

# ORGANIC VIEW

A PUBLICATION OF THE ORGANIC CONSUMERS ASSOCIATION • [www.organicconsumers.org](http://www.organicconsumers.org) • MEMBERSHIP UPDATE • SUMMER 2011

## BEYOND MONSANTO AND FOOD, INC. The Organic Transition

Over the past year, the Organic Consumers Association has continued our mission to preserve strict organic standards and to fight back against Monsanto and the industrial agriculture lobby ("Food, Inc."). Now that organics have become mainstream (\$30 billion in annual sales, representing 4% of all grocery store sales, and 12% of all fruit and vegetable sales) industry has apparently accepted the fact that we are here to stay, although they still maintain that the collateral damage of GM (Genetically Modified) crops and toxic chemicals are nothing to worry about, and that only industrial scale factory farms have the ability to feed the world.

Of course we know better. Study after study has shown that yields from small, low-energy-input, organic farms in the developing world are many times more productive than chemical and GMO farms. In the industrialized world, yields on organic farms are comparable to industrial farms in "normal" weather, but produce substantially more in times of drought or intense downpours, which seem to have become the new norm. And of course research continues to reinforce the fact that organic foods are safer, more nutritious, better for the environment, and better for restoring the all-important carbon-sequestering capacity of farmland and pasture land.

Besides educating the public about the hazards of pesticides, antibiotics, and sewage sludge in chemical agriculture over the past year, thanks to your support, the OCA has continued the good fight on GM trees, wheat, salmon, alfalfa, sugar beets, corn-based ethanol, and rice. We recently stopped a wrong-headed effort by organic industry giants including Whole Foods Market and Stonyfield Farm to reach a compromise with Monsanto and the USDA to allow the planting of GE alfalfa and other crops.

But now the time has come to go on the offensive. We can't wait for Congress, the USDA, EPA, or FDA to regulate GMOS, toxic agro-chemicals, and Monsanto's growing seed monopoly. Over one-third of American farmland is now planted with GMOS. Eighty percent of all non-organic processed foods contain GM ingredients. Most of the nation's greenhouse gases come directly or indirectly from our energy intensive, chemical intensive, genetically engineered system of food and farming.

It's time to mobilize consumer power at the local level. It's time to hit Monsanto and Big Industrial Ag where it hurts: at the cash register.

We need to pressure city councils and state legislatures to label GM-tainted foods as well as foods coming from CAFOs (confined animal feeding operations). If they won't do this, we'll need to organize ballot initiatives wherever possible.

Grocery stores and restaurants must be forced to admit to their customers that most of their milk, eggs, meat, and non-organic processed foods are GM-tainted, including so-called "natural" foods that contain corn, soy, canola, or cottonseed oil.

As long as only a quarter of us consumers understand that they're being force-fed GMOS and CAFO products, we'll never create the critical mass necessary to push organic over the tipping point. Once a majority of consumers are educated about the risks and harms of GMOS, and once non-organic foods are truthfully labeled as "may contain GMOS," Monsanto's Biotech Bullying will come to an end.

To volunteer to help organize a Millions Against Monsanto: Truth-in-Labeling Campaign in your local community, call or write our office in Minnesota or send an email to [chapters@organicconsumers.org](mailto:chapters@organicconsumers.org)





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## A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

As we prepare this issue of *Organic View*, spring is finally returning to our Minnesota North Woods headquarters. After a long winter of severe weather and bad news, including nuclear meltdown, it's time to focus on the positive. The positive message of organic food and farming. The positive message that there's still time to turn things around. The positive pilot projects and community alternatives all across the nation that we've managed to build. The positive news that people are rising up in non-violent grassroots revolution, from Madison, Wisconsin to the Middle East. Winds of change and hope are in the air.

Give yourself a pat on the back for being a part of the organic revival that's sweeping the globe. Take the time to appreciate the wonders

### It's time to retool the System and move toward an Organic and sustainable future

of nature and the accomplishments of a growing movement of organic and green-minded citizens. Take a deep breath, along with hundreds of thousands of others in the Organic Consumers Association or our growing Millions Against Monsanto network, and get ready for the next stage of our organic revolution! It's time to scale up our efforts to build a green, organic, and sustainable economy, and to address the

root causes of our economic, health, political and climate crisis.

We are determined to lay out our Organic Solutions to the public health crisis, the energy crisis, the Great Recession, and global warming.

