

Biggest opponents of labeling GE food? Pesticide corporations.

Oct 17, 2012 by Pesticide Action Network



According to filings released by the California Secretary of State last week, the world's six largest pesticide corporations are now the six largest funders of opposition to [Proposition 37](#).

Collectively the "Big 6" have contributed more than \$20 million to oppose the measure that would label genetically engineered food, including an intensive advertising campaign over the past two weeks.

"Pesticide corporations like Monsanto continue to enjoy unfettered and unlabeled access to the market, while consumers are left largely in the dark," said Marcia Ishii-Eiteman, PhD, senior scientist at PAN. "Despite the best efforts of the Big 6 to confuse and distort the issue, Californians have a right to know what's in their food and how it's grown."

[The Big 6](#) — including Monsanto, BASF, Bayer, Dow, DuPont and Syngenta — dominate the world's seed and pesticide markets and actively oppose the measure. In filings released this week, each of the six corporations made contributions of at least \$2 million, with Monsanto's contribution alone totaling more than \$7 million.

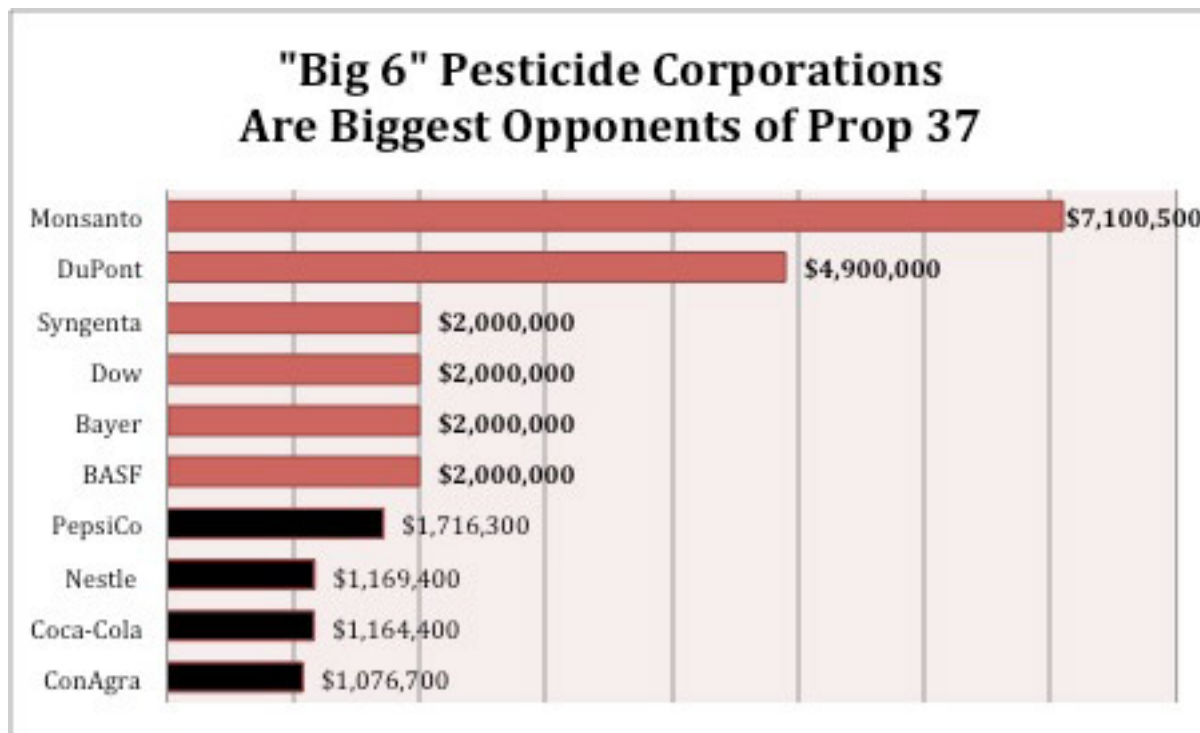
To date, the opposition to Proposition 37 has raised more than \$35 million in total, spending about \$19 million with Sacramento public relations consultants, aggressive television advertising and paid mailings.

400 million more pounds of pesticides

A [comprehensive study](#) released two weeks ago provides insight into the Big 6 interest in defeating Proposition 37, underscoring the fact that genetically engineered crops dramatically drive up the use of pesticides and open markets for these corporations' products.

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Published on Pesticide Action Network (<http://www.panna.org>)



The study, conducted by Dr. Charles Benbrook and based on federal government data, shows that genetically engineered crops have increased pesticide use by over 400 million pounds in the U.S. over the past fifteen years. Increased pesticide use has led to greater weed resistance from "superweeds" which, in turn, has led to increased pesticide applications and reliance on more hazardous pesticides. As the pesticide treadmill goes into high gear, rural communities and farmworkers face the greatest health risk from frontline pesticide exposure.

Control of the GE seed and pesticide markets, and the fact that GE crops drive up pesticide use, has benefited giant corporations at the expense of consumers. "The Big 6 chemical and seed companies are working diligently to monopolize the food system at the expense of consumers, farmers and smaller seed companies," said Philip H. Howard, an associate professor at Michigan State University and an expert on industry consolidation.

Monsanto alone controls 23% of the world's seed market, and Bayer controls 20% of the global pesticide market.

[Take action »](#) This fall, California voters have the opportunity to make history. Support labeling GE food and Proposition 37! If you're in California, pledge to vote [YES on 37](#), write a [letter to the editor](#) of your local paper, or [host a house party](#) to engage your neighbors, friends and families in the conversation.

We have a right to know what's in our food and how it's grown, whether or not pesticide corporations agree.

Source URL: <http://www.panna.org/blog/biggest-opponents-labeling-ge-food-pesticide-corporations>