



Oct. 29, 2002

Mr. Charles O. Holliday, Jr.
CEO, Dupont Company
33 Hill Rd.
Wilmington, DE 19806

Mr. Rich McConnell, President
Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc.
400 Locust Street
Des Moines, IA 50306-3454

Mr. Michael D. Parker, CEO
The Dow Chemical Company
2030 Dow Center
Midland, MI 48674

Mr. Charles Fischer, CEO
Dow AgroSciences LLC
9330 Zionsville Road
Indianapolis, IN 46268

Dear Sirs:

The Sierra Club is outraged by your decision to deny additional plant research materials to Prof. Allison Snow, who has done outstanding research regarding the ecological effects of genetically engineered crops. We, as the nation's largest grassroots conservation organization, are vitally concerned that good science should be done to outline the real risks of bioengineered crops to the natural environment as well as to human health. Professor Snow has done important basic ecological research along those lines which showed that, contrary to expectations, a variety of bioengineered sunflower was able to spread transgenes to wild sunflower relatives and that those wild relatives had a tendency to proliferate as superweeds. Among Prof. Snow's earlier conclusions were that, "Gene movement from crops to their wild relatives is an ongoing process that can spur rapid evolutionary adaptation in weeds that will ultimately be harmful to crops." Dr. Snow planned followup studies but, as stated in Nature,

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she is now being blocked by your companies. Even though, "together with the US Department of Agriculture, Pioneer and Dow had funded Snow's study. . .the seed firms say that they no longer want to continue the research."


Your companies frequently claim that transgenic crops will be good for the environment and are subject to rigorous scientific testing. Dr. Snow would like to continue her research with purely academic funding in order to answer important questions, but you are denying her access to your patented seed lines and genes and thereby stifling good science. We ask, therefore, that you reconsider -- and reverse -- your opposition.

We are sending copies of this letter to government regulatory agencies which, we hope, will agree with us that independent science should not be muzzled.

We believe that if patent protections are used to stop scientific study, new legislation to restrict such patent rights should be urgently considered.

We look forward to your response, which should be addressed to either of us below.

Sincerely yours,

COPY


Laurel Hopwood, Chair
Sierra Club Genetic Engineering Committee
lhopwood@earthlink.net

Jim Diamond, M.D.
(incoming chair) jim.diamond@sierraclub.org
1533 Edith St.
Berkeley, CA 94703

copies: EPA [e-mail]
Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman
✓ FDA Commissioner Mark B. McClellan
Senator Tom Harkin, Iowa [e-mail]
Senator Mike DeWine, Ohio
Rep. Dennis Kucinich (e-mail, c/o Auke Piersma)