.com](http://www.oapf.saskorganic.com)

The film was pre-screened at the gala dinner at EcoFarm Day in Cornwall and the Guelph Organic Conference dinner. It was also shown at some community film festivals and events. Over 20,000 people watched it on Youtube by the end of the year.

CBAN produced lots of campaign materials on GM alfalfa throughout the year, including a new action postcard, buttons and a poster for health food stores.

Lucy spoke about GM alfalfa at the Annual General meeting of the National Farmers Union Ontario (Bruce Local), and presented on a special panel at the Canadian Chef's Congress in Nova Scotia.

In October, CBAN and the National Farmers Union organized a highly effective protest outside the meeting of the industry group Canadian Seed Trade Association (CSTA) in Kitchener-Waterloo. The CSTA and its members, including Monsanto, are pushing to get GM alfalfa on the market. Over 100 farmers and supportive consumers came out to the action and the event got good media coverage.



## GM Apple

In 2012, CBAN strengthened the GM apple campaign in British Columbia where growers are already opposed to the release of the non-browning GM apple. We worked closely with grassroots groups in the apple producing region of the Okanagan to take action: the Okanagan-based groups Bee SAFE, Okanagan Greens Society, the True Food Foundation, and the Similkameen Okanagan Organic Treefruit Growers Association launched a provincial petition against the GM apple, and sent a letter asking the company to withdraw its application for its approval. The theme of the September Organic Okanagan Festival was “Love the Apple – NO GMO.”

CBAN did some important research on the GM apple and directly challenged misinformation from the company Okanagan Specialty Fruits, including through an opinion piece in the Western Producer and direct conversations with the company. CBAN published a factsheet and wrote many articles for community and farm magazines.

CBAN also sent detailed comments to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) on the science of the GM apple despite the obvious farce of the CFIA process itself, where the public is invited to “comment” but is not provided with any details. CBAN challenged the company to release their data, which they refused to do, and also challenged the CFIA on their misleading process.



*Richmond BC residents showed up in force to ask their City Council to support the resolution to go GE Free! Congratulations Richmond!*

## GE Free Zones

The Society for a GE Free BC had another major success in 2012, when Richmond City Council declared itself GE Free! Later in the year Saanich and Metchosin also declared themselves GE Free. The perseverance and continued grassroots mobilization in BC is getting concrete results that are inspiring more and more communities to take action.

## International Solidarity

In January, CBAN's Coordinator Lucy Sharratt, and Eric Chaurette and David Bruer from CBAN member group Inter Pares, participated in a groundbreaking exchange between groups fighting GM crops in India and West Africa. Inter Pares supported the exchange and CBAN's participation, so that we could learn more about the realities of GM cotton and share lessons of resistance from around the world.



*Bernadette Ouattara from Burkina Faso, West Africa, listens to Indian cotton farmers describe their experience with Monsanto's GM cotton.*

As part of the exchange, Lucy, Eric and David participated in the conference “Bt Cotton and Beyond: Status and implication of GE crops and post GE technologies for small farmers in Africa and Asia.” The conference was held in Hyderabad, India, and was co-organized by Southern Action on Genetic Engineering (SAGE) and the Deccan Development Society. Lucy presented on “Genetic Engineering in Canada: Current Challenges.” She was also interviewed on Indian television about the impact of GM crops in Canada, and spoke at a press conference with representatives from groups in West Africa and from across Asia.

Lucy, David and Eric joined partners from West Africa on farm tours that demonstrated the environmental, economic and social value of diverse ecological agriculture, and where farmers explained the devastation of Monsanto’s GM cotton.

CBAN is proud to work in partnership with farmers organizations in Africa and Asia.



*Our friends from Burma say “Stop Monsanto”*



*David, Lucy and Eric at the “Bt Cotton and Beyond” conference.*



*Lucy joined the panel on television with the Minister of Environment from Andhra Pradesh. Standing is the TV host and Salome Yesudas from the Deccan Development Society (DDS), and sitting from left to right is Neth Dano from ETC Group, the Minister of Environment for Andhra Pradesh, Lucy, and Rene Segbehou from Benin, West Africa.*



*Its chickpea! CBAN’s Coordinator Lucy Sharratt learns about robust small-scale biodiverse farming from Chendramma Bidakanne.*



*Women are keepers of seed, and their knowledge builds food security for them and the entire community.*



## II. Public Awareness

In addition to outreach and actions in CBAN's major campaigns, CBAN implemented various other public awareness activities throughout the year including:

