



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Canadian Policy to Manage GMOs has to be reconsidered to Prevent Contamination of Organic Agriculture and Reassure Consumers

Guelph, Ontario – December 19, 2011 - Genetically modified organisms are multiplying; the list of GMOs waiting for approval and commercialization is getting longer and AAFC is now consulting the agricultural sector to convince Canadians that it would facilitate trade to accept low level presence (LLP) of non authorized GMOs in imported shipments. GMOs are not approved simultaneously in the leading GMO producing countries; to accept LLP of non authorized GMOs would prevent exporters and importers from shipping back low-level contaminated shipments.

Canadian organic growers know well the contamination risks associated with GMOs cultivation and trade. The organic canola production has now become impossible in Canada because of the high level of contamination from GE canola. The organic sector is now facing the threat of the commercialization of GE alfalfa, a crop that spreads very rapidly and would contaminate organic feed of Canadian livestock.

To stop the proliferation of GMOs and protect non GMO crops, the Organic Federation of Canada is opposed to the proposed LLP legislation, and argues instead that the government should engage with stakeholders, including consumers, in a long overdue dialogue on how to manage the growing problem of GMO's in the food supply.

“There is a global movement to move toward 1% (low level of non authorized GMOs in imported products), which of course will not hurt organics” said Minister Gerry Ritz at the House of Commons debates last December 5th. The OFC fully disagrees. The Organic

Sector has repeatedly told the government that freedom from contamination by GMO's is a central piece of the promise of organic food. That further steps be taken to allow even greater contamination of the landscape without full discussion of the issues is unconscionable. The OFC urges the Canadian government to consult the whole population, not only the biotechnology lobby, to establish practices that will assure that organic agriculture and organic foods are not affected by any level of GMOs.

- 30 -

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