Monsanto, BP, the nuclear power industry, out-of-control transnational corporations, indentured scientists, Wall Street speculators, and bought-and-sold politicians seem perfectly content to maintain business as usual, no matter the cost—even if the cost is human survival.

It's time to retool the System and move toward an Organic and sustainable future, before the System collapses and crushes us. We are the ethical and organic force that can save the planet. We are the antidote to hopelessness and fatalism. We are the messengers of hope.

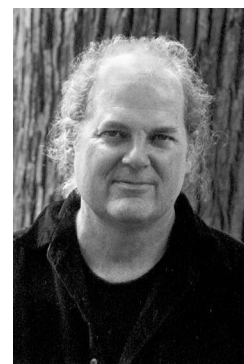
OCA needs your help more than ever to broadcast our message and mobilize the forces for change. The funds that we need in order to carry out our mission come from individuals like you, our grassroots supporters. Please use the enclosed reply envelope to send us a tax-deductible donation.

Thank you for your support and for everything you do for a better world.

Regards & Solidarity,

*Ronnie Cummins*

Ronnie Cummins, OCA Director



## OCA's Grassroots Lobbying Gains Momentum

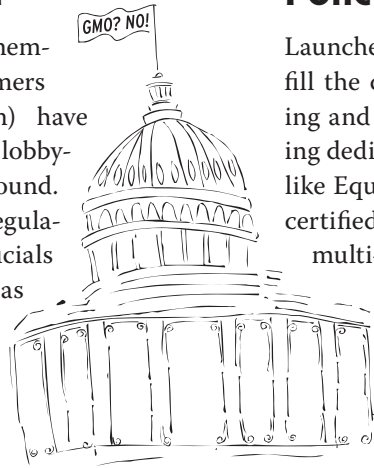
Over the past year, OCA's members and the Organic Consumers Fund (OCA's lobbying arm) have continued our grassroots lobbying online and on the ground. Together we pressured regulatory agencies and elected officials to turn away from "business as usual," and adopt "organic" rules and policies that promote health, justice, and sustainability.

Although we failed to stop the USDA AND the Obama Administration from approving controversial new genetically engineered (GE) crops and foods, including alfalfa, corn (for ethanol), salmon, and sugar beets, we have helped generate enough grassroots pressure so that mandatory labeling bills for GE foods have now been introduced in 14 states, much to the chagrin of Monsanto and the biotech industry, who understand quite clearly that EU-style mandatory labeling laws would drive most GE crops and foods off the market.

At the same time, complimenting our marketplace Millions Against Monsanto Truth-in-Labeling campaign, we are working with Congressman Dennis Kucinich of Ohio to reintroduce federal legislation requiring mandatory labeling and safety testing of GE foods.

Although Congress has yet to ban BPA linings in cans, dangerous pesticides, or a range of other hazardous products that are being phased out in the European Union, OCA has continued to sound the alarm and prepare for consumer boycotts and eventual legislation.

With Congress beginning to discuss the 2012-2017 Farm Bill, and deliberating on annual federal agricultural appropriations, OCA continues to raise our voice for nutrition programs that benefit low-income consumers and stimulate local and organic food production; for an end to billion-dollar subsidies to industrial agriculture, GMO crops, and factory farms; and for an increase in farm programs that promote land conservation, water quality, and transition to organic practices.



## OCA's Fair World Project: Policing Fair Trade

Launched in September 2010, OCA's Fair World Project aims to fill the critical need for monitoring and policing Fair Trade labeling and certification practices, as well as promoting and highlighting dedicated fair trade mission-driven companies, especially those like Equal Exchange or Dr. Bronner's, that are producing products certified as both organic and Fair Trade. Over the past decade, the multi-billion dollar Fair Trade market, like organic, has experienced significant growth, with double-digit growth in the last year alone.

In January 2011, the OCA launched a national campaign to keep the Fair Trade movement honest and pluralistic. For more than sixty years, hundreds of organizations all over the world allied with conscious consumers have actively supported a Fair Trade approach to international and domestic commerce based upon dialogue, transparency, and economic justice. One certification organization, TransFair USA, which dominates the US market and whose standards have come under attack for being too friendly toward large corporations such as Wal-Mart and Starbucks, is currently in the process of changing its name to "Fair Trade USA" and has applied for the name to be trademarked. Such a blatant attempt to exert monopoly control over the Fair Trade movement is unacceptable to the OCA and justice-minded consumers. This would be comparable to Whole Foods or another large company trying to get the trademark for "Organic." OCA network members have sent over 10,000 letters telling TransFair USA that "Fair Trade is a movement not a brand."

