



Dirty Fingerprints

Monsanto was the master of fake news long before fake news was a thing. For decades, the St. Louis-based biotech company has enlisted the services of expensive (and slick) PR firms to feed the public and the media lies about everything from how the company improves farmers' lives, to how its Roundup® weedkiller is "safe," to how GMO crops increase yields and reduce the need for pesticides.

As consumers wised up, as credible independent scientists dug deeper into the risks associated with glyphosate and Roundup®, and as the media started asking tougher questions, Monsanto was forced to up its smoke-and-mirrors game in order to counter the negative PR.

One of Monsanto's most effective propaganda strategies has been to identify people who on the surface appear to have the right scientific credentials, then collaborate with them behind the scenes to promote Monsanto's script as their own, independently researched opinions.

One of those people is Henry Miller, whose latest "scientific opinion" is that organic food is a scam.

We're not surprised that Miller would tout this opinion—an opinion that the author of our featured blog post this week, Stacy Malkan, says has "Monsanto's fingerprints in plain sight all over it." After all, rising sales of organic and non-GMO foods threaten Monsanto's bottom line. What did surprise us—and Malkan, co-director of US Right to Know—was that Newsweek would run an opinion piece by someone who has been widely discredited, including most recently in a New York Times article. The Times exposed Miller for submitting an article under his own name to Forbes magazine—an article that was ghostwritten by Monsanto. orgcns.org/2BtxuxG



Time to Brush Up?

Here's something you may want to add to your cancer-prevention toolbox: a new-and-improved dental health regimen.

As reported by UK-based Natural Health News, two recent large scale studies found strong links between poor dental health and increased cancer risk.

According to Natural Health News, data from comprehensive dental exams performed on 7,466 people from four states—Maryland, Minnesota, Mississippi and North Carolina—revealed that people with severe gum disease, or periodontitis, had a 24-percent increased risk of developing cancer compared to those with healthy gums. The data was published in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute.

A study conducted in Finland, and published in the International Journal of Cancer, found that poor dental health correlated with a 33-percent increased risk of dying from cancer and a significantly higher risk of dying from pancreatic cancer.

As Natural Health News points out, there's already plenty of evidence linking gum disease with heart disease and stroke.

If you haven't been keeping up with the latest science on dental health, now may be a good time to brush up. orgcns.org/2DwoTMs

Everybody Knows

As Leonard Cohen would say, "everybody knows."

Everybody, including the EPA, knows that neonicotinoid pesticides harm bees.

But here's a part of the story you may have missed: Monsanto, Bayer and Syngenta coat their GMO corn seeds with neonics, then charge farmers extra for them—even though studies show that neonic-coated seeds provide no real benefit to farmers.

Why do farmers pay extra for seeds that have no extra benefit? Because the biotech companies that have a monopoly on GMO seeds offer only neonic-coated seeds. That's not good for farmers. Or bees. It's also not good for humans, when neonics end up in our water and food.

After Obama's EPA admitted that neonics kill bees, the agency began work on a docket that could be used to restrict the use of neonics.

But just before passing the baton to Trump, the EPA walked back an earlier proposal for mandatory rules on how neonics can be used while honeybees are pollinating crops.

A decade into the colony collapse crisis, politicians on both sides know better than to pretend there's nothing wrong with neonics. But will they do anything about it?

So far, Trump's EPA has taken every opportunity to side with industry, including chemical and biotech companies, willfully ignoring the consequences for human health and the environment. All the more reason to keep up the pressure.

Take action by midnight February 20: orgcns.org/2n3JaTk

Boycott Power

Trump has dumped family farmers.

That's right, Trump, who once claimed he's "fighting for our farmers," is passing policies that mostly benefit the big agribusiness corporations—not small farmers, and certainly not rural communities. Robert Reich, professor of Public Policy at the University of California at Berkeley, recently sat down with Michael Pollan to discuss food and agriculture policy and inequality under the Trump administration.

Pollan, a food policy expert and author of several books including "The Omnivore's Dilemma," didn't mince words when it comes to Trump's impact on food and ag policy, or where the president's loyalties lie. Pollan explained how Trump is rolling back anything initiated under the Obama administration, including Michelle Obama's standards for school lunch. So instead of nutritionists deciding what kids should eat, we're back to allowing the food companies to decide. So basically, we're back to anything industry wants, Pollan said.

Reich and Pollan agreed that big companies are spending a fortune on brand image and, now more than ever, if you organize or threaten a consumer boycott you can have a real impact.

Pollan said: "It's the Achilles heel of American capitalism. They are not afraid of the government anymore, but they are afraid of their consumers attacking their brand." orgcns.org/2Edxkx4