



CBAN assembled teams to meet with Members of Parliament in 2017. Pictured here are some delegates, from left to right: Rachel Parent, Kids Right to Know; Aube Giroux, "Modified" Filmmaker; Thibault Rehn, Vigilance OGM; Lucy Sharratt and Taarini Chopra of CBAN.

# CBAN ANNUAL REPORT | 2017



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## GM Salmon

On August 4, 2017 the GM fish company AquaBounty revealed that it had made its first sale of genetically modified salmon. The company sold about 4.5 tonnes of GM salmon in Canada sometime between April and July. This was the world's first genetically modified food animal, and was sold exclusively into the Canadian market, without labels indicating that it was genetically engineered.

CBAN shared this information widely through the media and via social media and other means, and started investigating to find more.

### Our investigations

Working with our member groups Vigilance OGM (Quebec) and the Ecology Action Centre (Nova Scotia) we broke the story that the GM fish was sold in Quebec in June. Vigilance OGM then further tracked down the specific dates of the shipments through Access to Information and found out that most of the fish went to foodservice, not retail.

### Our action results

For years, CBAN and our member group Vigilance OGM have communicated with grocery stores about GM foods and in 2017 we secured statements from all the major grocery chains that have “no plans” to sell the GM salmon.

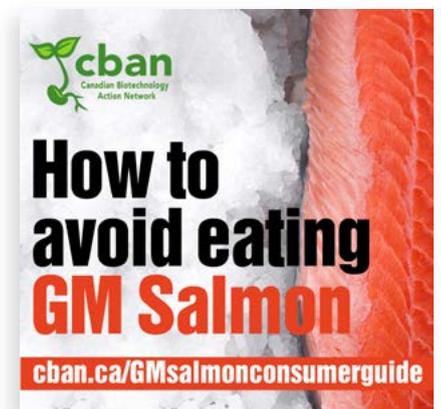
### Our public education

We published the guide “How to Avoid Eating GM Salmon” to respond to questions from the public about where the GM salmon could be.

### Our media coverage

CBAN was quoted in over 40 national and international news stories on the GM salmon.

From August-October, CBAN produced two press releases, a media background, and an “International Bulletin” on the construction of a GM fish factory in Canada.





- » We were quoted in national news on CBC TV, CBC Radio & Global TV.
- » CBAN's Coordinator was interviewed on CBC Radio's *The Current*.
- » We were quoted in the UK Telegraph and two stories in The Guardian UK.
- » We also triggered new media coverage in October in La Presse, The Globe and Mail, and the National Post.
- » CBAN continues to provide extensive background information to journalists including for feature stories in magazines, and for investigative journalists and documentary crews.

## GM VEGETABLES AND FRUIT

We confirmed that the new GM non-browning apple and potato were not planted in Canada in 2017, and were not on the Canadian market. A limited amount is grown and sold in the US.

We published the *Market Status Update for Growers: GM Apples and GM Apple Trees in Canada*.



CBAN held a national strategizing meeting. From left to right - top row: Martin Boettcher, National Farmers Union; Jeremy Colbeck, Union Paysanne. Middle row: Lucy Sharratt, CBAN; Mary Lou McDonald, No More GMOs Toronto; Tom Rudge, Growers of Organic Food Yukon; Leo Broderick, GMO Free PEI; Faris Ahmed, USC; Peter Eggers National Farmers Union. Bottom row: Taarini Chopra, CBAN; Karen Rothschild, Union Paysanne; Marie-Eve Voghel, Vigilance OGM; Maureen Kirkpatrick, CBAN Special Advisor; Eric Chaurrette, Inter Pares; Arzeena Hamir, GE Free BC; Cathy Holtslander, Organic Agriculture Protection Fund of SaskOrganics, Thibault Rehn, Vigilance OGM; Av Singh, Canadian Organic Growers; Amandine Francois, Vigilance OGM. Behind the camera: Genevieve Grossenbacher, USC Canada.



CBAN teams met with 19 Members of Parliament from every party. Pictured here: Kate McMurray from The Big Carrot in Toronto with "Modified" Filmmaker Aube Giroux; Kate McMurray with Pierre-Luc Dusseault, Member of Parliament for Sherbrooke, Quebec.

## Labelling

Twenty years of polling shows that, consistently, 80% of Canadians want mandatory labeling of GM foods.

In 2017, CBAN shared information about the need for mandatory labeling, and Private Members Bill C-291.

We assembled teams to meet with Members of Parliament, in collaboration with other groups including Kids Right to Know. In total we met with 19 MPs from all parties.

CBAN also hosted an online Action Kit for grassroots action including a hardcopy petition, posters, flyers, and background information. 4,994 people sent action letters to their MPs from CBAN's website.

Canada's Parliament voted against Bill C-291 for mandatory labeling on May 17.



