

IRELAND AIMS TO BECOME A GMO-FREE ZONE

PRESS RELEASE

GM-free Ireland Network, Dublin, Thursday 14 June 2007 www.gmfreeireland.org

***New coalition government adopts all-island GM-free policy *Farming groups agree to explore phasing out GM animal feed**

DUBLIN, 14 June 2007 – Following last night's Green Party historic agreement to form a coalition government with Fianna Fail, the two parties revealed their agreed policy "to negotiate for the whole island of Ireland to become a GMO-free zone."

The announcement was received with jubilation by farmers and food producers on both sides of the border who have spent the last nine years campaigning to achieve this goal.

Following the announcement last night, Green Party leader Trevor Sargent, TD, confirmed his pre-election pledge to resign his leadership position if his party entered into government with Fianna Fail, adding that he would now work very hard within the new Government "to get Green Party policies implemented whatever way I can".

"The establishment of Ireland as a GMO-free zone is a project that I will throw myself into in a very enthusiastic fashion, because we don't have much time to rescue that status for this country, and it's one that is so vital to us as a food-producing island which is operating in markets that are overwhelmingly looking for GM-free food, and if we lose that status, that's it, we cannot go back."

The Green Party is an all-island party, working on both sides of the border. The Green Party will get two Cabinet Minister positions in the new Government.

In a related move last weekend, the GM-free Ireland Network brought the main farmers organisations on both sides of the border together with Brazil's largest exporter of certified non-GMO soya beans, for exploratory discussions to phase out the use of GM animal feed in Irish farming. Participants included high level representatives of the Irish Farmers Association, the Irish Creamery and Milk Suppliers Association, the Irish Cattle and Sheepfarmers Association, and the Northern Ireland branch of the UK National Beef Association.

GM-free Ireland Network spokesperson Michael O'Callaghan congratulated the new government for adopting the GM-free island policy, and invited Trevor Sargent to address a briefing on Food Safety and GMOs which GM-free Ireland will co-host with the EU Parliament Independence/Democracy Group at the European Parliament Office in Dublin at noon on Friday [1].

ENDS

NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. Speakers at the briefing include Kathy Sinnott MEP, Jeffrey Smith (who will launch his new book Genetic Roulette: the documented health risks of GM foods), and Dr. Ricarda Steinbrecher PhD of EcoNexus, who is part of the legal and scientific team which recently convinced the European Patent Office to revoke Monsanto's species-

wide patent on genetically modified soybeans. For details on the briefing, see <http://www.gmfreeireland.org/EUP.php> To register please call (0404) 43 885.

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