



**Collaborative Campaigning for  
Food Sovereignty and Environmental Justice**

# **ANNUAL REPORT 2009**

## **CBAN MEMBERS**

**ACT for the Earth  
Biofreedom  
Canadian Organic Growers  
Check Your Head  
Coalition for Safe Food  
Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario  
Food Action Committee of Ecology Action Centre NS  
G.E. Free Yukon  
GENEaction  
Greenpeace Canada  
Inter Pares  
National Farmers Union  
P.E.I. Coalition for a GMO-Free Province  
Saskatchewan Organic Directorate  
Society for a G.E. Free B.C.  
Union Paysanne  
USC Canada**

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In 2009, the biotech industry made a bold push for new GM crops in Canada – but CBAN was there to push back. In its third year, CBAN is more important and more effective than ever. 2009 was a year of more community and individual participation, more media coverage, and more campaign action across the country.

## I. Campaigning and Research and Monitoring

In 2009, CBAN spearheaded two new national campaigns: to stop Monsanto’s GM sugar beet and “SmartStax” corn. CBAN also established the “No to GM Alfalfa” campaign in partnership with CBAN Member group the Saskatchewan Organic Directorate and CBAN also initiated, and now coordinates, the Global Stop GM Wheat campaign.

### GM Sugarbeet

U.S. sugar giants bent to Monsanto in 2008 and allowed GM sugar beet for the first time. However, the only company in Canada that processes sugar beet for sugar, Lantic/Rogers, still had a pledge on their website not to use GM ingredients. CBAN warned that this promise was about to be broken and launched a campaign to keep Canadian sugar GM-Free.

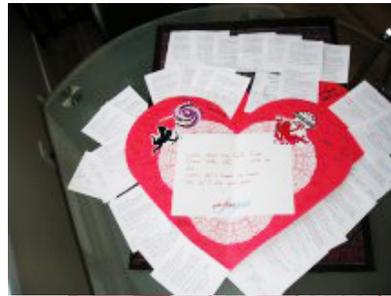
CBAN launched a national action for Valentine’s Day and thousands of Canadians sent Valentine’s to Lantic’s President Edward Makin, asking the company to stay GM-Free. CBAN then launched a second action in time for Easter, just before the planting season for sugar beet.

#### RESULT

Thousand’s of Canadians were active in the campaign, writing cards and letters to Lantic, and many communities coordinated local action. While Lantic refused to respond to these letters or to CBAN’s requests to meet, Cadbury Canada responded that they will not use GM sugar in their products. Meanwhile, a new legal action in the U.S. was launched against GM sugar beet, potentially changing our campaign in Canada.

### GM Wheat Revival

In 2004, Canadian and U.S. farmer and consumer protest forced Monsanto to withdraw its applications for approval of GM wheat, but on May 14, 2009, industry groups in Canada, Australia and the U.S. published a pledge to “work toward the goal of



Comox Valley (BC) Valentine sent to Lantic



Thousands of protest Valentines were sent to sugar company Lantic asking them to remain GM-Free.



synchronized commercialization of biotech traits in our wheat crops.” CBAN immediately coordinated the release of a joint counterstatement with Canadian, U.S. and Australian groups called the “Definitive Global Rejection of Genetically Engineered Wheat”. Our protest statement includes detailed arguments that rebut the industry’s promotion of GM wheat.

CBAN responded quickly to the industry’s pledge because we saw it as the first part of a new effort from Monsanto to push GM wheat. We were proven correct when Monsanto announced new GM wheat research just two months later.

To fully address this challenge, CBAN initiated and now coordinates the new Global Stop GM Wheat campaign. We are monitoring and responding to the long-term corporate plan to genetically engineer the major staple crop of wheat.

