

Toxic Tortillas?

Are those tortillas you've been making with Maseca flour toxic?

On October 9, the Organic Consumers Association reported that samples of Maseca white and yellow corn flour tested positive for concerning levels of glyphosate, the active ingredient in Monsanto's Roundup weedkiller.

Testing also revealed that some Maseca flour samples tested as high as 94.15 percent for the presence of genetically modified organisms (GMO). That's a startling finding, given that GMO crops are not allowed to be grown commercially in Mexico. Those findings can mean only one thing—Mexico-based Gruma, which owns the Maseca brand, is importing GMO corn from the U.S. to produce its flour, sold all over the world, including in Mexico and the U.S.

Since we revealed our test results, concerned tortilla-loving consumers from the U.S., Mexico and Canada have reached out asking what they should do. So we've researched some alternative corn flour brands that aren't contaminated with glyphosate and aren't made from GMO corn. orgcns.org/2P6SW6i

Juror No. 4

Robert Howard, juror No. 4 in the trial of former school groundskeeper Dewayne Lee Johnson vs. Monsanto, has two questions for the judge who is threatening to throw out the jury's unanimous verdict against Monsanto:

"Do you have any reason at all to believe that myself or my fellow jurors did not follow your instructions?"

Did you assess the credibility of Monsanto witnesses, particularly Monsanto employees, at all?"

Howard is one of four jurors who wrote to Judge Suzanne Bolanos, defending the jurors' unanimous decision and asking her to uphold it. Howard also called our office, wanting to vent. He's discouraged. And angry. He told us that he and others on the jury listened to the evidence, and followed the judge's instructions to the letter.

Take Action: orgcns.org/2yL82V3

Pandora's Potatoes

In 1995, with his Ph.D. from University of California, Berkeley, Caius Rommens was invited by Monsanto to lead the biotech giant's new disease control program.

In a recent article in *Independent Science News*, Rommens writes:

I should not have accepted the invitation. I knew, even then, that pathogens cannot be controlled by single genes. They evolve too quickly around any barrier to infection. It takes about two to three decades for insects and plants to overcome a resistance gene, but it takes only a few years, at most, for pathogens to do the same.

But he did. Then, in 2000, Rommens left Monsanto and started an independent biotech program at J.R. Simplot Company, one of the largest potato processors in the world.

His goal? Develop GMO potatoes.

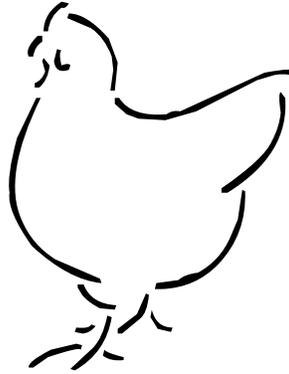
In his new book, "Pandora's Potatoes: The Worst GMOs," Rommens now renounces that work and outlines all the hidden dangers of GMO potatoes and why they should be taken off the market.

orgcns.org/2AgxGCQ

Water Woes

Costco is trying to build the world's largest chicken factory farm operation in Nebraska. Norway-based Nordic Aquafarms is trying to build the world's largest salmon factory farm in Maine.

Meanwhile, Iowa is struggling to clean up the mess that industrial agriculture, especially factory farms, has made of the state's water.



Bill Stowe, general manager of Des Moines Water Works describes it this way:

"Iowa has become the sacrifice state for industrial agriculture. As a native Iowan and somebody whose family has been around here for generations, we are the sacrifice, just like West Virginia has become the sacrifice state for coal."

Among those making the biggest sacrifices? Pregnant women and their children. According to Peter Weyer, an expert on nitrate pollution (attributed largely to industrial agriculture) in drinking water, more than half of the 42,000 Iowa women monitored over a 30-year period had relied on the same water source for more than 20 years, "giving extra credence to the researchers' conclusion that it was nitrogen in the water, and not other potential sources, that was the main contributor to the elevated cancer rates."

Yale Environment 360 also reports:

"Another study on birth defects that centered on 10 locales around the country, including Iowa, found evidence suggesting newborn children face increased risk of conditions such as spina bifida and cleft palate if their mothers have sustained exposure to drinking water with half the federal limit for nitrogen." orgcns.org/2qJYRAk

And Yet, We Do

October 16 was World Food Day.

It was also a day when millions of people are cleaning up after yet another weather-related disaster, this time in Florida. And millions more around the globe are experiencing devastating droughts and crippling storms that are leaving them unable to grow food and feed their families.

We often think that we, as individuals, have little or no power to solve problems as complex and overwhelming as global warming and world hunger.

And yet, we do. The personal choices we make when it comes to our food, and the demands we make of our local, state and federal politicians to adopt climate change-reversing food, farming and land-use policies give us the power to do something, everyday, to reverse our dangerous course.

Take Action: orgcns.org/2LpouUn