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Nov. 6, 2005

Commissioner Jane Henney
Food & Drug Administration
Docket No. OOP-1211CP1
Dockets Management Branch
5630 Fishers Lane
Room 1061 (HFA-305)
Rockville, MD 20852

Dear Commissioner Henney,

We are extremely concerned about the U.S. government's premature rush to get genetically engineered food onto the market, before a wide range of health and safety concerns are adequately addressed. As professional sociologists, we know that human beings and the safety protection systems we create are notoriously fallible, and cannot be relied upon to protect us and our natural environment from irreparable harm. This point is clearly underscored by our nation's recent experience with Starlink™ corn, and the fallibility of the existing "food protection" system on so many counts.

We are also profoundly disturbed about the way the U.S. government has gone about deregulating the agricultural biotechnology industry since the early 1990s, and are unclear as to why there is such a sense of urgency about improving our crop systems in this particular way, when so many other far more benign and risky alternatives are available (e.g., integrated pest management, traditional breeding, intercropping, organic farming). We beg you to reconsider your agency's regulatory stand on genetically engineered food, and to recognize that we have a global as well as a national responsibility to protect human and non-human nature from this unpredictable and potentially very harmful technology.

We look forward to your reply.

Respectfully yours,

Rachel Schurman

Michael Goldman

OOP-1211

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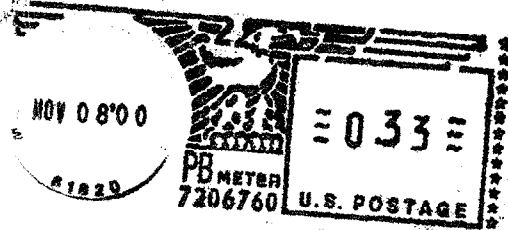
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