

## Conference "Genes Are Not For Sale"

This conference which was set up to counteract an international Bio-Tech event in Krakow, drew approx 120 people to Wawel Castle and filled the room to capacity. Dr Arpad Pusztai, Percy Schmeiser and Michel Dupont were the main international speakers, Prof. Magdalena Jaworska, Dr Zbigniew Hałat main Polish ones. They all hammered home the same message: There can be NO coexistence between GMO and traditional and organic crops; cross-contamination is inevitable - whatever the distance.

Percy Schmeiser informed a riveted audience that in the whole of Canada there is NO maize or oilseed rape left which is not contaminated by GMO. So it is impossible to grow conventional or organic maize and oilseed rape in Canada now. What is more, he confirmed that Monsanto is now informing him that he no longer even owns his crops. Presumably because the Monsanto Corporation owns the patent therefore owns the crops once they are contaminated!!

And still some people in Europe are diligently discussing what distance constitutes a 'safety zone' 10 metres? 50 metres? 100 metres?

Dr Pusztai gave a characteristically thorough review of the 'nonscience' which is applied in the creation of genetically modified organisms. He particularly emphasised the fact that it is the very imprecise methods used to insert foreign genes that lies at the heart of the subsequent loss of control of the final organism.

Michel Dupont reminded everyone that when 'the process of democracy' fails to protect our food, environment and health, it is necessary to intervene and take control of our future. The French 'reapers' have done just this and have thereby protected France from widespread GMO contamination over the past decade. They fight on ....Vive La France!

The unexpected participation of the vice chairman of the Ministry of the Environment Andrzej Szweda-Lewandowski led to a lively discussion.

Participants were not impressed by his intervention on behalf of the recently proposed 'GMO Act'. He unconvincingly attempted to portray the government as 'an honest broker'

seeking compromise between European Commission directives calling for enforcement of 'coexistence' measures and the Polish government's wish to remain GMO Free. Vice chairman Andrzej Szweda-Lewandowski was noticeably missing from the main conference proceedings and his message was out of tune with the reality.

Senator Henryk Gorski was presented with an ICPPC petition to the Polish government calling for the proposed new 'GMO Act' not to be ratified. So far there are 1,500 signatures of organisations and individuals supporting this call and more are coming in every day. For signing please see [http://icppc.pl/pl/gmo/open\\_letter.php](http://icppc.pl/pl/gmo/open_letter.php)

Proceedings ended with strong support from participants to fight-on to keep Poland GMO Free and to support ICPPC's call for a European wide Moratorium of all GMO. Widespread determination to resist any watering down of the current national GMO ban was also expressed.

A Brother from Benedictine Abbey Tyniec attended the conference. Brother Jan was to be seen long after the conference's conclusion, seated in front of an old oak table, carefully writing a letter to the Minister of Agriculture, Mr Lepper.

!!!We want to thank Jean-Louis Gueydon of Fondation pour une Terre Humaine for helping to support the mounting of this conference. Also several traditional and organic farmers/processors who, without charge, provided and prepared a superb spread of delicious eco friendly food for everyone's consumption.

**Smacznego!**