The same month, the OCA and Dr. Bronner's Magic Soaps filed a complaint to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) against TransFair USA and "fair trade cheater brands" like Avon/Mark and Hain Celestial/Queen Helen. TransFair licenses its seal for a fee on products and brands that have as little as 2% fair trade content. This has allowed large brands to present themselves as "Fair Trade" while selling products with only a minimal amount of certified Fair Trade ingredients. This is outrageous. Just as we demand with certified organic foods and products, nothing should be sold with a "Fair Trade" label claim unless the overwhelming majority of its ingredients are actually certified.

Consumers have supported the Fair Trade movement over the years with their daily purchases of ethically produced and traded products. The time has come to safeguard fair trade standards the same way that OCA and organic consumers safeguard organic standards. Learn more and get involved: [fairworldproject.org](http://fairworldproject.org)



## CITIZENS PLEDGE TO STABILIZE THE CLIMATE



## The 5% Solution

### ZERO WASTE · ZERO GREENHOUSE GAS POLLUTION

Inspired by Mexico City and other cities who pledged at the Cancun Climate Summit in December 2010 to reduce/sequester greenhouse gas emissions (CO<sup>2</sup>, methane, and nitrous oxide) by 5% per year, starting in 2011, we the following individuals, households, schools, businesses, farms, institutions, cities, and counties pledge to take the following actions to reduce fossil fuel use and greenhouse gas emission, to naturally sequester CO<sup>2</sup>, and to reverse warming and climate change.

- Eat healthy, climate-friendly, carbon-sequestering organic food.
- Avoid processed foods that likely contain GMOs, are energy intensive to produce, and come from conventional, industrially farmed ingredients.
- Purchase organic, fairly-traded products that are locally grown and sourced.
- Switch to a predominantly plant-based diet, eating only animal products which are organic, grass-fed, and pastured their entire lives.
- Reduce consumption of unnecessary products; reuse, share, and recycle.
- Cook with covered pots or pressure cookers.
- Boycott plastic bags, water bottles, and containers; reuse cloth bags and glass jars.
- Reduce electricity consumption; use high-efficiency light bulbs, appliances, and turn off electric lights and switches when not in use.
- Reduce heating and cooling costs by retrofitting buildings, businesses and homes.
- Install a solar water heater in your house and/or business.
- Wash clothes in cold water, dry clothes in sun whenever possible.
- Take showers instead of baths.
- Separate and recycle all household waste, including compostable kitchen and yard waste.
- Join or organize a Zero Waste/Recycling club.
- Use biodegradable and organic cleaning products and soaps.
- Recycle and reuse grey water for yard and plants.
- Reduce gasoline use: carpool, use public transportation, bike, or walk.
- Avoid airline travel, use the bus or train instead.
- Plant trees and organic backyard, rooftop, community, and school gardens.

#### PLEASE HELP OCA WITH A TAX-DEDUCTIBLE CONTRIBUTION

- ▶ **ONLINE:**  
[organicconsumers.org/donations.htm](http://organicconsumers.org/donations.htm)
- ▶ **BY MAIL:** Organic Consumers Association  
6771 South Silver Hill Drive  
Finland, MN 55603
- ▶ **BY PHONE:** 218-226-4164

\$1000	·	Cultivator
\$500	·	Harvester
\$250	·	Planter
\$100	·	Tiller
\$50	·	Seed
\$35	·	Soil support
\$ ____	·	Other

#### FREE ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

OCA publishes a free electronic newsletter, **Organic Bytes**, with recent news stories, Action Alerts, quotes, and graphics. Sign up for a free subscription or read past issues in html or print-ready PDF at: [organicconsumers.org/organicbytes.cfm](http://organicconsumers.org/organicbytes.cfm)

# MILLIONS AGAINST MONSANTO A GROWING MOVEMENT

In the wake of recent Obama Administration approvals of genetically engineered alfalfa, corn-based ethanol, and sugar beets, OCA and our allies have stepped up our efforts.

On March 26, 2011, a group of dedicated activists decided to take matters into their own hands and, using Facebook and other social media, as well as phone and email, organized anti-GMO "Rallies for the Right to Know" in over 30 cities across North America. Several thousand organic consumers took part, raising awareness about GMOs, and laying the foundation for upcoming anti-GMO actions on World Food Day.

