

# PRESS RELEASE

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## **EU ENVIRONMENT CHIEF INVITED TO GM VIGIL**

Ian Hudghton MEP (Scottish National Party) has revealed that he has sent an invitation to Environment Commissioner, Margot Wallstrom to visit the GM vigil at Munloch on the Black Isle. The invitation to the Swedish head of the EU's Environment department follows a visit to the site by Mr Hudghton a few weeks ago and to continuing liaison between his office and the campaigners both on the Black Isle and now in Fife.

Mr Hudghton's personal appeal to the Commissioner comes as Black Isle residents anxiously watch the trial crop of oil seed rape come ever closer to flowering and just days after GM campaigner, Donnie Macleod was released from Prison in Inverness. Outlining his reasons for issuing the high-profile invitation, the MEP said:

"The people in the Black Isle are rightly concerned about the imminent flowering of the crop. No scientific testing has been done on the potential health risks from inhaling pollen from GM crops, thus forcing local residents to be unwilling guinea pigs in an unwanted experiment. Emotions are at fever pitch following Mr Macleod's jailing and further Court appearances scheduled for early June. I want the Commissioner to see for herself just what impact GM field trials are having on this local community.

There are many issues around the GM debate yet to be decided at a European level. Campaigners in Scotland are keen to put questions about labelling, traceability and liability for environmental damage to the Commissioner and to let her know their concerns. I have asked Mrs Wallstrom to come to this "beautiful part of Europe which prides itself in the purity and wholesomeness of its produce" and to hear the concerns of those who fear that this reputation is going up in smoke with the advent of GMO's."

Speaking on behalf of the Munloch Vigil, local campaigner, Rob Gibson said:

"We are delighted that Ian Hudghton has made this approach to the Commissioner. As far as Munloch residents are concerned, we have lost all faith in Ross Finnie. He's done absolutely nothing to listen to the concerns of local people and everything to assist the biotech companies to carry out these experiments. Mrs Wallstrom will be guaranteed a warm welcome from the

people of the Black Isle. Our hope is that she can come here before the crop starts to flower – the moment we are all dreading.”

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