

# Our Agricultural “Noah’s Ark” has been defiled

Almost all food crops used by humans today originated in one of up to a dozen natural areas of great biological diversity. Known as “Vavilov Centres”, these wild “Noah’s Arks” are still seed banks for the ancient agricultural crops. They have not been subjected to selective breeding, as our food crops have, so still have a diverse gene pool that is naturally disease resistant.

Selective breeding has been happening for thousands of years. Recently in the West, selective breeding within each species of food crop has accelerated, drastically narrowing the genetic base of some of the food crops the world depends upon for survival.

As with humans, selective or in-breeding makes a species vulnerable to disease and extinction. When a crop species succumbs to disease, we begin again with ancient seeds from Vavilov Centres.

Please note that selective breeding is *not* genetic engineering.

Genetic scientists working for multinational chemical companies developed Genetically Modified corn. Within a few years of release, the modified crop has contaminated wild corn in the Mexican Vavilov Centre, from which corn originated. Genetically, the ancient corn has been irreversibly altered.

The same genetic scientists assured us cross-pollination would never happen. They assured us that there would be no negative environmental effects, that GM foods were perfectly safe for human consumption, and that we would use fewer chemicals in agriculture.

If they were wrong about cross-pollination, as they were proven to be, should we allow commercial GM crops into Australia’s agricultural industry? Would that be rational? Would that be responsible?

Should control of our food crops be laid in the hands of multinational chemical companies? Understandably, their motive is profit. As with other globally relevant issues, it is appropriate that control should not be given to those with a conflict of interest. To retain control, we must prevent the commercial planting of genetically modified crops in Australia, threatened to commence in May 2004.

Please find the Prime Minister’s contact details overleaf, and make your concerns heard.

Remember: Once they are planted, the patented pollen is released and the damage is done. We will be beholden to the chemical companies forever.

Want to know more? Go to [www.snakeshow.net](http://www.snakeshow.net).