



## Global Food Justice

### Convening in Hawai'i bolsters peoples' movement against the Big 6

People in Hawai'i are standing up to agricultural biotech giants Monsanto, Syngenta, Dow, DuPont-Pioneer and BASF. These transnational pesticide and seed corporations own more than 1,000 genetically engineered seed test plots across the islands—more than anywhere else in the world. Their pesticide-intensive experiments have had serious consequences, such as repeated pesticide drift onto children and teachers at Waimea Middle School on Kaua'i.

In 2014, with support from PAN North America and leadership from local groups, Kaua'i became the first of four islands to pass legislation demanding public access to information about pesticides and better safety precautions for families that might be exposed to drift from open genetically engineered (GE) seed test fields.

Not surprisingly, the Big Ag corporations have responded with lawsuits to quash this and other efforts to push back against their control of food and farming. But communities in Kaua'i and across the islands are holding strong, building powerful momentum to protect their families, farmland and the food system.

#### January food justice tour

In January, PAN North America joined our partner, Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action, in hosting a series of community events across the Hawaiian islands to connect the dots linking GE crops and pesticide issues with corporate control of our food system along with local and global land and resource struggles.



Photo: Devika Ghai

Professor Noelie Rodriguez addresses local residents and international visitors at the University of Hawai'i, Hilo, during the Food Justice Summit.

A speaking tour brought together four powerful women from four parts of the world to highlight these connections.

- **Mariann Bassey Orovwuje** from Friends of the Earth Nigeria described corporate land grabs and the “engineering of hunger” in Africa, aided and abetted by the Gates Foundation.
- **Sarojeni Rengam** of PAN Asia & the Pacific, based in Malaysia, told of violence against Indigenous people, highlighting the case of the Lumad people of the Philippines and their strategies for resistance.
- **Eva Schürmann** of MultiWatch (based in Switzerland) talked about Syngenta's persistence in marketing highly hazardous pesticides across the Global South and the moral and political responsibility of the Global North.

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Photo: Gary Hoosier

PAN North America staff and PAN International partners walked with activists from Hawai'i as Grand Marshals at the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Day march in Honolulu.



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# What EPA Didn't Know (but should have)

by Linda Wells, PAN's  
Midwest Organizing Director

As 2015 wrapped up, we were celebrating the news that EPA had asked the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals to pull Dow's latest herbicide cocktail from the market. Approved just over a year ago, Enlist Duo is a combination of glyphosate and 2,4-D designed for use with Dow's new line of genetically engineered seeds.



It's not often that the agency takes such bold action to reverse a decision on pesticides. While we suspected this would be a short-term victory, it exemplified some of PAN's longstanding critiques of the current rules governing pesticides and genetically engineered (GE) crops.

As it stands, our regulatory system relies heavily on science conducted by pesticide companies themselves. In this case, Dow was caught contradicting itself when reporting on its science, painting a different picture for each government agency. It took catching Dow in a lie for EPA to take a closer look.

## Evidence that couldn't be ignored

PAN has been one of many, many organizations opposing the approval of Enlist Duo. We joined farmer groups and scientists in pushing EPA and USDA to look at all the potential real-world consequences of both the pesticide combination and the widespread planting of Dow's accompanying herbicide-resistant seeds.

Damage to non-target crops, the emergence of more herbicide-resistant "superweeds," and human health impacts were all either glossed over or ignored by the agencies when approving Dow's Enlist crop system.

After both agencies gave Enlist Duo the green light, PAN joined the Center for Food Safety in a legal petition challenging EPA's faulty process. It was while preparing their defense that the agency discovered the evidence that led EPA to ask the court to revoke approval of Enlist Duo. While Dow had provided no evidence to EPA that the two key ingredients in Enlist Duo, glyphosate and 2,4-D, had synergistic impacts when combined, the chemical company had cited concrete evidence of synergistic impacts when they submitted a patent application.

## EPA has another chance do it right

In the latest twist, on January 26, the 9th Circuit denied EPA's request to revoke its approval of Enlist Duo—handing a victory to Dow. EPA has the power to revoke registration

of Enlist Duo itself, but only after a lengthy process. The agency has announced its intention to reconsider, but the Court's decision allows Dow to keep selling Enlist Duo in the meantime.

If EPA does reevaluate its registration for Enlist Duo, we hope they will look at more than just synergistic impacts, and give real weight to the known health and economic risks these pesticides pose.

Since EPA originally approved Enlist Duo, glyphosate has been declared a probable carcinogen by the World Health Organization and the state of California. PAN and our allies are working to get EPA to take this latest science into account—and protect farmers, farmworkers and rural communities across the country.

The way our agencies regulate pesticides and GE crops is clearly not working. We rush toxic products to market and then don't allow our agencies a swift course of action to remove them. PAN, along with many others, will be keeping the pressure on the feds to take Enlist Duo permanently off the market and ensure that pesticides and GE crops are rigorously studied before being approved and marketed to farmers.

**Online** For more on GE crops and pesticides, see [www.panna.org/monsanto-dirty-secret](http://www.panna.org/monsanto-dirty-secret).

**OUR MISSION**

**Pesticide Action Network North America**

works to replace the use of hazardous pesticides with ecologically sound and socially just alternatives. As one of five PAN Regional Centers worldwide, we link local and international consumer, labor, health, environment and agriculture groups into an international citizens' action network. This network challenges the global proliferation of pesticides, defends basic rights to health and environmental quality, and works to ensure the transition to a just and viable society.