**RESULT**

There was wide media coverage in Canada and the U.S. of our tri-national statement, countering Monsanto's message of support for GM Wheat. By the end of 2009, 233 farmer and consumer groups from 26 countries had signed the rejection statement. CBAN is monitoring the push for GM wheat and has established a solid campaign platform with groups from across the world, for future global action.

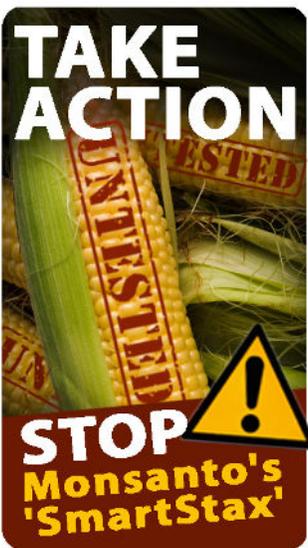
**No to GM Alfalfa**

CBAN supported the development and implementation of the "No to GM Alfalfa" campaign with CBAN Member group the Saskatchewan Organic Directorate. In early 2009, we issued an invitation to groups across Canada to sign on to a statement against GM alfalfa. By April, 80 groups already signed on and joined the campaign. An injunction on planting alfalfa in the U.S. was reaffirmed in 2009 and delayed Monsanto's plans in Canada.

**RESULT**

CBAN has built the foundation of a strong campaign to stop Monsanto's GM alfalfa in Canada.

**Stop Monsanto's "SmartStax" Corn**



In June, the Canadian and the U.S. governments simultaneously announced their approval of Monsanto's new 8-trait "SmartStax" corn. This unprecedented stacked GM crop was approved in a way that contradicts United Nations CODEX food safety guidelines as well as regulations in the European Union.

SmartStax raises serious new environmental and human health safety questions and illuminates the problems with Canadian regulation as well as monopoly corporate control over seed. SmartStax corn was not evaluated for safety by Health Canada.

CBAN secured wide and strong media coverage of the SmartStax scandal in both the mainstream and farm press. CBAN also began a letter writing and postcard campaign to the Minister of Health requesting

that she withdraw SmartStax from the market. Almost 2000 people sent letters from the CBAN website alone.

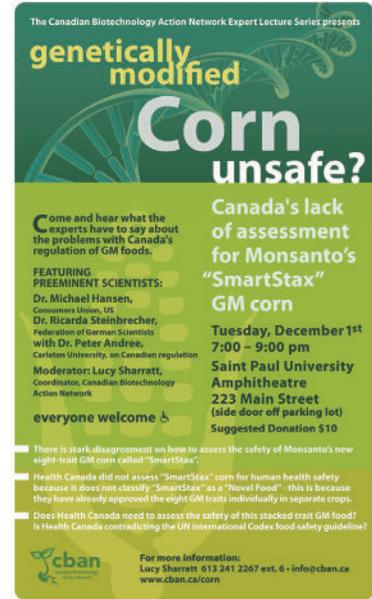
CBAN wrote detailed letters to the Minister of Health and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) – leading the CFIA to request a meeting with CBAN. On August 13, a delegation of three from CBAN met over the phone with six CFIA employees

including the Executive Director of the Plant Products Directorate. The meeting confirmed our analysis of the serious problems with the regulation of SmartStax and our broader analysis of the deeply inadequate regulatory process.

On December 9th, CBAN presented the first event in our Expert Lecture Series: "Genetically Modified Corn Unsafe?: Canada's lack of assessment for Monsanto's SmartStax GM corn" with two renowned international experts: Dr. Michael Hansen of the Consumers Union in the US and Dr. Ricarda Steinbrecher of the Federation of German Scientists, with Peter Andree of Carleton University. CBAN invited all Members of Parliament and Senators to the Ottawa public event and the lecture was attended by three MPs, representing the Liberal and New Democratic Parties.

