

Testbiotech calls for a stop on patents on seed, plants, farm animals and food

This week a global action is started against patents on seed, plants, farm animals and parts thereof including gene sequences and food. Over 100 organisations from all over the world are alerting the public and warning of the dangers of increasing monopoly rights on basic resources of farm and food production. Seed, plants and farm animals as well as food production chains are becoming progressively subject to monopoly rights imposed by worldwide patents. More and more patents have been filed, even including claims on conventional breeding of plants and animals. These are actually being claimed by industry as their inventions!

If this trend is not stopped, these developments will impact on farmers, small-scale breeders, food producers and consumers. Leaving the control over seeds to multinational corporations means leaving decisions on choice in the food market and the way food is produced to those whose first aim is to make a profit, not provide food security. Farmers in particular are increasingly dependent on agrochemical and seed corporations. Breeding is becoming more difficult as access to genetic resources is hampered by the restrictions that patents impose. This situation will result in fewer innovations urgently needed for food safety.

The US company Monsanto recently filed patent application WO2008021413, which - in more than 1000 pages - makes 175 claims to misappropriate various gene sequences and genetic variations, especially in soy and maize. Monsanto even goes as far as to explicitly claim all relevant maize and soy plants inheriting those genetic elements and its uses in food, feed and biomass. In a further patent application, WO 2009011847, Monsanto makes broad claims covering methods for cattle breeding, for the animals themselves as well as "milk, cheese, butter and meat". These patents and many others filed by various companies such as Dupont and Syngenta are the reason why Testbiotech is calling upon politicians and patent offices around the world to ensure that such patents cannot and will not be granted.

Testbiotech is calling upon organisations and individuals to sign the joint global alert posted on the website of the 'no patents on seeds' coalition. Global days of action against patents on farm and food production are planned from the end of April until July 2010. They will end in a public hearing on July 20th at the European Patent Office in Munich, Germany. This hearing will be on a patent filed for the conventional breeding of broccoli which will lead to a precedent decision being made in Europe. Testbiotech will inform the public about these activities and will support it.

[Link to the alert](#) [1]

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Links

[1] http://www.no-patents-on-seeds.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=93&Itemid=56&lang=en