**30+ YEARS** **90 COUNTRIES**

## Anna Lappé on Five Food Movement Trends

Anna Lappé is an advocate for just and ecological food systems and a widely respected author and educator. She is the founder and director of Real Food Media, and co-founded the Small Planet Institute and Fund with her mother, Frances Moore Lappé. Anna's latest book is *Diet for a Hot Planet: The Climate Crisis at the End of Your Fork and What You Can Do About It*. These reflections are from her recent remarks to PAN's board of directors.

There are five emergent trends in the work in which Pesticide Action Network and I are engaged, trends that position PAN to have even greater impact in the coming years.

**First**, thanks to decades of effort, we now have a clear sense of the true costs of pesticides. There is now strong epidemiological research documenting with clarity and precision the long-term health impacts of even very low levels of exposures *in utero* to environmental toxins such as agricultural pesticides. Those in our movement have been raising alarm about these health threats for decades, but today the knowledge base is so large, solid and compelling that we can say with ever greater authority there is no place for hazardous pesticides in our food system.

**Secondly**, as PAN has so well documented, there is mounting evidence that agroecological solutions free farmers from the reliance on these damaging pesticides and are key to ensuring food security. Though you wouldn't know this from the media, many mainstream outlets still echo the corporate myth that there is no alternative to the chemically reliant industrial agriculture model. We've known better for at least 40 years—it was there in my mother's *Diet for a Small Planet*—but, today, the question has shifted from “Can we feed the world without dangerous chemicals?” to “Why isn't the media covering the solutions?”

**Third**, despite the dearth of media attention, every day, people everywhere are waking up to the power and potential of sustainable food systems. Communities are realizing that organic food is not just about healthier eating, but about food security, public health and justice.

**Fourth**, young people in particular are making these connections. Groups like Food Corps, working with school garden educators around the country, and Real Food Challenge, working with thousands of students on more than 300 campuses to support sustainable food purchasing policies, are galvanizing a new generation of food movement activists.

**Finally**, all these trends are occurring at a time of rapid corporate consolidation, especially along the food chain and in the media sector, with enormous consequences to non-corporate ecological farming as well as to investigative journalism. In other words, our work has never been more clearly vital, and yet never has it been more challenging to get these messages out.



Photo: Clark Patrick

**One of PAN's core strengths is its deep scientific credibility. When I need solid data and reliable analyses, I turn to PAN.**

**Whether I need evidence on the impact of pesticide use, case studies on agroecology in practice or examples of inspiring success stories, PAN is my go-to source.**

— Anna Lappé

For me, that means that PAN, and all of us fighting for fair food, have to be even more strategic in designing our programs and communications to effectively educate people who don't follow food issues closely, from everyday eaters to elected officials and key food system decision makers.

Thank you for your expertise and courageous leadership.

**Online** Follow Anna at [www.realfoodmedia.org](http://www.realfoodmedia.org) and on Twitter @annalappe.

- **Adelita San Vicente Tello** from Mexico's Semillas de Vida told the story of how the Mexican people have successfully fought off Monsanto's genetically engineered corn.

The events were co-hosted by Native Hawaiian activists and cultural practitioners who articulated connections between GE crops and pesticides and the interlocking struggle for Native Hawaiian rights. The tour included stops at several small farms and sacred sites, continually illuminating intersections between the movements for food and agricultural justice and the rights of Indigenous peoples.

### International strategic planning

Following the tour, we were joined on O'ahu by representatives of the DC-based National Family Farm Coalition, Hawai'i-based partners, and PAN International leaders from Belgium, Ethiopia, Germany, India, New Zealand, the Philippines, Senegal and the UK for a two-day strategy session on GE seeds and pesticides.

**We pledge our commitment to stand together and organize our communities to protect our homes, our children, and our shared planet. The agrochemical industry is global and so is our collective fight.**

— Closing declaration of the PAN International strategy meeting on O'ahu

The joint projects reviewed on O'ahu included communicating the impacts of pesticides on children's health; strengthening PAN's campaign to ban highly hazardous pesticides around the world; and communicating the dangers of GE crops for people and the planet. Local groups, including long-time partners Hawai'i SEED and GE Free Kaua'i, were part of the strategy session, adding opportunities to link the development of new agrichemicals and GE seeds in Hawai'i to the spread of this technology to the rest of the world.

We declared our solidarity with the Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians) and other residents of Hawai'i, and agreed on joint campaigns and projects.



Photo: Devika Ghai

PAN International representatives examine taro grown by Charlie and Paul Reppun on their organic farm in Waiahole Valley on O'ahu.

### Meanwhile, poisonings continue

In a testament to the high stakes and urgency of our work, our strategy meeting was interrupted by news that ten Syngenta field workers on Kaua'i had been poisoned by Dow's chlorpyrifos and were rushed to the hospital. Unsurprisingly, the companies are blaming the workers themselves.

In this environment, it is more important than ever that we keep connecting our struggles. From Hawai'i to Iowa, to Mexico and to the Philippines, we are all combating the same pesticide-fueled industrial agricultural system, and the future of our families and our planet depend on us standing up for healthy alternatives driven by people power and agroecological farming.

**Take Action** Don't let the Big 6 become the Big 5 — [www.panna.org/block-dow-dupont-merger](http://www.panna.org/block-dow-dupont-merger). Read PAN International's full statement of solidarity at [www.panna.org/global-food-movement-hawaii](http://www.panna.org/global-food-movement-hawaii).

This report was filed by PAN organizer Devika Ghai, one of four staff members who participated in the Food Justice Summit.

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