OCA's plan is to organize several thousand supporters in each congressional district for major actions on October 16, 2011, which is World Food Day. 435 districts x 2300 supporters = 1,000,000 people against Monsanto. Participants are demanding Truth-in-Labeling for products containing GMOs or coming from animals reared on GMO feed on Factory Farms. Just as in Europe, labeling of these products as likely containing "GMOs" will likely drive them off the market.

## San Francisco, Chicago, Seattle, Boulder, New York, and Your Town!

Recently, OCA has organized Millions Against Monsanto Regional Summits around the Country. At the San Francisco Green Festival in April, OCA joined filmmaker Deborah Koons Garcia (*The Future of Food* [thefutureoffood.com](http://thefutureoffood.com)), Pamm Larry (Label GMOs: It's Our Right To Know, a 2012 CA Ballot Initiative [labelgmos.org](http://labelgmos.org)) and fellow Millions Against Monsanto activists to brainstorm and solidify ideas for the Truth-in-Labeling campaign.

At the Chicago Green Festival in May, OCA worked with enthusiastic campaign volunteers who helped staff the OCA booth and organize an activist strategy session. On the Tuesday after the Green Festival, two-dozen Illinois Millions Against Monsanto activists staged a colorful "GMO Food Dump and Return" outside the Lincoln Park Whole Foods Market in Chicago to press the store to stop selling unlabeled GMO foods marketed as "natural."



During the course of the demonstration, OCA Political Director Alexis Baden-Mayer and Chicago OCA activist Mike Durschmid were arrested. OCA got some great press coverage from this event, including the *Chicago Tribune*, *Baltimore Sun*, and *Los Angeles Times*.

A big thanks to the Seattle United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 21 who came out to support the Millions Against Monsanto campaign on Tuesday, May 24, 2011 in Seattle. Dozens of anti-GMO activists gathered in front of the University Trader Joe's to demand labeling of foods contaminated with genetically modified ingredients. Another theatrical Food Dump and Return event was held.

On April 16, grassroots organizers in Denver, Colorado held a rally and a march to call for the labeling of GMO in stores, and to call for a moratorium on the release of further genetically modified foods, to encourage consumers to vote with their pocket books by refusing to buy GMO foods, and to demand proper long-term testing of GMO products. Similarly, on May 21, organizers in Winter Park, Florida held a demonstration outside of the local Whole Foods Market to educate the public on the dangers of GMOs and the need for Truth-in-Labeling.

## Upcoming Events

OCA is planning more Millions Against Monsanto Summits, one in Boulder, Colorado on June 28 and one in New York on October 1-2. In the meantime, we are urging concerned consumers across the country

to hold their own Rally for the Right to Know or GMO Food Dump event. We are also calling on OCA members to lobby local state legislators in 14 states, where GMO labeling bills have been introduced.

Planning a Truth-in-Labeling event in your area? OCA can help promote it with a packet of campaign materials to get you started. Visit [millionsagainstm Monsanto.org](http://millionsagainstm Monsanto.org) for campaign resources or email [chapters@organicconsumers.org](mailto:chapters@organicconsumers.org) if you are planning an event that we can promote to OCA members in your area. A GMO-Labeling petition is provided on the other side of this page. Feel free to copy, distribute, and return it to OCA with signatures.

# ORGANIC CONSUMERS ASSOCIATION · GMO TRUTH-IN-LABELING PETITION

As a citizen concerned about the health, environmental, ethical, and socioeconomic hazards of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and industrial-scale factory farms or CAFOs (Confined Animal Feeding Operations), I feel strongly that consumers have an inalienable right to know whether the food we are purchasing likely contains GM ingredients or comes from animals confined in CAFOs and fed GMOs. Considering the growing concern over GMOs and CAFOs, all non-organic food and animal products produced with soy, corn, cottonseed oil, canola, sugar beets, alfalfa or GM growth hormones should be clearly identified with a label or shelf sign that says "Likely Produced with GMOs". Thank you for your attention to this important consumer concern.

<b>Name</b> <i>please print legibly</i>		
E Mail		
Address		
City · ST · Zip		
Phone	Check if interested in being a coordinator in your area →	

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Friendly Notice: If you sign this petition, expect to get contacted by the OCA asking you to get further involved.  
 Organic Consumers Association · 6771 South Silver Hill Drive · Finland, MN · 55603 · 218-226-4164 · fax: 218-353-7652  
[www.organicconsumers.org](http://www.organicconsumers.org) · [campaigns@organicconsumers.org](mailto:campaigns@organicconsumers.org) · We do not rent or sell our lists.