## Challenging Corporate Propaganda in Schools

In 2017, CBAN shed light on corporate GMO marketing in our schools.

The program “Ag in the Classroom” presented a high-school webinar called “Trashing Food Waste with Technology” that focused on the GM non-browning apple, with the only presenter being a marketing and communications employee from GM apple company Okanagan Specialty Fruits. The pre-webinar lesson plan asked students to spend time on the company’s website and gave students the incorrect impression that the GM apple was on the market in Canada.

Our story was covered by the CBC and spurred debate in multiple farm newspapers. It also sparked conversations with provincial education departments.

## ONGOING ACTIVITIES

**C**BAN continues to research, monitor and share information with the public:

- » Sharing information on GM alfalfa with farmer organizations
- » Monitoring the market status of GM products
- » Writing articles
- » Providing information flyers for the March against Monsanto

CBAN’s effectiveness in monitoring, providing research, and encouraging debate spurred the biotech industry to coordinate a national PR response to gain public trust. They call this the “social licence” campaign.

**CBAN BULLETIN**

**BIOTECH COMPANIES ARE PROMOTING THE GM APPLE TO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**

**MARCH 2017**

**CBAN.CA/APPLE**

**GMOs in Your Food**

Genetic modification (GM) is also called genetic engineering.

It is used to introduce new traits to an organism by changing its genetic makeup, through intervention at the molecular level.

Unlike traditional breeding, genetic engineering can directly transfer genes between organisms in unrelated species, delete genes, or move genes around in the same species.

GM Foods	
Canada	Canada
Corn	Cotton
Canola	Squash
Soy	Papaya
Alfalfa	Salmon
Sugar beet	Potato
	Apple

[cban.ca/gmfoods](http://cban.ca/gmfoods)

## Events

CBAN presented five events on new genetic engineering technologies in 2017.

We started the year by organizing a public event called “The Future of Genetic Engineering”, to open the Guelph Organic Conference in Ontario. CBAN’s Coordinator presented along with US-based scientist Jonathan Latham and University of Guelph professor Rene Van Acker. This started a year of events to share information about the new gene editing technologies such as CRISPR.

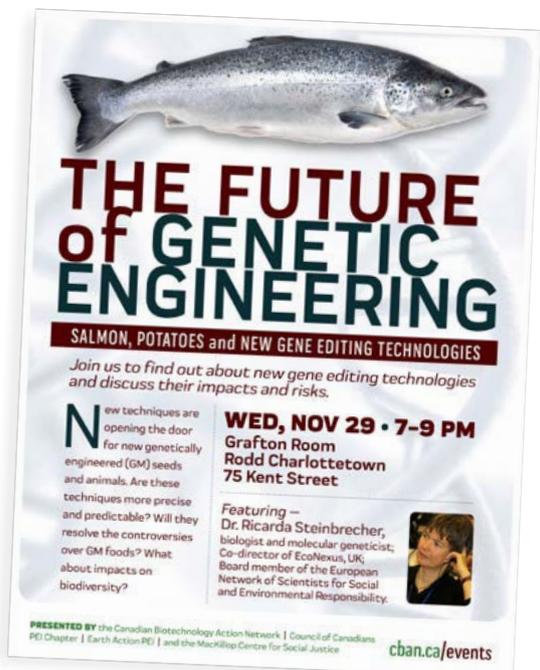
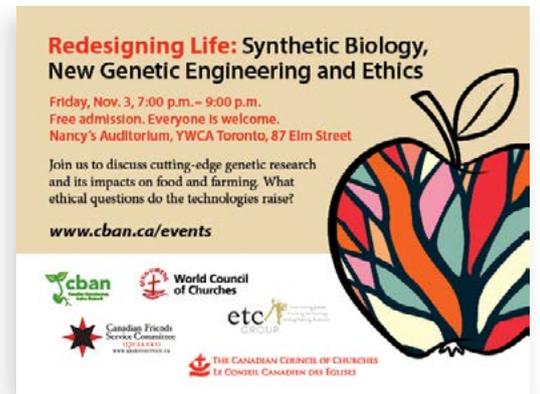
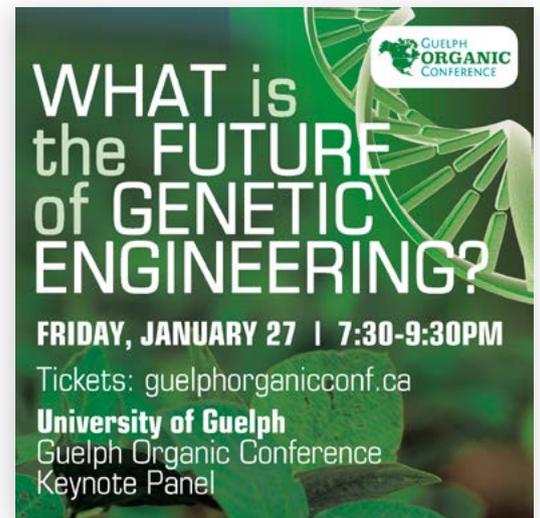
CBAN also joined an international collaboration with The Canadian Council of Churches, The World Council of Churches, Canadian Friends Service Committee (Quakers), and ETC Group to present “Redesigning Life: Synthetic Biology, New Genetic Engineering and Ethics” in Toronto. Following a joint presentation from pioneering bioengineer Drew Endy and ETC Group’s tech critic Jim Thomas, CBAN’s Coordinator spoke on a panel with Canadian farm activist Nettie Wiebe and Nigerian human rights and environmental activist Nnimmo Bassey of Mother Earth Foundation.

