

We are writing in support of the Scottish Government’s decision to ban the growing of GM crops in Scotland, reinforcing its long-standing moratorium.

We believe that this policy reflects a broad consensus across civil society in Scotland.

As consumers in Scotland we have repeatedly shown that we want to avoid GM in our food – not because we are against science but because with good reason we do not trust the claims made by corporations with a vested interest in controlling our food system.

As citizens in Scotland, and organisations of citizens, we believe that GM technology and the way that it has been used in the last twenty years:

* concentrates power and control in the global food system, with a handful of companies dominating the market for seeds and pesticides
* makes small farmers run faster to stand still, increasing input costs for seed and herbicides while global commodity prices are falling
* reduces diversity of food, seeds and plants and the resilience of local food economies
* has stolen the limelight from other more viable, less risky scientific solutions

for more sustainable modes of production and distribution of food

We underline the precautionary principle that the Scottish Government upholds – that the potential risks from GMOs to public health and our environment outweigh any potential benefits of the technology.

As stakeholders in Scotland’s food system, we recognise the importance of protecting and enhancing Scotland’s reputation for good, clean food.

We are aware that many of our major export customers have concerns about GM, while many EU member states including Germany and France are likely to join Scotland in opting out of GM food growing.

We note that Scotland’s world-class seed potato industry cannot afford any risk to its reputation for high quality seed – which includes many blight resistant varieties developed through conventional breeding techniques.

We encourage the Scottish Government to build on this decision by supporting closer co-operation between Scotland’s farmers, growers, fisherfolk, and Scotland’s people to tackle the central challenge of ensuring that everyone can feed themselves and their family well, without degrading the environment.

We want to see food for people - rather than food as a commodity - at the heart of Scotland’s vision for agriculture. Diversity of crops and food, farming with nature, not against nature, and short food chains between producers and citizens are the keys to Scotland becoming a good food nation - and a global contributor to fair and sustainable food for all.

**Signed by:**

Nourish Scotland

Friends of the Earth Scotland

Global Justice Now

Unite

Common Good Food

Scottish Crofting Federation

CommonWeal

Compassion in World Farming

David Atkinson (Former Vice Principal SAC)

Professor Brian Wynne, University of Lancaster

**Notes to editors:**

Scottish government press release, Sunday 9th of August: [http://news.scotland.gov.uk/News/GM-crop-ban-1bd2.aspx](http://news.scotland.gov.uk/News/GM-crop-ban-1bd2.aspx%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)