

PRESS RELEASE

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MEP PLEDGES ZERO TOLERANCE ON GMO'S

Speaking after his visit to the Black Isle GM vigil at Munloch today, SNP MEP, Ian Hudghton, has pledged to fight for "a zero tolerance approach" to GM food labelling in the European Parliament. The MEP told protesters that if there is any risk at all of products being contaminated by GMO's when their safety has yet to be established, then the public has the right to know and any so-called "threshold" of contamination was simply hoodwinking the public. The MEP visited Munloch today to offer his assistance to the campaigners' fight to stop field trials of genetically modified crops.

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 venting their resentment in a number of ways with many displaying banners in their gardens and by backing the actions of the protest group. 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? Visiting an area of natural beauty such as the Black Isle, you have to question why Scotland wants 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 finding their crops being 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 see that Scotland's world-wide 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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