### Events

- EcoFarm Day: CBAN Coordinator Lucy Sharratt was the keynote speaker at the gala dinner at EcoFarm Day in February, in Cornwall, Ontario. Participants at the event got a special preview of the animated GM alfalfa video!
- Planet in Focus: Lucy spoke after two film screenings at this major film festival in Toronto.
- BC Events Tour: CBAN Coordinator Lucy Sharratt spoke at the BC Seeds Gathering and at Community Forums on GM Foods, from November 7-15 in Kelowna, Langley, Nanaimo, Campbell River and Victoria (with local MP and Green Party Leader Elizabeth May, and MLA Saanich South and NDP Agriculture Critic Lana Popham). The events were presented by CBAN and the Society for a GE Free BC with local groups including Kelowna Chapter of the Council of Canadians, Bee SAFE, Okanagan Greens Society, True Food Foundation, Council of Canadians Surrey-Langley-White Rock, Vitamin House, GE Free Nanaimo, and the Healthyway Natural Foods Market.
- ACORN: In November, Lucy spoke at the Atlantic Canadian Organic Regional Network (ACORN) conference, on a panel with retired University of Guelph professor Ann Clark and Beth McMahon from the Canadian Organic Growers.
- Dalhousie Food Law Action Group: Lucy spoke to this group of university students in Halifax.



*ACORN Conference in PEI: Lucy with Beth McMahon from Canadian Organic Growers at the mic, with Ann Clark, E. Ann Clark, Associate Professor (retired), University of Guelph*



*BC or Bust! Tour of events landed in Victoria BC: Tony Beck of GE Free BC; Victoria area organizer and farmer Robin Tunnicliffe; and the federal and provincial representatives for the area: Elizabeth May, MP for Saanich-Gulf Islands and Green Party Leader and Lana Popham, MLA Saanich South and NDP Agriculture Critic; Lucy Sharratt, CBAN Coordinator. Saanich was declared a GE Free Zone soon after the event!*

### Materials

- Articles: CBAN's Coordinator wrote numerous articles for *Common Ground* magazine (on Enviropig, GM sweetcorn, GM apple), *Watershed Sentinel* (food co-ops and GMOs) and *BC Organic Grower* and *Rural Delivery Magazine* (GM apple).
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs): CBAN posted simple FAQs on the CBAN website to help answer questions from the public.
- CBAN produced a "Chef's Guide to Genetically Modified Foods" for the Chefs' Congress.
- GM Food Fridge Chart: CBAN continued to print and distribute thousands of "GM Food Fridge Chart" postcards, helping consumers to keep GMOs out of their homes and diets.





### III. Rapid Response

- CBAN brought media and public attention to the display of live transgenic goats at the Canada Agriculture Museum in Ottawa. The goats were retired test-subjects from a defunct Canadian biotech company. *Due to the controversy, the GM goats were removed from display by the Museum in 2013.*
- CBAN presented on the issue of GM crops and food to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food during his mission to Canada in May.
- CBAN responded to misinformation on “Golden Rice” (GE Vitamin A enhanced rice) in the press, with an opinion piece in the Ontario Farmer.
- CBAN's Coordinator participated in a technical meeting of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity in Montreal. CBAN hosted a panel on GM fish for government delegates with Friends of the Earth US, the Center for Food Safety US and EcoNexus. CBAN wrote an article on GM fish for government delegates, and also moderated a panel on Synthetic Biology.
- CBAN published a factsheet and press release in response to the first-ever long-term animal feeding trial on Monsanto's GM corn NK603 and their herbicide Roundup (Séralini, et al.). CBAN's research compared the new study to Health Canada's approval process and Monsanto's data.
- In November, CBAN worked with the groups Équiterre, Nature Québec, the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment, Prevent Cancer Now, and Vigilance OGM to denounce regulatory approval of Canada's first corn and soy crop plants genetically engineered to tolerate doses of the herbicide 2,4-D. The groups combined their research to produce a media backgrounder on the issue.
- CBAN was asked to participate in a study funded by Genome Canada on the politics of GE wheat. We declined because of the study's biased terms of reference, and wrote a detailed letter explaining this decision.
- CBAN continued to monitor proposals from the government to allow “Low Level Presence” of GM content in our foods, and participated in a December consultation meeting at Agriculture Canada offices.

### IV. Media

#### Press Releases 2012

**February 13:** New Video Educates Canadians on Threat of GM Alfalfa: Family farms and organic food at risk from genetically modified alfalfa.

**March 27:** Genetically Modified Goats on Display at Ottawa Experimental Farm: Family Outing Turns to Shock.

**April 2:** Genetically Modified Pig Shelved: “Feds should rule out GM food animals,” citizens' group urges.

**Press Conference April 2:** GM Pig Shelved”, Press Room, Parliament Hill.

**May 29:** Richmond City Council Finalizes GE Free Zone.

**June 22:** GM “Enviropigs” Meet Dead End: Remaining GM pigs euthanized at the University of Guelph.

**July 9:** GM Apple Closer to U.S. Approval: Farce of Canadian public consultation exposed.

**August 14:** GM Apple Jeopardizes Okanagan's Reputation, say local groups.

**September 20:** Unprecedented Safety Study Finds Harm from GM Corn.

**Oct 24, 2012:** Farmers Protest “Industry Spin” Designed to Facilitate Licensing of GM Alfalfa in Ontario: Policy of coexistence of GM alfalfa is “utterly absurd”, say local farmers.

