

PRESS RELEASE

Immediate Release - Thursday 14 February, 2002

MEP ISSUES WARNING AFTER GM TRIAL VISIT

SNP MEP, Ian Hudghton , has issued a warning to Scotland's communities about field trials of genetically modified crops. The MEP visited the Black Isle today to meet with local people who are campaigning to have field trials at Munloch stopped. Following his visit, Mr Hudghton warned other communities where field trials are planned – currently North-east Fife and Aberdeenshire – to start lobbying local politicians now to get the trials cancelled, stating that the safety of GMO's is far from certain.

Reflecting on his meeting with the Munloch campaigners, Mr Hudghton said:

“There are three issues I particularly want to highlight from today's visit. Firstly, I was struck by the intense anger the wider community feels about having GM crop trials right on their doorstep when issues of public safety are far from resolved. Ordinary folk are showing their resentment in a number of ways with many displaying banners in their gardens and by backing the actions of the vigil. Worries about GMO's are widespread across Scotland and indeed across Europe as a whole.

Secondly, I would question what Scotland has to gain by being a GM crop testing ground? The natural assets of the Black Isle and of the areas currently threatened with testing are considerable. You therefore have to question why Scotland would want to ditch its reputation for wholesome, natural produce and replace it with genetically modified products. It's not good enough to argue that it's only one field growing the GM crop, and that the rest of the fields are ok. Evidence from Canada and the USA shows that cross-pollination is rife and that farmers who choose to grow organic crops are having their produce tainted through no fault of their own.

Finally, I issue this challenge to Ross Finnie. When Scottish public opinion is clearly against GM testing, and consumers across Europe are increasingly demanding reassurance about the quality and traceability of food they eat, why is he so hell-bent on widening Scotland's role as a GM guinea pig? Can't he see that Scotland's worldwide reputation for producing natural and wholesome foods will be jeopardised by these trials? If he is any doubt, then

he should take a trip north to Munlochy where the folks of the Black Isle will leave him in no doubt at all why these trials should be halted.”

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