

Economic interests quashing scientific controversy?

New round in the dispute on the NK603 rat-study

Munich, 29.11. 2013 The editors of the international journal *Food and Chemical Toxicology* have asked the group around French scientist Gilles-Eric Seralini to withdraw their publication on the long-term impact on health from feeding herbicide mixtures such as Roundup (active ingredient glyphosate) and genetically engineered maize NK603. They are saying the data are insufficient to back up severe impacts on the health of rats, as described in the French scientists' publication. This is an unusual attack on a peer reviewed scientific publication. Normally fraud or incorrectness would be reasons to withdraw a paper, neither of which the study was accused. Testbiotech believes that the request to withdraw the publication is not driven by scientific interest, but mostly by economic interests.

"The request to withdraw this publication shows that the whole dispute is not about science, but driven by an attempt to protect financial interests. The scientific publication raises doubts about the safety of two Monsanto products. Industry repeatedly claims there is consensus on the safety of genetically engineered plants. Publications showing major uncertainties in current risk assessment and therefore raising new scientific controversies, are annoying for anyone with a vested economic interest in marketing these products", says Christoph Then for Testbiotech, "Instead of suppressing this paper many more studies should be requested to investigate the true long-term risks of the products."

So far, the names of the experts responsible for the review of the publication have not been made public. However, it is known that there are several experts on the editorial board of the journal *Food and Chemical Toxicology* (FCT) who have ties with industry and to the *International Life Sciences Institute* (ILSI), which is financed by industry. The editor in chief, Wallace Hayes, worked for the tobacco industry. Others have direct links to biotech-industry or the European Food Safety Authority, which is defending its own opinions claiming that products such as NK603 are safe. Furthermore, some are working for biotech service contractors - or the pesticide industry:

- Richard Goodman, former Monsanto employee, who worked with ILSI;
- Brian Delaney, employee at Pioneer/ Dupont;
- Susan Barlow, former expert at the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), also worked with ILSI;
- Ivonne Rietjens, former expert at the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), also worked with ILSI;
- David J. Brusick, consultant for pharmaceutical and chemical companies, former leading staff member of Covance Laboratories, which are a service contractor for Monsanto (feeding studies with genetically engineered plants);
- William C. Hall, Hall Consulting, former Charles River Laboratories, which are a service contractor for Monsanto (studies on glyphosate);
- Palma Ann Marone, Product Safety Laboratories, which are a service contractor for agrochemical industry (studies on glyphosate);
- Claire L. Kruger, consultant for pharmaceutical and chemical companies;
- Dieter Schrenk, EFSA.

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Further information: [Link to Seralini study](#) [2]

[Study on ILSI](#) [3]

[The European Food Safety Authority: Using double standards when assessing feeding studies](#) [4]

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