We also organized three events featuring UK biologist and molecular geneticist Dr Ricarda Steinbrecher of EcoNexus: a presentation at the annual convention of Atlantic Canadian Organic Farmers Network (ACORN) and a public event in Halifax, NS and one in Charlottetown, PEI.



At the Toronto event "Redesigning Life" with, from left to right: Rachel Parent, Kids Right to Know; Nnimmo Bassey, Mother Earth Foundation Nigeria; Lucy Sharratt, CBAN Coordinator.

**‘Gene Editing’** describes a range of new genetic engineering techniques. Most gene-editing techniques use enzymes to cut parts of the genome which then “repairs” itself. The result is an insertion, replacement or removal of bits of DNA.



Thank you to everyone  
who donated in 2017!

Thank you to  
our funders!

The Big Carrot Natural Market, Toronto

Booch Organic Kombucha

Canadian Health Food Association

Carrot Cache

The Bernard and Edith Ennis Foundation

Inter Pares

Julie Daniluk R.H.N., Daniluk Consulting

LUSH Handmade Cosmetics

Mumm's Sprouting Seeds, Saskatchewan

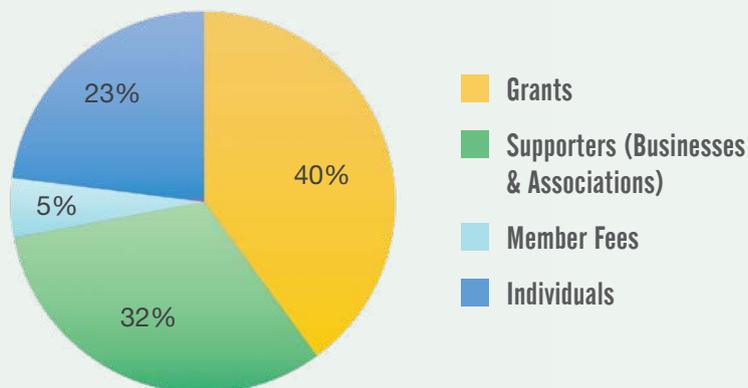
Nature's Path Foods

New Roots Herbal

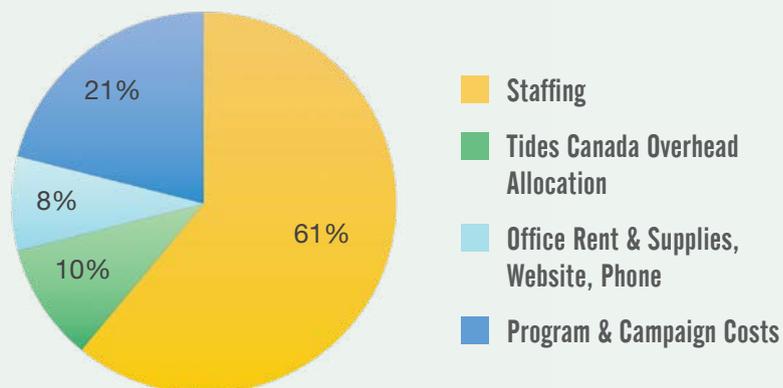
Patagonia

## FINANCES

2017 CBAN Revenue \$160,485



2017 CBAN Expenses \$163,585



**CBAN is a project on Tides Canada's shared platform**, which provides governance, human resources, financial, and grant management. 10% of revenue received is allocated to overhead to support these costs. Tides Canada has full fiduciary and governance responsibility for CBAN.

**The Canadian Biotechnology Action Network (CBAN)** brings together 16 organizations to research, monitor and raise awareness about issues relating to genetic engineering in food and farming. CBAN members include farmer associations, environmental and social justice organizations, and regional coalitions of grassroots groups

### CBAN members:

Canadian Organic Growers, Check Your Head, Council of Canadians, Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario, Ecology Action Centre, Growers of Organic Food Yukon, No More GMOs Toronto, Greenpeace Canada, Inter Pares, National Farmers Union, GMO Free PEI, Organic Agriculture Protection Fund of SaskOrganics, GE Free BC, Union Paysanne, USC Canada, Vigilance OGM.

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