

# GM-free Ireland

# PETITION



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**TO: BRIAN COWEN, TAOISEACH (PRIME MINISTER)**  
**BRENDAN SMITH, MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD**  
**JOHN GORMLEY, MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT, HERITAGE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

Please use all legal and political means necessary to prevent the World Trade organisation and the European Commission from forcing Ireland and other EU member states to accept the environmental release of genetically modified living organisms (GMLOs) — and the placing on the market of related GM animal feed and food products — against the wishes of the vast majority of citizens. GMOs now include viruses, bacteria, algae, fungi, seeds, crops, trees, insects, crustaceans, fish, poultry and livestock — patented by Monsanto, BASF, Syngenta, Pioneer and other transnational agri-biotech corporations intent on privatisation and appropriation of the world's genetic resources, agricultural seeds and food commodities. Despite repeated condemnation by the EU Parliament and the Council of Ministers, the European Food Safety Authority continues to deny the scientific evidence of the health and environmental dangers of GM food and farming, and keeps recommending approval of new GM products based on secret data submitted by the applicant companies without independent scientific peer review. The European Commission's refusal to accept the right of member states to ban GM crops if they so choose is undemocratic, unconstitutional and unacceptable. Contamination incidents around the world prove that most GM crops can not "co-exist" with conventional and organic crops, and can never be recalled after their release. Contaminated farmers are liable for patent infringement and contamination lawsuits, and may lose legal ownership of their seeds and crops *in perpetuity*. This threat to our health, environment, food security and food sovereignty would be the biggest rip-off in the history of the Irish state. As one of three hundred million EU citizens who oppose GM food and farming, I request you to take these seven steps:

1. Introduce emergency legislation, rigorous testing and severe fines to stop the importation of live GM seeds such as oilseed rape which —although not approved for EU cultivation— can be imported for food, feed, and processing into cooking oil or agrofuel, to prevent their subsequent spillage and irreversible contamination of related wild species and food crops.
2. Get proactive: Join with other EU member states to reject the legally-flawed EC Recommendation to "ensure the co-existence" of GM crops with conventional and organic farming. Demand a new Directive that recognises the democratic right of Member States, Regions, and Local Authorities to set up local GMO-free zones. Require the Irish and European Food Safety Authorities to stop recommending the approval of GM animal feed, food, crops and animals without long-term health and environmental risk assessments, transparency, independent peer review and consideration of economic and social impacts. Secure mandatory EU labelling for meat, poultry and dairy produce from livestock fed on GM feed. Reject EC approvals of GM products without Qualified Majority Votes by member states. Refuse to weaken the EU "zero tolerance" policy for unapproved GM products. Follow the lead of member states which have already banned specific GM crops approved for cultivation by the EC. And vote "NO" on all EC requests to approve or re-approve GM feed, food and crops.
3. Declare a 5-year moratorium on the environmental release of GMOs in the Republic until your Government has (a) implemented its 2007 Agreed Programme with legislation to prohibit the release of GM crops and animals, and (b) secured similar legislation by the Northern Ireland Assembly so as extend this ban to the whole island of Ireland.
4. Enforce mandatory labelling of food containing or derived from GM ingredients sold by restaurants and other food outlets.
5. Protect *Ireland — the food island*: encourage farmers to use GM-free animal feed, and set up a national Quality Agriculture GM-free Certification and Labelling Scheme for meat, fish, poultry and dairy produce from animals fed a Non-GM diet.
6. Refuse to grant or renew patents on higher living organisms including GM and conventional plants and animals. And stop wasting millions of Euro of taxpayer funds for research, development and promotion of GM food and farming.
7. Lobby the EC, EU Parliament and EU Member States to recognise the island of Ireland as a GMO-free biosafety reserve for the European Union because we (i) are geographically isolated, (ii) most upwind from potential contamination by wind-borne GM pollen from other countries, (iii) have the lowest level of previous GM exposure in the EU, and (iv) can therefore have the safest and most credible GM-free zone and GM-free food in Europe. This would provide our food, farming and tourist sectors with a unique selling point — a priceless sustainable competitive advantage for future generations.

I hold you accountable to your constitutional duty to protect the health and security of Irish citizens. Stop the GMO invasion!

| NAME | EMAIL | SIGNATURE |
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THIS PETITION IS ORGANISED BY THE GM-FREE IRELAND NETWORK • [WWW.GMFREEIRELAND.ORG](http://WWW.GMFREEIRELAND.ORG)

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