

Point of Privilege resolution #4

Brought forth at the 98th Annual Convention of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM), March 13, 2003.

Submitted by the RM of Grant #372, Division 4 councillor Marc Loiselle, and overwhelmingly approved by delegates representing 292 of the 297 Saskatchewan rural municipalities.

WHEREAS, SARM has 2 previously passed resolutions opposing the registration and release of GM transgenic wheat and cereal crops; and

WHEREAS, in July 2002 Monsanto filed for health approval in Canada, then in December 2002 filed for regulatory approval in Canada and the United States to release its Roundup Ready wheat on an unconfined basis for feed use and commercial production; and

WHEREAS, wheat does spread its pollen, despite its mostly self-pollinating nature, and that the pollen then does drift by wind, insect and other activity; which results in genetic out-crossing to other wheat and similar species of plants; and

WHEREAS, initial research data in Saskatchewan has demonstrated conclusively that wheat pollen drifts to 27 metres and supplementary information indicates as far as 80 metres; and

WHEREAS, the isolation perimeter zone surrounding the Roundup Ready wheat confined field test plots is set at only 30 metres, according to the protocols established for the variety registration trials within the framework of the Prairie Registration Recommending Committee for Grain (PRRCG); and

WHEREAS, there are many more field test plots of Roundup Ready wheat in Saskatchewan, besides the few done for the PRRCG variety registration purposes, for which it is not known what, if any, isolation perimeter zones are established; and

WHEREAS, without substantially increasing any isolation perimeters to allow for the still unknown overall potential out-crossing of wheat, there is already an open possibility that the Roundup Ready gene could be escaping beyond the confines that are currently established; and

WHEREAS, the exact locations of Roundup Ready field test plots is a closely guarded secret known only to Monsanto, Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada's (AAFC) Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), and to Saskatchewan Agriculture, Food and Rural Revitalization's (SAFRR) Provincial Oilseed and Transgenic Crops Specialist; and

WHEREAS, Rural Municipalities and individual landowners/ratepayers are not notified when and where Roundup Ready wheat test plots are located;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that SARM lobby AAFC/CFIA and SAFRR to disclose the locations of all field test plots of Roundup Ready wheat in Saskatchewan and to give prior notification to SARM, rural municipalities and landowners of the intent to set up such test plots; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in order to safeguard the genetic purity of non-GM wheat, SARM lobby AAFC/CFIA to stop further confined field testing of Roundup Ready wheat until it is known to what extent genetic out-crossing (cross-pollination) of wheat and related species is possible.