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BASF out of Europe

Chemical giant ends GMO push in Europe



The World's Number 1 chemical company, German giant BASF, [announced](#) that it is stopping the development of genetically modified crops in the EU and moving its headquarters for Plant Science to the USA.

After battling for more than 12 years to get its GM potato for industrial uses authorised in 2012 and seeing the outcry it generated in the public, the company seems to have finally realised that EU public opinion is still strongly opposed to GM crops despite the industry's best lobbying efforts.

BASF is now stopping work on GM crops targeted at the European market, ie 4 varieties of potatoes and one of wheat.

For the Greens, it is very good news, that a major actor in trying to impose GM crops has decided that it needs to respect public opinion. It shows that the resistance to GMOs by EU citizens for the last 15 years has had some influence. But we have not been duped: BASF has not made the transition to sustainable agriculture and is still selling toxic pesticides. It is still continuing to develop GM varieties in North and South America, and is also trying to avoid "*cumbersome*" (in other words protective) EU legislation on GMOs by developing other kinds of modified plants. It is the champion of mutated crops that withstand herbicides (the equivalent of GM herbicide tolerant (HT) plants) that are at the heart of a package sold by agrochemical and seed multinationals consisting of selling the HT seed and the "*complementary*" herbicide together. These are at the opposite end of the spectrum to a sustainable agriculture that aims at avoiding

the use of chemical herbicides altogether. This is an environmental hazard that will lead to creating HT weeds and push us along a chemical and biotechnological conveyor belt.

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