

advertisement in the *EW* a few weeks back for TOBACCO? Did the *EW* advertising staff know that tobacco is a product which, when used as intended, kills the user and those in close proximity? Is *EW* that hard up for advertising dollars? It seemed so ... I don't know, un-*EW*-like to see a full page color ad for something that kills. Was the "natural" label on the tobacco supposed to make it more acceptable? Come on, folks. Get it together.

*Christy Sherman
Eugene*

GM DANGERS

In response to Camilla Mortensen's Feb. 21 article "Ready for Roundup Ready Sugar?," please watch Debora Koons Garcia's excellent documentary *The Future of Food* as soon as you can. The film provides stunning information about unlabeled, genetically modified crops making their way into our bodies and our environment with little or no testing.

Even more, after farmers' fields in Canada were allegedly accidentally cross-pollinated with Monsanto's Roundup Ready varieties, Monsanto demanded patent usage fees from the farmers because the patent follows the GM gene. That's right. If the gene is in the plant, the company who owns the gene can demand payment for its usage. It doesn't matter how it got there.

Since most of the farmers did not have the financial means to fight, they settled out of court and are forbidden to discuss their

settlements. One farmer fought — and lost. Canadian judges supported Monsanto's patent usage claims, and the farmer was forced to pay up. What a precedent!

The implications for Oregon's sugar beet farmers? If cross-pollination occurs, they not only can lose their naturally developed seeds, but they can also be asked to pay patent usage fees on the GM variety that invaded their fields. Shouldn't the farmers be suing the GM crop-producing companies for the destruction of their naturally developed seed?

Labeling of GM foods is law in European Union (EU) member countries. Why is the U.S. dragging its feet on this issue? Without proper labeling of GM foods, health effects cannot be monitored and health effect databases cannot be compiled. Without this basic information, it's much more difficult for people to avoid GM foods on physical, mental, spiritual or moral grounds. And there is no accountability for companies if adverse health effects are linked to their GM products.

According to the film, Monsanto has patented over 11,000 seeds, many of them not even genetically modified. Visit thefutureoffood.com for more information. And thank you, Camilla, for your informative article.

*David Moody
Eugene*

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