**RESULT**

CBAN's media work resulted in widespread reporting, in both the mainstream and farm press, of the problems with SmartStax and Canadian regulation. Monsanto was forced to defend SmartStax and its regulation in the media, publicly responding to CBAN's critique. CBAN's communications campaign led to awareness of our major concerns in the public, inside regulatory agencies, and among Members of Parliament.



## GM FLAX CONTAMINATION CRISIS



In early September 2009, Canada's exports of flax were discovered contaminated by GM flax and our export markets were closed.

CBAN alerted Canadians to the contamination crisis and its impact on farmers. CBAN monitored events nationally and internationally as they unfolded.

CBAN played a critical role in securing media coverage in the mainstream press (including a front page Globe and Mail story featuring a picture of farm leader Arnold Taylor) as well as in the farm press. CBAN worked closely with our Member groups the National Farmers Union and the Saskatchewan Organic Directorate to detail the impact on farmers.

CBAN was the only national group outside of the farming community that was able to respond to the crisis. CBAN was a source of information for the general public and farm groups, as well as for the media and Members of Parliament. CBAN was also a source of information for groups around the world who were dealing with the crisis.

The flax contamination crisis highlights many of the most serious problems with GM and its regulation in Canada – all issues that CBAN researches and monitors, and campaigns on.

## II. Public Education and Awareness

CBAN Member groups organized many great educational events in 2009. Here is just a sample of the public outreach activities:

- ▶ CBAN, the National Farmers Union Ontario and the Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario coordinated the Public Forum at the national Guelph Organic Conference in Guelph Ontario, "Genetic Engineering and Our Organic Future", as well as two workshops at the Conference.
- ▶ The Society for a GE Free BC organized a highly successful five-stop speaking tour with farmer Percy Schmeiser. CBAN Coordinator Lucy Sharratt joined to speak at three of the events.
- ▶ Coordinator Lucy Sharratt spoke for CBAN at the Royal Society of Canada's symposium on genetic engineering in Ottawa and at the National Farmers Union Ontario Convention, as well as numerous local events in Ontario.
- ▶ CBAN sponsored many events and workshops with local partners in rural and urban areas, lending publicity and other non-financial support.

- ▶ CBAN took a lead role in finalizing the Dig In! online tool box of workshop activities, now posted at [www.cban.ca/digin](http://www.cban.ca/digin)
- ▶ CBAN published action flyers on SmartStax corn and published a "GM Updates" flyer in time for the NFU Convention in November.
- ▶ CBAN also published "CBAN Briefing to Members of Parliament: Genetically Modified Flax Contamination: Canadian Farmers Lose their European Market October 29, 2009" and "CBAN Briefing: WTO dispute over Genetically Modified Organisms: Canada, Argentina, US vs European Union July 20, 2009."

GE FREE  
YUKON

CBAN sent a briefing package on GE regulatory and environmental issues to Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Yukon, in support of the ongoing work of CBAN Member GE Free Yukon.



*With ETC Group and CBAN Member groups USC Canada, Inter Pares and the National Farmers Union, CBAN supported the organizing of the public forum “Beyond Hunger and Profit: Grassroots Solutions to the Global Food Crisis” in Ottawa, as part of the NFU’s 40th Annual Convention. The standing-room only event featured Honduran farm leader Luisa Gomez; Sarojeni Rengam, a civil society leader from the People’s Coalition on Food Sovereignty Asia, Pat Mooney from ETC Group, and was moderated by Nettie Wiebe from the NFU.*

- 36,000 copies of “Why Your Food Choices Matter” brochure were distributed in Ontario by the end of 2009.
- CBAN continued to sell and distribute copies of the DVD “The World According to Monsanto” as well as support local screenings.

### III. Media

CBAN achieved important media coverage in 2009, in particular on the dangerous approval of “SmartStax” corn and on the crisis of GM contamination that hit flax farmers in Canada. Without CBAN, the mainstream press may never have reported on these stories.