Signatures gathered by:



## How OCA is Using the Internet, Facebook and Twitter to Spread the Organic Revolution

As a nationwide non-profit, the OCA uses social media to communicate and mobilize our growing network of 200,000 supporters on Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter, supplementing the netroots power of the 300,000 subscribers of our weekly newsletter *Organic Bytes*, and the 30,000 people who visit our website *OrganicConsumers.org* every day.

Using Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, we are reaching thousands of people daily, providing an alternative to corporate-controlled mainstream media sources dominating public discussion.



### OCA'S SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES

#### FACEBOOK

- [organicconsumers](#)
- [millionsagainst](#)
- [comingclean](#)

#### TWITTER

- [againstmonsanto](#)
- [organicconsumer](#)
- [OCA\\_comingclean](#)

#### YOUTUBE

- [organicconsumer](#)

#### USTREAM.TV

- [oca](#)



**Facebook** · Our active Facebook community engages in conversations, takes action on issues important to our campaigns, and shares our messages across the internet. Daily posts include informative articles, action videos, and campaign photos. OCA supporters that 'like' our page can take action using a tab that allows members to sign petitions, send emails, and share their action with their Facebook friends, all without leaving Facebook.

We are using Facebook Causes to activate our Millions Against Monsanto campaign members. We started Causes in February 2011, and we're now at over 52,000 members in 435 distinct causes. We communicate with each of them directly via bulletins and our newsletter *Organic Bytes*. Millions Against Monsanto Cause members took organized action in March, with nationwide **Rallies for the Right to Know**. Members organized online and produced impressive turnouts to anti-GMO events.

Our current campaign objective is one million members nationwide, by World Food Day, October 16. With 100,000 followers each on the Millions Against Monsanto and the OCA Facebook page, we are well on our way.

**Twitter** · Twitter's micro-blogging format allows us to send alerts and *Organic Bytes* links, and to engage in informal conversations with organic suppliers, volunteers, consumers, and press outlets. The power of Twitter gives followers instant communication with organiza-

tions, information that is easily shared with each Twitter-user's followers.

In April, we started metadata tagging and link building which allows us to track our growth and makes all of our content easily traceable and searchable. Even though we have just begun, 20,000 followers already have access to our daily twitter feeds. Twitter is perfect for smart phones and tablets, allowing you to take the OCA with you wherever you go.

**Video** · Our first video was released in March. It reached 20,000 views within a week and is still being watched daily. We're producing new videos, and adding videos to our favorites on the OCA YouTube channel. We are using Ustream to host live lectures and Q&A chats with organic leaders to mobilize our supporters to direct action.

We hope you'll visit our website, [organicconsumers.org](#), which will link you to all of our sites. Please "like", "follow", and "add" us on your social media outlets to stay informed.

## MEMBER COMMENTS

I really appreciate your work. You are one of the very few who informs consumers of what we are eating in a detailed, very clear way. It's truly alarming what even basic foods are becoming. -Mollie in MI

Thank you for all the work you do. I don't know if I could sleep at night if I didn't know the OCA existed and is so hard at work to save our planet and what grows in and on it. -Nicole in ME

The work you do is critical to the planet and to my family's health. Bless you all. -Barbara in CO

Thank You! for the good work you are doing on behalf of all humanity. I appreciate your information, support and love-based outreach and services. In gratitude -Patsy in AK

We gotta stop those GMO knuckleheads and their minions in Congress, the USDA, and even NPR... GO OCA! -Don in WA

Keep up your outstanding work. We are counting on your efforts. -Vijay in CO

Am with your efforts 100% against these corporate Neanderthals. -Kristen in WI

Thank you for all that you are doing to get GMO products labeled. This fight against Monsanto is so very important which is why I am donating what I can to help out. -Thomas in CA

You guys do such a great job with uncovering the information and getting it out to the people. Keep up the good work. -Mandy in AK

Keep up the great work! I cannot say enough about what this organization does and stands for; for all humanity... especially our children. Thank you. -Garrett in PA

Thank you for your hard work. I hope we prevail for the good of our society. -Shannon in PA





For all things produced in a garden, whether of salads or fruits, a poor man will eat better that has one of his own, than a rich man that has none. -J. C. Loudon

# ORGANIC VIEW

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