



The Trans-Pacific Partnership means GMOs in your food.

Your ability to control what you eat, or even know what is in the food you eat, will be gone if the secret Trans-Pacific Partnership currently being negotiated in secret sessions among the United States and 11 other Pacific Rim countries is passed. The Obama administration, guided by Monsanto and other agribusiness and pharmaceutical companies, is pushing for rules that put corporate greed ahead of food safety and consumers' right to know what we're eating.

The text of the TPP is secret — not even members of Congress are allowed to see it — but hundreds of corporate representatives are helping to write the text. Part of this plan involves companies like Monsanto inducing the U.S. to put their preferred intellectual property, environmental, food safety and capital-markets laws into force. This will benefit only Big Ag and Big Pharma by allowing the cultivation of genetically modified organisms in all TPP countries and will also act to prevent mandatory GMO labeling in order to integrate GMOs into the food supply while removing traceability and accountability. As a result, “inconvenient” U.S. environmental, food safety and labeling laws and rules will be overruled by Monsanto under the TPP without a direct democratic vote on any issue.

The TPP, if approved by Congress, will supersede and subvert U.S. federal and state laws, including FDA and Department of Agriculture rules and regulations, and force globalized commodified food of uncertain and unsafe origin, dangerous pesticides and untested genetic and molecular content on consumers. Choice will be gone, and even a meaningful glance at a label will be either pointless or will deliberately misinform consumers. There will be no alternative to your lack of choice under TPP.

Many GMOs exist to Sell Monsanto Pesticides. A primary purpose of GMOs, which have lower yields per hectare than traditional methods of agriculture, is to force farmers to buy more Roundup, a pesticide made by Monsanto. Increased use of Roundup has pollutes streams, aquifers, drinking water, encouraged “super weeds” to develop genetic resistance to glyphosate, and posed uncertain health risks to humans and others. Genetically engineered foods have not been adequately tested, nor have the Monsanto pesticides that are sold along with GMO seeds. The TPP will result in increased pesticide use, environmental and food contamination.

No Regulation. The FDA does not require safety assessments of GMO foods and does not review all GMO products hitting the market. FDA guidelines are entirely voluntary and the patent holders themselves determine whether their products “warrant analytical or toxicological tests.”

Corporations will Control Biotechnology Law and Standards. Under the TPP, a world market concentrated in the hands of a few multinational corporations will supplant the democratic process. Pressure from U.S. corporations in previous bilateral trade negotiations has already caused India, China, Vietnam and Bangladesh to back down or remove GMO import restrictions. Big Ag has also demanded the U.S. government use the proposed TPP to force other countries such as New Zealand, Australia, Japan, Peru, Chile, Malaysia and the Philippines to allow field testing of GMOs and removing labeling restrictions that disclose GMO content.

The TPP promotes Monopoly Power. The U.S. biotechnology lobby led by Monsanto is pushing for no GMO labeling. “It is well known,” a diplomatic cable released by WikiLeaks reports, “that Monsanto does not like New Zealand’s genetically modified organism regulations,” which the U.S. government has actively lobbied against on Monsanto’s behalf.

Standardization. All TPP members will be required to standardize sanitary measures. This does not mean the best or safest standard, but the one that will commodify food the most to remove production and labeling standards disclosing GMOs, country of origin, and compliance with environmental, safety and minimum-wage laws. The race to the bottom will mean that the lowest food safety and environmental standards will be the standards adopted — anything stricter would be eliminated as “barrier” to “free trade” and would constitute an illegal “confiscation” of corporate profits.

Investor-State Provisions. Although a handful of multinational corporations are already attempting control the world’s food supply, the TPP would accelerate this process. The “investor-state provision” contained in TPP — requirements that corporate profits be given the highest priority in any dispute with a rule, law or regulation — would enable multinational corporations to challenge the laws and rules of signatory governments directly. Any regulation that a multinational corporation claims will reduce the profits it expects from an “investment” will be challenged in secret arbitration tribunal controlled by corporate elites and in which lawyers who represent corporations in investor-state disputes sit in judgment!

An example under NAFTA is pharmaceutical corporation Eli Lilly’s suit against the Canadian government to invalidate Canada’s standards for granting drug patents. Eli Lilly claims the denial of a patent is an illegal “expropriation of its property rights” under NAFTA. The proposed rules of TPP are even more tilted in favor of multinational corporations than are the rules of NAFTA. The TPP will allow more of these lawsuits that can invalidate federal and state regulations, with no restrictions on what constitutes an “investment.”