CBAN issued 16 press releases in 2009 and the CBAN Coordinator authored many opinion pieces and articles. The below list of press releases shows the range of CBAN’s media work in 2009 and illustrates the unique contribution CBAN is making as we increase our media capacity.

#### PRESS RELEASES 2009

- December 1, 2009. Panel Challenges Canada’s Regulation of Genetically Modified Foods: Safety Approval of Monsanto’s New GM Corn Questioned.
- October 22, 2009. Trade with Canada: European Consumers Warned that Trade Deal with Canada could be used to Weaken GMO Regulations.
- October 5, 2009. GM Flax Contamination from Canada Soars to 28 Countries: But Canadian farmers still have no answers.
- September 10, 2009. Illegal GM Flax Contaminates Canadian Exports: Contamination of European food threatens Canadian export markets “SmartStax” corn.
- October 16, 2009. Canadians Join Global Day of Action Against Monsanto: Challenge approval of new eight-trait GM “SmartStax” corn.
- July 29, 2009. No Safety Assessment of GE Corn by Health Canada: Canada Ignores International Food Safety Guidelines.
- July 24, 2009. CFIA’s Irresponsible Rubber-Stamping of New Genetically Engineered Corn: No environmental risk assessment, and reduced environmental stewardship requirements for new Monsanto/Dow “SmartStax”.
- June 20, 2009. Genetically Modified Food: Canada capitulates and abandons fight with Europe at the WTO
- July 2, 2009. U.S. Court Defeats Monsanto’s Genetically Modified Alfalfa, For Now: Monsanto’s Plans in Canada Likely Delayed.
- June 1, 2009 (Ottawa, Montréal, Washington, Canberra). Genetically Engineered Wheat Rejected Globally: Groups Remind Monsanto Tri-national Statement Responds to Industry Pledge to Commercialize GE Wheat.
- May 5, 2009. Canada Must Support UN Negotiations on Labeling of Genetically Modified Foods: Codex meeting in Calgary could suspend work on GM food labeling.
- April 28, 2009. Widespread Call Issued to Stop GM Alfalfa in Canada: 80 groups to fight the commercialization of genetically modified alfalfa.
- April 15, 2009. Canadian Sugar Company Chooses Genetically Modified Sugar Beet: Lantic Inc. accepts Monsanto’s GM sugar despite consumer concerns
- April 1, 2009. Chocolate Bunnies Under Threat of GM Sugar! Genetically modified (GM) sugar beet could be planted in two weeks.
- January 23, 2009. International Critic of Genetically Modified Sugar Beet to speak at Guelph Organic Conference.

**Percy Schmeiser on Genetically Engineered Food and Farming**  
 Recipient of the 2007 Right Livelihood Award “for his courage in defending biodiversity and farmers’ rights”

**The Classic David vs. Goliath Struggle**  
 Percy Schmeiser, an internationally renowned farmer and farmers’ rights advocate from Bruno, Saskatchewan, discusses his 10-year battle with agribusiness giant Monsanto after his fields were contaminated with genetically engineered (GE) canola in 1998.

**Learn How Genetically Engineered Foods Have Entered into the Canadian Food Supply**  
 and learn of the efforts to establish an Okanagan that remains free of genetically engineered plants and trees.

**Kootenay Tour**  
**Creston**  
 Tuesday, September 15, 2009  
 Prince Charles Auditorium  
 223 18th Avenue S. Creston B.C.  
 7:00pm... Doors open 6:30, Admission by Donation (Suggested \$10)      Contact: Phone: (250) 365-7678  
 Web Site: www.gefreebc.org

**Grand Forks**  
 Wednesday, September 16, 2009  
 Grand Forks B.C. Community Centre  
 6410 Community Centre Road  
 7:00pm... Doors open 6:30, Admission by Donation (Suggested \$10)

**Okanagan Tour**  
**Salmon Arm**  
 Friday, September 18, 2009  
 Solmar Classic Theatre  
 3610 Alexander Street NE, Salmon Arm, B.C.  
 7:00pm

