"Through our experience we have come to understand that the genetic engineering of food has never really been about public good, or feeding the hungry, or supporting our farmers. Nor is it about consumer choice. Instead it is about private, corporate control of the food system.

This control extends into areas of life that deeply affect our day-to-day well-being, including food security, science, and democracy. It undermines the development of genuinely sustainable, environmentally friendly agriculture and prevents the creation of a transparent, healthy food supply for all."

– Excerpt from Beyond GM's Letter from America

Find out more about GMOs and about what you can do to keep the UK GMO free. Visit our websites and campaigns:

BEYOND GM

www.beyond-gm.org

GMOs?

DON'T SWALLOW THE HYPE

BEYOND GM

GMOs ARE BAD NEWS...

FOR US

For all their hype, after 20 years, only four main GM crops – cotton, maize, soya and canola – have emerged. Around half of these are used to make biofuels, a large proportion goes to feed livestock and the rest is turned into fats, sugars and fillers for processed foods. GM foods are not cheaper, they are not more nutritious and scientific evidence is now showing they could be harmful to human health.

FOR FARMERS

GM crops do not consistently increase profits – but do increase costs. They significantly increase the use of expensive pesticides and, in addition, farmers who plant GMOs are prohibited from saving their seeds, so have to buy expensive new seeds each year.

GM companies are also buying up many seed suppliers and removing non-GM seeds from the market, trapping farmers on an expensive GMO treadmill. GM seeds and pesticides contaminate non-GM and organic crops and seeds, adulterating our food supply and putting the businesses of non-GM and organic farmers at risk.

FOR ANIMAL WELFARE

Farmers are beginning to report that their animals get sick when they eat GM feed. Impaired immunity, gut and reproductive abnormalities have all been reported. The animals fail to thrive and farmers spend more on medicines and vet bills.

Recently, GM salmon, engineered to grow twice as fast as natural salmon, have been shown to develop hormone imbalances, respiratory problems and deformities.

FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

In countries where GM crops are grown, pesticide use has increased significantly. This massive increase – especially in the use of the herbicide Roundup – has led to many plants developing a resistance, forcing farmers to spray ever increasing amounts and to add other toxic herbicides to the mix, with even more devastating effects on the natural world.

There is some evidence that the pesticides used on GM crops are also toxic to beneficial soil organisms. This has serious implications for crop health and the nutritional quality of our food.

Countries that grow GMOs have found them spreading along field margins, roadsides and out into the wider landscape, including nature reserves. Studies now show that the spread of GM canola (rape seed), alfalfa, maize and grass are a threat to the ecologic balance for plants, insects and soil life.

FOR WILDLIFE

GMOs threaten land animals, insects, fish and other aquatic animals, both directly and indirectly. The toxic pesticides used on GM crops are implicated in the devastating collapse of bee colonies. They are also killing off a key food source for Monarch butterflies – the milkweed – and populations are declining as a result. Most recently, a trial has suggested that butterflies and moths that consume the type of oil found in 'fish oil' producing GM crops suffer multiple, fatal deformities.

FOR CULTURE

GM crops are an extension of a harmful and outdated industrial farming model. In developing countries they lead to the planting of monoculture crops which rely on expensive inputs. They, decimate farmland, biodiversity, local markets, traditional diets and traditional, sustainable practices such as seed saving.

FOR SCIENCE

GM crops have accelerated the growth of a particularly toxic form of 'corporate science' – conducted in the name of profit and patents rather than honest enquiry. This toxic science, which is solely for the benefit of biotech companies, distorts the true picture of potential risks – and in particular health risks – by suppressing results that show harm; yet it is used regularly and aggressively to silence critics of agricultural GMOs.

In contrast, studies conducted by independent scientists, regularly find disturbing results. A recent open letter by more than 300 such scientists from around the world made it clear there was absolutely no scientific consensus on GMO safety and that the weight of the evidence suggests cause for real concern.

FOR REGULATION

New processes for producing GM crops and foods are rapidly being developed. Biotech copanies are lobbying hard for government regulators to agree that these new GMOs – which contain all the same potential for harm as older types – are not GMOs at all, and therefore do not need to be regulated (i.e. tested for safety and monitored post-marketing).

International trade deals such as TTIP, which work to the advantage of large corporations rather than people, seek to remove all 'impediments' to selling or importing GMOs in the EU, including vital safety regulations. Negotiations like these undermine public confidence in regulators, whose job it is to ensure our safety.

FOR DEMOCRACY

Polls in the UK (and elsewhere) show the majority of people don't want GMOs on their farms or in their food. Yet this majority is not represented (and is often derided) in the media, in academia and science, by regulators and by the politicians who are supposed to represent us and work for our benefit.

FOR THE FUTURE

GMO crops could be introduced in Britain from by 2017. The UK government plans to allow more open air trials and encourage famers to 'go GM'. Because Britain is a small island, the effects of planting GMOs here will be even more devastating than it has been in the Americas, where the majority of GM crops are grown. If the UK and the rest of Europe becomes the new 'market' for GMOs it will be nearly impossible for any other country to reject these toxic crops.

BEYOND GM CAN HELP

Our mission is to help foster public engagement in the GMO food and farming debate. Through a mixture of good information and creative public campaigning we are working to ensure that the scientific uncertainty and serious concerns that the majority of us have about GMOs in the food supply are kept in front of our regulators, politicians, scientists and the media.

BEYOND GM

JOIN US. SUPPORT US.
BE PART OF A BIGGER CONVERSATION.