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OBJECTION TO GMO TRIALS

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The Surplus People Project hereby adds its voice to the objections lodged by, among others, residents of the Lutzville area and the Food Sovereignty Campaign to the intended experiments with genetically modified maize in the Lutzville area as applied for by Monsanto South Africa Pty Ltd.

The fundamental purpose of these experiments is to allow Monsanto to patent maize seeds and thus seize control of the use and distribution of seed. Through this seed monopolization Monsanto is effectively marginalising rural communities. By allowing these experiments decades/ centuries of indigenous knowledge, traditional cultivation practises and sharing techniques are being compromised. Monsanto is motivated by greed for profits. It is claimed that this GMO maize will allow for the production of more food and will therefore lessen hunger. It will actually cause more hunger. Hunger is not caused by the shortage of food. The world produces enough food for 11 billion people. Hunger is caused by inequality and the concentration of wealth. GMO maize will generate more inequality as it will force poor farmers to pay this rich corporation for the right to plant maize.

This experiment undermines democracy and public participation. The advertisements used to invite public comment contain no information about the health and environmental risks associated with GMOs. It also uses a language filled with scientific and technical jargon, which makes it virtually impossible for the general public to fruitfully participate. It places no obligation on the people behind the experiment to make sure that the public is fully informed about all aspects and views on the issue.

GMO foods have been proven to be harmful to health of rodents used in laboratory experiments. This means they are more than likely to be harmful to the health of human beings as well. Food corporations like Monsanto have released these GMO foods without proper safety and health tests. Their profits are their overriding concern.

Nobody knows the consequences to the environment of releasing masses of organisms that genetically did not exist before. Everybody knows the consequences of corporate environmental recklessness.

The maize in question is supposed to be drought resistant but by Monsanto's own admission it does not fare significantly better in dry conditions than unmodified maize. Furthermore there is

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