**Kelowna**  
 Sunday, September 20, 2009  
 4th Annual Organic Okanagan Festival,  
 Summerhill Pyramid Winery,  
 4870 Crestle Lake Road, Kelowna, B.C.  
 1:00pm

**Vernon**  
 Saturday, September 19, 2009  
 Okanagan College – Lecture Theatre,  
 7000 College Way, Vernon, B.C.  
 7:00pm

**Okaganan Events \$5 Admission**

Event Sponsors: Society for a U.S. Free B.C., Okanagan Green Society, Okanagan College, HOKO, Sheshep Seed Savers, Canadian Beekeeping Action Network, Global Bioinfectious Diseases, Grand Forks and Boundary Regional Agriculture Society, Creston Food Action Coalition

Logos for various organizations including the Society for a U.S. Free B.C., Okanagan Green Society, Okanagan College, HOKO, Sheshep Seed Savers, Canadian Beekeeping Action Network, Global Bioinfectious Diseases, Grand Forks and Boundary Regional Agriculture Society, Creston Food Action Coalition, and CBAN (SHUSNAP BEED SAVERS).

**NATIONAL FARMERS UNION YOUTH**

Following our joint *Dig In! Workshop on Food Sovereignty* project with Check Your Head and the NFU Youth, CBAN supported the NFU Youth as they developed and launched their "Campaign for New Farmers."



## IV. Thank You

### Thank you to our funders in 2009

The Big Carrot, Toronto  
 Carrot Cache  
 Inter Pares  
 Ontario Natural Food Co-op  
 Ontario Trillium Foundation, an agency of the Government of Ontario  
 Patagonia Inc.  
 Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation

### Thank you to individuals for your important donations!

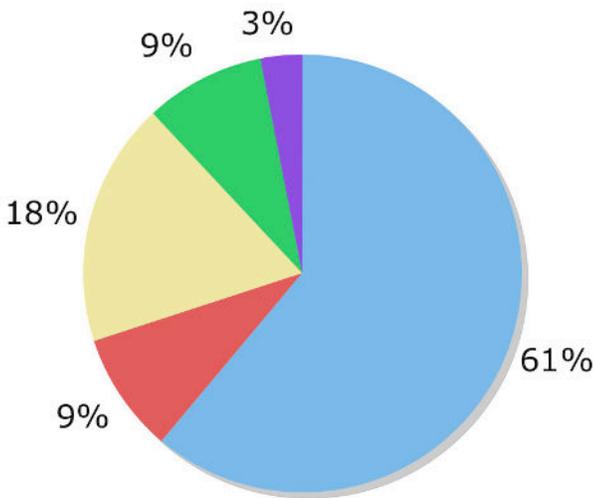
### Thank you to our Supporters

ETC Group

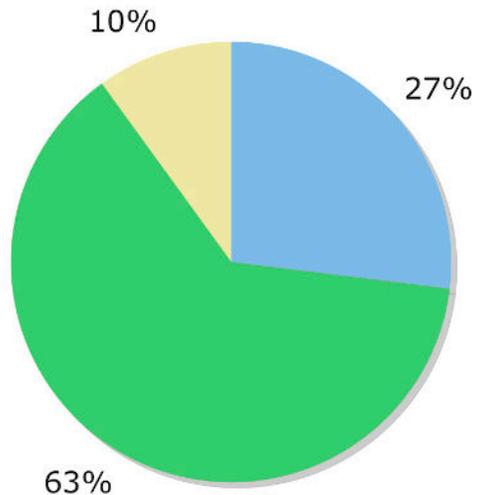
## V. Finances

2009 CBAN Incoming \$69,434

2009 CBAN Expenses \$66,145



- Foundation Grants
- Member Fees
- Member Donations
- Individuals
- Other



- Project and Campaign Costs
- Staffing
- Administration