**November 19:** GM 2,4-D-Tolerant Crops set to Accelerate Pesticide Use: Groups denounce government approvals as reckless.

CBAN also produced **media backgrounders** on 2,4-D crops, GM foods, and Enviropig.

## IV. Thank You

### A big thank you to our funders in 2012!

The Big Carrot

Patagonia Inc.

Organic Agriculture Protection Fund  
of the Saskatchewan Organic Directorate

Ontario Natural Food Co-op

Inter Pares!

In October, a wonderfully generous and committed donor pledged to double your donations to CBAN by November 30, matching them up to \$10,000. 364 people and 8 small businesses donated a total of \$20,169. With the matching donation, this helped us raise an amazing total of \$30,169. Thank you!

In addition to all the inspiring donations from individuals:

- The Big Carrot Natural Food Market in Toronto donated an additional \$10,000 to CBAN!
- The National Farmers Union Grey Local in Ontario donated \$999.
- A seed saver in BC asked her friends to give to CBAN for her birthday.
- Several small companies donated to CBAN this year — these companies are CBAN “Supporters”: Daniluk Consulting, Eatmore Sprouts & Greens, Harmony Organic, Healthyway Natural Foods Market, Mumm’s Sprouting Seeds, Nanaimo Vitamin House, Nutiva Inc., Preferred Nutrition.

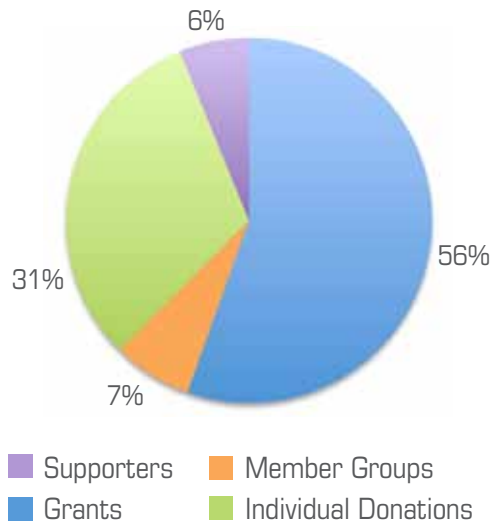


*Cookies baked by CBAN volunteer Hayley McCann!*

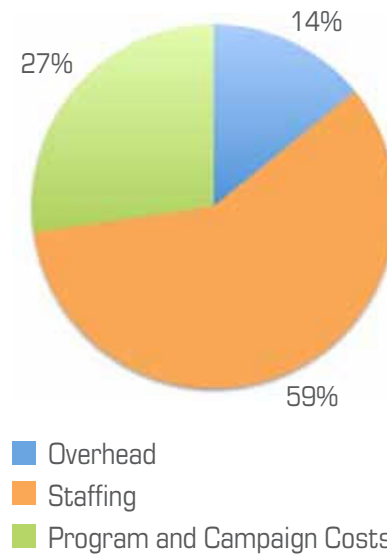
***Thank you to everyone who donated  
to support our work!***

## V. Finances

### 2012 CBAN Incoming \$129,110



### 2012 CBAN Expenses \$91,294



Overhead — This number is Tides Canada Initiatives Overhead Allocation for governance, human resources, financial and grants management.

CBAN is a project of Tides Canada Initiatives. Tides Canada Initiatives (TCI) is a shared platform that provides professional administration to a range of projects and collaborations across Canada with a common base of expertise. The TCI support team takes care of the books, contracts and human resource needs so project staff can drive real world change without the challenges of managing a stand-alone charity.

## Some feedback from the public in 2012

I just wanted to let you know how much I appreciate the work you are doing, including the e-mails with updates. Its great how easy you make it to contact our representatives in government.

They are excellent brochures! We give them away at all our events and store tours. There's nothing like a well-done resource document...especially if it's pretty too!

Congratulations on the animation – wow, it was received very positively at the Guelph conference and will be an excellent tool for educating consumers. Big round of applause!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

This is great work! I just loved the film! Sure makes the point clearly!

Really well done. Well reasoned, articulate, and compelling – at least by any objective analyst. Good for you. (on CBAN's submission to CFIA on LLP)

Much appreciated! The information on your website seems limitless.

Thank you, for all of your intelligence, resourcefulness, devotion and stamina!!!

That was a great letter to the *Western Producer* on the GM apple; crisp as all good apples should be!

Just a note of thanks for fighting the cause and getting the rest of us mobilized to support all the great work you are doing!!

Thank you for being a part of such an eye opening experience for me. (From a chef, reporting back from the Chef's Congress.)

I received your package yesterday with the postcards, petition, etc. Thank you so much for everything, it's great. I will definitely be promoting your organization at the walk and hopefully generate more people to check out CBAN; who may also donate to support the important work you guys are doing.



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