



**National Organic Coalition**

[www.NationalOrganicCoalition.org](http://www.NationalOrganicCoalition.org)

**\*\* ACTION ALERT \*\***

**USDA approved  
GE Alfalfa and GE Sugar Beets!**

***Tell President Obama:  
"NO GE ALFALFA or GE SUGAR BEETS! --  
Reverse the USDA Decisions NOW"***

**USDA has recently de-regulated – *approved* – Monsanto's genetically engineered alfalfa, in order for it to be widely planted this spring.**

De-regulation with no oversight, enforcement or penalties by USDA is a green light for business as usual. Potential contamination from yet another genetically modified crop without independent health and environmental testing, or plans for liability, compensation, and labeling is of grave concern to organic farmers and consumers alike.

It is time for the US government to support more than just the biotech approach to agriculture. Approving the unrestricted planting of GE alfalfa is clearly a case of USDA caving in to special interests over public good. The American public has noted in poll after poll that they want the right to know how their food is produced, and demand that GE foods be labeled to preserve their choice.

***It's time to tell President Obama:  
NO GE ALFALFA!***

**MAKE A CALL OR SEND AN EMAIL TODAY!  
DONATE: CENTER FOR FOOD SAFETY'S LEGAL FIGHT**

*see instructions below*

**ALFALFA? WHY SHOULD I CARE?**

Alfalfa is the nation's 4<sup>th</sup> largest crop, planted on over 21 million acres. Forage and hay are primary feed crops for dairy cows and beef cattle as well as pork, lamb, and sheep. It's not just for livestock - hay is used as mulch and alfalfa meal as a beneficial soil amendment. Alfalfa sprouts constitute an important sector of the salad market and alfalfa also plays a major role in honey production. In addition, currently over 90% of all alfalfa hay planted in the U.S. does not use any herbicides at all. Roundup-Ready (GE) Alfalfa will introduce the toxic herbicide Roundup (Glyphosate) to these fields.

## What can YOU do?

### ➤ **Call/Email THE PRESIDENT – Tell him: STOP THE APPROVAL OF GE ALFALFA**

Please send your own comments and notify your networks, – post on your website, urging other people/organizations to comment. Thanks!

Suggested Language (add in your own):

"I am \_\_\_\_\_, a farmer/citizen in (your state). Please do not to allow the commercial release of GE alfalfa. Before any release can happen, there must be independent scientific evaluation of public health, environmental, and economic consequences of that release, ongoing government oversight and protection, and a plan for compensation of those harmed by accidental contamination. I want and deserve choice in my food supply."

Sincerely,

*Your Name; Farm name, Organization, Concerned Citizen, etc.*

President Barack Obama Comment line: **(202) 456-1111**

Email: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/>

### ➤ **DONATE TO THE CENTER FOR FOOD SAFETY. Their legal work has been at the forefront of this fight, and is the reason that USDA had to admit the health and environmental impacts from GE crops.**

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### **NATIONAL ORGANIC COALITION'S POSITION ON DEREGULATION:**

Prior to any de-regulation of new genetically-engineered crops, A GE contamination plan is essential to protect all non-gm crops. At a minimum, the following 7 points must be addressed transparently and fairly (for all stakeholders involved). See NOC's Contamination Prevention Plan for details.:

<http://www.nationalorganiccoalition.org/GMO/GMOContaminationPrevention.pdf>

1. Establish a USDA Public Breeds Institute to ensure that the public has access to high quality non-GMO breeds and germplasm.
2. Create a *Contamination Compensation Fund* [see NOC's Draft proposal at: <http://www.nationalorganiccoalition.org/GEAlfalfa/ProposedCompensationPlan.pdf>], funded by GMO patent holders, to provide immediate assistance to persons contaminated by GMOs, from seed to table.
3. Complete elimination of deregulated GM crop status, including prior deregulations, with on-going oversight and public evaluation of compliance and enforcement.
4. Conduct comprehensive, independent, longitudinal studies on the health, environmental, and socio-economic impacts of GMOs, prior to GM crop approvals.
5. Prohibit the growing of promiscuous GM crops that are likely to cause GMO contamination.
6. Prevent food security risks associated with the concentration of our food system in the hands of a few companies.
7. Institute an immediate labeling protocol for all GM crops, products, and ingredients.

## **BACKGROUND:**

Under heavy pressure from the Biotech Industry, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has approved the use of Monsanto's Genetically Engineered (GE) Roundup Ready™ Alfalfa in time for spring planting.

This authorization ignores on-the-ground realities that are likely to lead to widespread GE cross-pollination and contamination of organic and non-GE crops, corruption of seed supplies, and protracted economic injury to farmers and markets.

Alfalfa is the nation's 4<sup>th</sup> largest crop, planted on over 21 million acres. Forage and hay are primary feed crops for dairy cows and beef cattle as well as pork, lamb, and sheep. It's not just for livestock - some vegetable farmers use the hay as mulch and alfalfa meal as a beneficial soil amendment. Alfalfa sprouts constitute an important sector of the salad market and alfalfa also plays a major role in honey production.

Organic standards do not allow the use of GE crops, including for animal feed. The purity of organic milk from alfalfa-fed dairy cows is a major concern. Milk is a primary entry product and mainstay for many U.S. consumers in the organic market and GE contamination would cause severe economic injury to farmers, devastating the viability and integrity of the organic label. There are also test-verified GE-free domestic and world markets in Asia and Europe that would stop buying from US farmers whose crops are contaminated by GE alfalfa.

Despite three District Court rulings and a landmark Supreme Court decision that makes planting GE alfalfa illegal and requires USDA to formulate a valid management plan, the agency is going full steam ahead putting the deregulation of GE alfalfa on a fast track. While conceding for the first time that GE contamination of organic and GE-free crops and markets is a major problem in the U.S., USDA's court-ordered 2300 page Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) relies on faulty data and fails to take into account the scientifically-validated promiscuous nature of GE gene flow in crops. It also overlooks the widespread corruption of conventional seed varieties by GE strains (such as occurred with StarLink corn and LibertyLink rice) along with documented severe economic injury to farmers and markets. And, there is no mention at all of possible health consequences from eating GM crops.

USDA has NOT shown that contamination-free "coexistence" with deregulated GE alfalfa is likely or possible. USDA's EIS fails to take into account the documented increase in Roundup-resistant "super weeds" that is requiring the use of highly toxic herbicide cocktails for weed control on conventional farms. Monsanto is in a big rush to spread GE alfalfa because the patent protections on their exclusive manufacture of Roundup expire in 2014. And, GE alfalfa is the all-important test case - waiting in the wings is an immediate decision on how to handle a lawsuit prohibiting GE sugar beets as well as a list of other GE crops coming along in the biotech pipeline.

**For more information, and to see the 2300-page FEIS, go to NOC's website:**

<http://www.nationalorganiccoalition.org/GEalfalfa.html>

**For more information about the court cases go to CFS website:**

[www.truefoodnow.org](http://www.truefoodnow.org)

**For more information about food issues, go to the FWW website**

<http://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/>

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