

## ACTIONS WITHIN Joint International GMO Opposition Month (JIGMOM) IN RUSSIA

### o **Kostroma**

On **April 1** a street action against GMOs took place in Kostroma (regional capital in Central Russia). Activists of the NGO *For the Sake of Life* urged regional authorities to declare the region a GMO free zone. Ecologists plan to undertake concrete steps to introduce GMO free law in the region.

The NGO will prepare and lobby in regional Duma (Parliament) a legislative initiative: adoption of local Law “On Food Safety” and declaring Kostroma region a GMO free zone. (According to the Statute of Kostroma oblast’ NGOs have a power to initiate legislation.)

“Moreover, - said leader *For the Sake of Life* – We plan to fight for the amendments to the article 10 of Federal Consumer law in order to introduce a ban on using GMOs in babyfood”.



### o **Archangelsk**

In Archangelsk (North-West of Russia) JIGMOM started on **April 1** with the call to local authorities to uncover information on tests of food products on GMOs.

Regional sanitary inspection provided to local NGO Etas a list of products tested negative to GMOs. But GM-positive products are still under secret.

Last year Archangelsk sanitary inspection conducted 228 tests of products on GMOs. 22 of them contained GMOs, but their brands were not revealed. This year they already checked 70, and there is no information available on how many of them were GM.

“The list of GM free food products provided by sanitary inspection Archangelsk activists plan to pass to local shops and retailers will provide it with green labels. This will be a start of GMO free zone initiative in Archangelsk region”, - said Alexey Ovchinnikov from Etas.

- o **Murmansk**

On **April 11** young ecologists of *Kola Peninsula* run a street action for GMO free zone in Murmansk. They went out to central square of the city with a 10 meter poster “GMO Free Zone” and in costumes of corn, carrot, tomato and banana. Two activists dressed in rabbit costumes where holding poster “No experiments”.



- o **Saint-Petersburg**

Students of the *Saint-Petersburg State Agrarian University* collected more than 250 signatures under an Open Letter to the Governor of Saint Petersburg Valentina Matveenko urging her to declare the city a GMO free zone. On **May 2** they passed it to the Governor office.

Different actions and other events also took place in **Bryansk** and **Yekaterinburg** regions.

- o **Kazakhstan**

### **PRESS-CONFERENCE ON GMOs IN NESTLE BABY FOOD**

At the **13<sup>th</sup> of April** the CIS NGOs presented to public the results of independent baby food tests on GMOs at the press-conference in Almaty (Kazakhstan). Event was dedicated to the Joint International Month of Opposition to GMOs (JIGMOM), action against GMOs which takes place all over the world. Press-conference was organized by members of CIS Alliance for Biosafety – local NGO Foundation for Integration of Ecological Culture (FIEC) and Moscow members of the Alliance.



Testing of babyfood was made in accredited laboratory Olympic in Moscow. Among 6 products of different companies GMOs were found only in NAN non-lactose milk substitute (produced by Nestle in Netherlands and sold in Almaty shops).

According to the Kazakhstan Law “On quality and safety of food”, any use of GMOs in babyfood is prohibited since 2004. But no control over GMOs in this country is in place. Standards for testing of food on GMOs still not adopted in Kazakhstan, it means that the results of Kazakh labs cannot be recognized as official ones. That is why members of the Alliance tested babyfood purchased in Kazakhstan in Moscow lab.

According to Eugene Klimov, leader of FIEC, his NGO in cooperation of Consumer League of Kazakhstan is preparing a demand to Nestle company to stop violating Kazakhstan laws. Then NGOs plan to bring a case against the firm.

“This is not a first time when Nestle babyfood products sold in CIS are found to contain GMOs. We support the demands of our Kazakhstan colleagues and urge the company to respect the rights of consumers and quit applying unfair double-standards in our countries”, - said Victoria Kopeykina, secretary of CIS Alliance for Biosafety at the press-conference in Almaty.

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## PHOTOS AGAINST GMOs

Within a Joint International GMO Opposition Month the CIS Alliance for Biosafety initiated the Internet photo-action “For My Place Free of GMOs”.

People from all over CIS were invited to submit photos with posters promoting GMO free idea at local and national level. The idea of the action was to make a picture with GMO free poster and famous or recognizable symbol of the place in the background.

By the end of JIGMOM people from 4 countries: **Moldova** and **Transnistria**, **Kazakhstan**, **Russia** and **Ukraine** took part in the action. Only from Russia organizers got pictures from 8 regions and districts (Bryansk, Kostroma, Moscow, Tomsk, Murmansk – two districts, Saint-Petersburg and Yekaterinburg).

We think that this action will be continued for some more time.