



Two Wisconsin towns without zoning ordinances, Cooks Valley and Howard, passed local ordinances in an attempt to regulate nonmetallic mine operations, but both towns were later sued — Cooks Valley by landowners who wanted to develop land for frac sand mines, and Howard by a sand mining company.

The pro-mining plaintiffs claimed that the towns unlawfully created the ordinances; however, Cooks Valley argued that it was simply trying to protect itself by enacting a licensing ordinance. Cooks Valley appealed a circuit court decision that invalidated its ordinance, but the appellate court suggested that the case go to the Wisconsin Supreme Court to differentiate zoning ordinances from licensing ordinances. On February 8, 2012 the Wisconsin Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Town of Cooks Valley. The Court authorized the town's police power to regulate non-metallic mining, such as frac sand mining, through a regulatory ordinance—which they confirmed is, in fact, different than a zoning ordinance.

Concerns about the threat frac sand mining poses to the environment were justified this spring in Wisconsin, when discolored water leaking into the St. Croix River and nearby wetlands was linked to a 72-acre frac sand mining facility nearby the Minnesota border. While the state was still determining how much sand and sediment made its way into the river and wetlands and what damage this caused, a state environmental official said, "I'm sure there were things living there that are going to have difficulty living there now that they're covered with sand."

The problems caused by frac sand mining in the Midwest represent yet another way that the rapid expansion of hydraulic fracturing is harming communities across the country. To find out how to stop the spread of fracking, go to <http://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/water/fracking/fracking-action-center/>

GMO Alfalfa

OPINION OF THE RELEASE OF GMO ALFALFA
by FFD board member Bernard Bernaud
Organic Inspector for 14 years



As an organic inspector, I cannot begin to describe what a devastation the release of GMO alfalfa is for organic producers. There will be a serious impact on their crop rotations because they rely heavily on legumes, especially alfalfa, to add nitrogen to their ground and to control weeds.

Because pollen from GMO alfalfa will be transported for miles by the wind, insects, and birds, it is going to be very difficult for organic producers to guarantee that their alfalfa has not been contaminated by GMO alfalfa.

We are going to see the same scenario as with canola, corn and soybeans. Many of the organic producers who used to produce organic canola, corn and soybeans stopped producing these crops when the GMO canola, corn and soybeans made their appearance.

Roundup kills the vegetation in waterways, and studies are showing more and more the ill effects upon insects, birds, and other animals.

I cannot believe that the GMO alfalfa is being marketed now without any regard for organic and conventional producers. There are many conventional producers who do not want GMO alfalfa. Thus far, there has been little concern for the neighbor who does not want GMO contamination. Alfalfa has always been a very good guinea pig because it is so susceptible to any kind of herbicides.

GMO alfalfa will undoubtedly contaminate the other alfalfa, organic or conventional. As farmers, myself included, we are powerless to avoid contamination from GMO alfalfa. It will completely disrupt if not ruin our rotation because we rely so much on alfalfa for soil building and feed for our organic livestock.

As far as I am concerned there is no such thing as cohabitation of GMO crops with other crops because GMOs cannot be contained.

How the US Sold Africa to Multinationals

Like Monsanto, Cargill, DupontPepsiCo and Others

By JILL RICHARDSON

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Driving through Ngong Hills, not far from Nairobi, Kenya, the corn on one side of the road is stunted and diseased. The farmer will not harvest a crop this year. On the other side of the road, the farmer gave up growing corn and erected a greenhouse, probably for growing a high-value crop like tomatoes. Though it's an expensive investment, agriculture consultants now recommend them. Just up the road, at a home run by Kenya Children of Hope, an organization that helps rehabilitate street children and reunite them with their families, one finds another failed corn crop and another greenhouse. The director, Charity, is frustrated because the two acres must feed the rescued children and earn money for the organization. After two tomato crops failed in the new greenhouse, her consultant recommended using a banned, toxic pesticide called carbofuran.

Will Obama's New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition help farmers like Charity?

The New Alliance was announced in conjunction with the G8 meeting last Friday. Under the scheme, some 45 corporations, including Monsanto, Syngenta, Yara International, Cargill, DuPont, and PepsiCo, have pledged a total of \$3.5 billion in investment in Africa. The full list of corporations and commitments has just been released, and one of the most notable is Yara International's promise to build a \$2 billion fertilizer plant in Africa. Syngenta pledged to build a \$1 billion business in Africa over the next decade. These promises are not charity; they are business.

This is par for the course for the attempted "second green revolution"



Source: Council on biotechnology www.whybiotech.com

that is currently underway. The Gates Foundation and its Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa are working to build up a network of private seed companies and private agro-dealers across Africa. The goal is to increase average fertilizer use in Africa by more than a factor of six and to decrease the distance each African farmer must travel to reach a shop selling seeds and inputs. Those who support this vision have heaped praise on Obama and the G8's New Alliance. In fact, with both Republican and Democratic support, this is one of the only things both parties agree on.

But what do actual Africans think? Not just the elite, but the peasant farmers? Charity, for her part, is frustrated. Most of Kenya's land is arid or semi-arid, making agriculture difficult if not impossible. But Ngong Hills receive adequate rainfall - or they did anyway. The climate crisis has changed the previously reliable rainfall patterns within Kenya and even a wet area like Ngong Hills is

suffering. The stunted, diseased corn one sees there was planted from the "best" store-bought seed and ample chemical fertilizer was applied. The crop failure was not due to lack of inputs.

In another part of the country, about an hour from Nairobi, Samuel Nderitu points out more failed corn crops. Corn - or maize as Kenyans call it - has been the main staple since Kenya was colonized by the British. But the corn growing on the demonstration farm of Nderitu's NGO, Grow Biointensive Agricultural Center of Kenya (G-BIACK) is healthy and thriving. So are G-BIACK's other vegetable crops and fruit trees. Why will he harvest a successful crop when his next-door neighbor will not?

G-BIACK is an organic farming training center, and the crops there were grown with manure and compost instead of chemical fertilizer. G-BIACK also saves seeds instead of purchasing seeds from the store.

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