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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **INTERNATIONAL VIDEO PROJECT GIVES KIDS A VOICE IN THE GMO DEBATE**

A new video project, by the UK's **Beyond GM**<sup>1</sup>, aims to give children a chance to speak up about GMOs and educate other kids in the world about their experiences.

**Our Food Our Future**<sup>2</sup> is calling on kids of all ages in the Americas to start an international conversation by sending in a short video of themselves talking about the food issues that affect them and their families, with a specific focus on GMOs, pesticides, labelling, health, environment, activism and the future.

The project is a next phase of the successful **Letter from America**<sup>3</sup> project which launched in 2014 to international acclaim and with widespread support by US NGOs and high profile individuals.

**Our Food, Our Future** aims to get kids in the Americas telling their stories to kids in the UK and the rest of Europe, where many governments, including the British government, are planning to plant GMO crops and, with the implementation of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), import more GMOs foods and animal feed.

In an editorial to accompany the launch of the project, Pat Thomas, Director of Beyond GM, reflects: "The current generation of young people in the Americas is unique because they have never known a food system without GMOs and this has, intentionally or otherwise, turned them into a huge uncontrolled experiment in food and health."<sup>4</sup>

Over the next few months the campaign will be collecting video clips, the best of which will go into a longer compilation video to be launched later in 2016. That video will be disseminated throughout social media, at conferences and talks and will also be a first step in Beyond GM's planned schools outreach in the UK.

In the same way that climate change issues have exposed our willingness to bargain away our future for short-term gains today, GMOs have exposed the future risks we are willing to take with our health and well-being as well as our environment. As a species we can't thrive or survive without good, clean, healthy food and "the biggest risks we are currently taking are with the health and well-being of our children," says Thomas.

In addition to making an international call-out for videos, the Beyond GM website will, over the next few months, be featuring guest editorials by young activists, starting with Rachel Parent, founder of Kids Right to Know.

The campaign launch page will also feature a video<sup>5</sup> from one of Beyond GM's youth supporters, Mya-Rose Craig<sup>6</sup>, inviting kids in the Americas to join in.

"The food we eat today shapes the adults we become tomorrow" says Mya-Rose "so it's essential that we have a bigger say in our food future."

"What our kids have to say about GMOs reflects the conversations that go on around the table, in the kitchen and at the grocery store" adds Thomas. "They see us struggle with food issues, with our own concerns, opinions and even activism and the desire to be heard. It's time for our kids – tomorrow's business people, politicians, consumers, farmers and voters – to have a space to speak out and to help other kids, in other parts of the world, understand the terrible impact of GMOs."

**For more information:** Pat Thomas ([pat@beyond-gm.org](mailto:pat@beyond-gm.org))

**Further media resources available at** <http://beyond-gm.org/ofof-media-resources>

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## Notes to editors

1 See the Our Food, Our Future launch page at [www.beyond-gm.org/our-food-our-future](http://www.beyond-gm.org/our-food-our-future)

2 Beyond GM ([www.beyond-gm.org](http://www.beyond-gm.org)) is a UK campaigning group raising the level of public understanding of issues around GMOs, as well as awareness of agroecological alternatives. The group has been responsible for several creative and high profile public-facing actions in the UK and internationally which are aimed at building a broad base of informed and engaged citizens. Specifically see GM Free Me ([www.gmfreeme.org](http://www.gmfreeme.org)), We Feed the World (<http://beyond-gm.org/we-feed-the-world-project>), and Mums Say No to GMOs (<https://www.facebook.com/mumssaynotogmos> and <http://beyond-gm.org/a-busy-day-at-londons-march-against-monsanto>). Beyond GM also works with other NGOs to spread the word about sustainability. See The Free Lunch event in Brussels <http://beyond-gm.org/beyond-gm-joins-ngo-partners-calling-for-a-sustainable-food-policy-in-the-eu/> and recent objections to planned UK field trials of GMOs <http://beyond-gm.org/ngos-file-objections-to-uk-field-trials-of-gm-crops>).

3 The Letter from America ([www.theletterfromamerica.org](http://www.theletterfromamerica.org)) campaign launched in November 2014 signed by groups and individuals representing 57 million Americans. These included NGOs, trade groups, organic businesses, such as Food & Water Watch, the Organic Consumers Association, the Sierra Club, the Rachel Carson Council, Friends of the Earth, Physicians for Social Responsibility, Dr Bronner's and NYR Organic as well as individual scientists, academics, and campaigners and high profile individuals including Susan Sarandon, Robert Kennedy Jr, Deepak Chopra, Daryl Hannah, Ed Begley JR, Paul Hawken, Alice Waters, Raj Patel, Wendell Berry and many others. The number of representative signatories has increased to close to 61 million since then and the Letter has been translated into 8 different languages. It remains open for those Americans and Canadians who wish to sign on.

4 See <http://www.beyond-gm.org/listening-to-the-voices-of-the-future/>

5 See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bft6KzPIZEU>

6 Mya-Rose Craig is a 13 year old naturalist, environmentalist and activist, with a keen interest in conservation and healthy food. She is based near Bristol and writes the successful Birdgirl Blog <http://birdgirluk.blogspot.co.uk/p/about-birdgirl.html>. She also wrote an article for Beyond GM in the lead up to the UK's 2015 elections, <http://beyond-gm.org/what-kind-of-world-would-i-vote-for/>. Mya-Rose was a Bristol European Green Capital 2015 Ambassador along with Shaun the Sheep (see the full list of [Bristol Ambassadors](#)). She has also been listed with the singer songwriter George Ezra and actress Maisie Williams from Game of Thrones as one of [Bristol's most influential young people](#).