Phil Angell, the director of corporate communications at Monsanto:

"Monsanto should not have to vouchsafe the safety of biotech food.
Our interest is in selling as much of it as possible."

・ Professor Richard Lewontin, professor of genetics, Harvard University, "An ecosystem, you can always intervene and change something in it, but there's no way of knowing what all the downstream effects will be or how it might affect the environment. We have such a miserably poor understanding of how the organism develops from its DNA that I would be surprised if we don't get one rude shock after another."

http://members.tripod.com/%7Engin/foodstatements.htm

・ Dr Suzanne Wuerthele, US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) toxicologist, "This technology is being promoted, in the face of concerns by respectable scientists and in the face of data to the contrary, by the very agencies which are supposed to be protecting human health and the environment. The bottom line in my view is that we are confronted with the most powerful technology the world has ever known, and it is being rapidly deployed with almost no thought whatsoever to its consequences."

・ Professor Norman Ellstrand, ecological geneticist at the University of California, "within 10 years we will have a moderate to large-scale ecological or economic catastrophe, because there will be so many products being released."

・ Dr Harash Narang, microbiologist and senior research associate at the University of Leeds, who originally pointed to the possible link between mad cow disease (BSE) and CJD in humans, "If you look at the simple principle of genetic modification it spells ecological disaster. There are no ways of quantifying the risks... The solution is simply to ban the use of genetic modification in food."

・ Dr. Erik Millstone, Sussex University, "The fundamental problem of the way in which

GM foods have been approved is that they haven't really been tested properly at all. All that has happened is something which I would characterise as an exercise in wishful thinking." see Dr Millstone's article on this

· Dr Ian Gibson MP, former Dean of Biology at the University of East Anglia, has called for a ban on GM foods until longer term safety testing has taken place. He has also expressed concern about the inclusion of GM ingredients in school meals: ‛There is an awful lot unknown about hazards of new [GM food] crops and until it is fully tested we should not be subjecting people to risks, least of all young children.’ click here for an article about the concerns of a leading European regulator

· "With genetic engineering familiar foods could become metabolically dangerous or even toxic.’ Statement by 21 scientists including the following, Professor Brian Goodwin, Professor Jacqueline McGlade, Professor Peter Saunders and Professor Richard Lacey

· Professor Richard Lacey, microbiologist and Professor of Food Safety at Leeds University - one of the scientists who predicted the BSE disaster from early on - has spoken out strongly against the introduction of genetically engineered foods because of ‛the essentially unlimited health risks ’. click here for an article on the risks of genetic engineering and why they are not worth taking

· Professor Arpad Pusztai, world-leading nutrintional science expert, formerly of the Food, Gut, and Microbial Interactions Group, Rowett Research Institute, "If it is left to me, I would certainly not eat it. We are putting new things into food which have not been eaten before. The effects on the immune system are not easily predictable and I challenge anyone who will say that the effects are predictable." see Pofessor Pusztai's article on why GM is not safe, predictable or precise

· Professor Colin Blakemore, Waynflete professor of physiology at Oxford University and former President of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, has said of the genetic engineering of food crops: ‛We shouldn’t be complacent in thinking that we can

predict the results."

・ Professor James (the main architect of the UK Food Standards Agency) has commented on genetically engineered food: "The perception that everything is totally straightforward and safe is utterly naive. I don't think we fully understand the dimensions of what we're getting into." He has also said, ""There is... a need to develop more effective and appropriate screening methods to alert companies and government agencies to the unexpected consequences of the often random insertion of genetic traits into plants." Professor James has also remarked that the current regulatory system is open to challenge simply because ｢we are making all sorts of judgments with so little evidence at hand.｣ click here for an article on the regulatory surrender of government

・ Dr Andrew Chesson, vice chairman of European Commission scientific committee on animal nutrition, "Potentially disastrous effects may come from undetected harmful substances in genetically modified foods." click here for an article about the concerns of a leading European regulator

・ Dr. Gerald B. Guest, Director of the FDA Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM),"...animal feeds derived from genetically modified plants present unique animal and food safety concerns ... Residues of plant constituents or toxicants in meat and milk products may pose human food safety problems. "

・ Professor Gordon McVie, head of the Cancer Research Campaign:"We don｣t know what genetic abnormalities might be incorporated into the genome [the individual｣s DNA]. I｣m more worried about humans than about the environment, to be honest. One of the problems is that because it｣s a long-term thing, you need to do long-term experiments." click here for an article on the inadequate safety testing of GM foods

・ Dr Vyvyan Howard: expert in fetal and infant toxico-pathology at Liverpool University Hospital, "Swapping genes between organisms can produce unknown toxic effects and allergies that are most likely to affect children"

・ Dr Mae Wan-Ho, geneticist in the UK Open University Department of Biology says: "Genetic engineering bypasses conventional breeding by using artificially constructed parasitic genetic elements, including viruses, as vectors to carry and smuggle genes into cells. Once inside cells, these vectors slot themselves into the host genome. The insertion of foreign genes into the host genome has long been known to have many harmful and fatal effects including cancer of the organism." read a summary of Dr Ho in discussion with other molecular biologists

・ Professor Dennis Parke of University of Surrey School of Biological Sciences, a former chief advisor on food safety to Unilever Corporation and British advisor to the US FDA on safety aspects of biotechnology writes: "In 1983, hundreds of people in Spain died after consuming adulterated rapeseed oil. This adulterated rapeseed oil was not toxic to rats". Dr Parke warns that current testing procedures for genetically altered foods including rodent tests are not proving safety for humans. He has suggested a moratorium on the release of genetically engineered foods.

・ Dr Peter Wills, theoretical biologist at Auckland University writes: "By transferring genes across species barriers which have existed for aeons between species like humans and sheep we risk breaching natural thresholds against unexpected biological processes. For example, an incorrectly folded form of an ordinary cellular protein can under certain circumstances be replicative and give rise to infectious neurological disease".

・ Dr Michael Antoniou, Senior Lecturer in Molecular Pathology at Guy ㄱs Hospital says, "The generation of genetically engineered plants and animals involves the random integration of artificial combinations of genetic material from unrelated species into the DNA of the host organism. This procedure results in disruption of the genetic blueprint of the organism with totally unpredictable consequences. The unexpected production of toxic substances has now been observed in genetically engineered bacteria, yeast, plants, and animals with the problem remaining undetected until a major health hazard has arisen. Moreover, genetically engineered food or enzymatic food processing agents may produce

an immediate effect or it could take years for full toxicity to come to light." Dr Antoniou recently warned MPs against believing there was any safe alternative to a ban on GM foods, "We should not lull ourselves into a false sense of security: we should not think that by regulating something which is inherently unpredictable and uncontainable it automatically becomes safe!" see Dr Antoniou's article on the hazards of genetic engineering

・ Dr. George Wald, Nobel Laureate and Higgins Professor of Biology, Harvard University, wrote "Up to now, living organisms have evolved very slowly, and new forms have had plenty of time to settle in. Now whole proteins will be transposed overnight into wholly new associations ..going ahead in this direction may be not only unwise, but dangerous. Potentially, it could breed new animal and plant diseases, new sources of cancer, novel epidemics."

・ The British Medical Association has questioned "whether there is a real need for genetically modified foodstuff", warning that "an artificial market may have been created by researchers and producers."

from readers in NCR May ? 2009