Increased Environmental Pollution is a Consequence of the TPP. Already weak U.S. environmental and consumer-safety laws would be further weakened. Some GMO foods are already allowed in some TPP countries but not yet allowed in the U.S. because federal regulators have not determined that these GMO foods are “safe” for human consumption. Once the U.S. signs the TPP, the authority to regulate or prohibit GMO foods not demonstrated as safe will be undermined by the ability of multinational corporations to invalidate host country’s environmental- and consumer-safety laws and regulations.

The TPP means unknown Environmental Cross-Contamination. One of the 12 countries in TPP negotiations, Vietnam, has some of the last untouched rainforest on earth. Allowing GMO crops will result in clear-cutting much of that forest to grow GMO crops upon principles of economies of scale. The risk of cross-pollination of GMO pollen with wild flora will occur and have unknown consequences on the plants and animals that eat them in fragile ecosystems. Already, in the U.S. and Canada, farmers report contamination of their crops from GMO strains being used on neighboring lands. Incredibly, Monsanto then sues these farmers for illegal use of their patents!

Food Security Decreases under the TPP. Monsanto already controls about 90 percent of the global GMO seed market — giving it a tremendous monopoly power to control supply and set prices. The monoculture caused by the standardization of crops from GMO seeds will devastate rural communities, biodiversity and the environment, and leave GMO crops immunologically exposed to crop viruses. Under the TPP, Monsanto would be allowed to add other crops such as alfalfa to the line of its “Roundup Ready” products — these are crops that are genetically engineered to be able to withstand heavy application of Monsanto’s Roundup pesticides. As insects become increasingly immune to Roundup, farmers drastically increase the amount of Roundup pesticides they apply to their lands. This not only degrades the soil, it send more pesticide runoff into groundwater and downstream rivers, creating environmental devastation.

TPP will Replace Family Farms with Corporate Agribusiness. The elimination of protective tariffs will drive small farmers and peasants off their land because they will not be able to pay the finance costs of GMO seeds or sell non-“standardized” crops and this will destroy heirloom brands and biodiversity. Access to “local grown” food will end. Big Ag has already started a “land grab” to consolidate its control over both production and distribution.

“Free-trade” agreements such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and the Transatlantic Free Trade Agreement (TAFTA) being negotiated between the U.S. and the European Union, will ensure that a handful of corporations, led by Monsanto, will obtain their goal of controlling the world’s food.

President Obama: Shilling for Monsanto. You've probably heard that President Obama appointed Monsanto's former vice-president for public policy as deputy commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration and that he signed the Monsanto Protection Act. But did you know that he appointed a lobbyist for CropLife, an industry group representing Monsanto, as his chief agriculture negotiator in the Office of the US Trade Representative, the branch of government negotiating TPP and TAFTA, a TPP-style agreement with the European Union? The Obama administration is not only driving TPP and TAFTA, but is calling on Congress to vote to grant the President Fast Track Trade Promotion Authority. According to Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch, “‘Fast Track’ is the process that gives the executive branch the authority to negotiate and write trade agreements and delegates away Congress’ constitutional power to set the terms of U.S. trade policy. Fast Track creates special rules for considering trade agreements by allowing the executive branch to sign an agreement before Congress votes on it and only gives Congress 90 days to vote on the trade deal. Under Fast Track, the president is authorized to negotiate trade agreements with foreign countries without consulting Congress or state legislators. After the executive branch locks down the terms of the deal and writes the implementing legislation, Congress is only permitted a yes or no vote, while states are virtually left out of the process. Thus, state and congressional officials elected to represent the public interest have no role in the process but to approve or disapprove the whole package.” Thus, Congress will be stripped of the power to amend TPP to remove it's most egregious pro-Monsanto, anti-consumer provisions.



WHAT YOU CAN DO

Call and email your Congressional Representative and demand that he or she publicly commit to vote against Fast Track Trade Promotion Authority. Let your Rep know that you want Congress to maintain its power to amend trade agreements in order to remove or modify provisions that weaken food safety standards. Let them know that safe food is more important than Monsanto's greed! You can find out who represents you in Congress and find their contact information at <http://gjae.org/leg>. When you call, ask to speak to your Representative's legislative assistant on trade.

To learn more about TPP, TAFTA, and Fast Track and find out about additional actions you can take to stop them, contact Global Justice for Animals and the Environment, 219 Carlton Terrace, Teaneck, NJ 07666. Phone: (718) 218-4523 Email: info@gjae.org Web: <http://gjae.org>

LOCAL CONTACT