

Ban Terminator

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Monsanto May Commercialize Terminator Biotech Giant Revises Pledge on Sterile Seed Technology as Global Alliance Calls for a Ban.

Monsanto, the world's largest seed and agbiotech company, made a public promise in 1999 not to commercialize 'Terminator Technology' – plants that are genetically engineered to produce sterile seeds. Now Monsanto says it may develop or use the so-called 'suicide seeds' after all. The revised pledge from Monsanto now suggests that it would use Terminator seeds in non-food crops and does not rule out other uses of Terminator in the future. Monsanto's modified stance comes to light as the biotech and seed industry confront peasant and farmer movements, Indigenous peoples and their allies in an escalating battle at the United Nations over the future of Terminator.

In 2000 the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) adopted a *de facto* moratorium on sterile seed technologies, also known as Genetic Use Restriction Technologies (GURTs). But at next month's high-level meeting of the CBD in Curitiba, Brazil (20-31 March 2006) the biotechnology industry will intensify its push to undermine the six-year old *de facto* moratorium.

In response, over 300 organizations today declared their support for a global ban on Terminator Technology, asserting that sterile seeds threaten biodiversity and will destroy the livelihoods and cultures of the 1.4 billion people who depend on farm-saved seed.

"The world's farmers cannot trust Monsanto," said Stewart Wells, President of the National Farmers Union (NFU) of Canada "Monsanto's broken promise is a deadly betrayal because Indigenous peoples and farmers depend on seed saving for food security."

The Ban Terminator campaign today announces the names of over 300 organizations worldwide that are demanding a ban on Terminator technology. The list of organizations and other background materials are available at www.banterminator.org

"We are alarmed that Monsanto's edited pledge no longer rejects commercialization of this dangerous technology." said Lucy Sharratt of the international Ban Terminator Campaign. "We are calling on national governments to dismiss Monsanto's tactic in favour of an all-out ban on Terminator. We invite all civil society and social movements to join with us for the battle against Terminator next month in Brazil."

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