

Solidarity letter from International Supporters

(April 17, 2014) We stand with Canadian farmers in opposing measures that threaten farmers' long-standing rights over seeds. Like family farmers around the world, Canadian farmers have a long tradition of selecting, saving and reusing their own seed as well as exchanging seeds with other farmers and buying from local seed growers. We believe that family farmers, not private institutions and corporations, can best conserve and enhance the genetic pool of plants, to feed people in an increasingly changing climate and environment while ensuring a resilient agriculture through cultivating seed diversity and adaptability.

We denounce the amendment of Canada's Plant Breeders' Rights Act (PBR) to conform with the UPOV '91 Convention as proposed by the Growth Agricultural Act (Bill C-18) as it will result in a further privatization, uniformization and monopolization of seeds by PBR holder. While the latter benefit from the new right to collect royalties at various stages of the crop production, farmers will lose their historical right to seeds autonomy.

Canada has no obligation under international trade agreements or treaties to conform with UPOV'91.

We join our voice to the Canadian family farming movement and urge the Canadian government to respect and protect the rights of farmers and demand to:

STOP Bill C-18 and REJECT UPOV'91.

- Re-establish and increase funding for public plant breeding institutions and public researchers and resume public plant breeding to the variety level.
- Re-orient Canada's agricultural laws towards the principles of Food Sovereignty – healthy food, ecological sustainability and democratic control.
- Adopt a new Seed Law based on the National Farmers Union's Principles for a Farmers' Seed Act.

SIGNED:

Agrar Koordination, Hamburg, Germany
African Centre for Biosafety, SA
Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa
Bifurcated Carrots, Netherlands
Border Agricultural workers project, USA
Center for Encounter and active Non-Violence, Austria
Center for the Study of Rural Change in Mexico (CECCAM), Mexico
Community Food and Justice Coalition, USA
Confédération Paysanne, France
Earth in Brackets, USA
European Coordination Via Campesina
Farmworkers Association of Florida, USA
Food Sovereignty Ghana, Ghana
GRAIN, Barcelona
Grassroots International, USA

GM Free Wales
Kasisi Agricultural Training Centre, Zambia
Kikandwa Environmental Association, Uganda
KPL South Korea Peasant League, South Korea
Mayo Organic, Fis Nua, Ireland
National Family Farm Coalition, USA
OGM dangers, FRANCE
Organic Growers of Ireland
ECOSUR Institute for Research & Graduate Studies, Mexico
Puente de la Costa Sur, San Mateo County, California, USA
Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural, Washington, DC, USA
Union paysanne, Canada
SEARICE, Phillipines
Small Scale Farmers Forum of Lesotho
Tanzania Alliance for Biodiversity (TABIO)