



News and press releases

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Industry GM Crop Figures Massaged: EU Four times too high for 2007 – 2008 ISAAA data due out soon

Immediate Release 22 January 2009

Industry GM Crop Figures Massaged: EU Four times too high for 2007 – 2008 ISAAA data due out soon

Data on the area of GM crops recently obtained by GM Freeze shows that the annual global summary of GM cultivation exaggerated the area grown in the EU by more than four times.

Every year the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA) publishes a “global status” report on commercial growing of GM crops around the world. [1] In 2007, countries which had only small areas of crops were reported in the ISAAA report as <0.05million hectare [2]. The report used a figure of 0.45million hectare for the EU to come up with an overall global area – more than four times the actual figure of 110,808 hectare grown in 8 member states.

The EU figures were for the only GM crop grown commercially, Monsanto’s GM maize Mon810, and were contained in post release monitoring report on the crop [3] released to GM Freeze in January 2009. In Romania, ISAAA’s figures were more than 150 times the area grown as reported by Monsanto, and in Poland 143 times larger.

Based on the data given in the Monsanto report, GM crops were grown on just 0.06% of the EU’s agricultural land. [3] France suspended the growing of Mon 810 maize in October 2007, which was confirmed in January 2008 thus preventing cultivation last year.

ISAAA is due to report its 2008 figures in the near future.

Commenting Pete Riley of GM Freeze said:

“ISAAA are certainly adept at massaging their data to make the GM industry look more successful than they are. The way they have used to EU data to inflate them by a factor of 4 is unacceptable. We simply cannot rely on ISAAA figures to give an accurate picture –the 2008 data should be taken with a large grain of salt. However, one thing is very clear – GM crops are not dominating global agriculture in the way the biotech companies would wish them to be. Politicians need to take note and ensure they increase funds for agroecological research, which avoids dependence on GM seeds and agro-chemicals.”

ENDS

Calls to Pete Riley 0845 217 8992 or 07903 341 065

1. See www.isaaa.org/resources/publications/briefs/37/pptslides/default.html
2. Table showing ISAAA figures for GM crops in EU and those given in the Monsanto Monitoring Report for Mon810 maize

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EU Country	Monsanto area ha	ISAAA area million ha	ISAAA as % Monsanto
Czech Republic	5,000	<0.05	1000% (10X)
France	22,135	<0.05	225% (2.25X)
Germany	2,685	<0.05	1862% (18.6X)
Portugal	4,263	<0.05	1173% (11.7X)
Poland	327	<0.05	15290% (152X)
Slovakia	900	<0.05	5555% (55.5X)
Spain	75,148	0.1	133%(1.33X)
Romania	350	<0.05	14286% (142X)
Total	110,808	<0.45	406% (4X)

The total area of agricultural land in the EU is 192.273million ha (110.849 million hectare arable). GM crops occupied only 0.06% of agricultural land (0.1% of arable land) in 2007.

Globally (based on 2007 ISAAA figures) GM crops occupied just 2.4% of world agricultural land (see www.gmfreeze.org/uploads/GM_crops_land_area_final.pdf)

3. Under Article 31 of EU Regulation 1829/2003, marketing consent holders for GMOs are required to produce a monitoring report on how the crop has behaved and whether any unexpected events had occurred. Monsanto's report on Mon810 maize was obtained by GM Freeze from Defra in January 2009 following the meeting of ACRE on 4th December where it was discussed.

Last updated 05/11/2008

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