

# U.S. Wheat Under GEO Contamination Threat

A Genetically Engineered Organism (GEO) is a "high risk" GMO.

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**Roundup Ready™ Wheat:** Today, there are no genetically engineered (GE) wheat species approved for agricultural use worldwide so one would assume there is no GE wheat in U.S. agriculture. Strong evidence suggests that's not true at all. *Monsanto, inc.* had been approved by the *Animal, Plant Health Inspection Services (APHIS)* to carry out particular covert outdoor GE wheat field-trials across 16 states between 1998 and 2005. Despite *Monsanto, inc.* having halted the USDA approval process for *Roundup Ready™ Wheat* in 2004, there have been official government reports announcing species of *Roundup Ready™ Wheat* (tolerant to the herbicide *Roundup™*) found growing in Oregon (2013), Montana (2014), Washington State (2016), and Alberta, Canada (2018) after over 10 years since Monsanto's outdoor field-trials ended in those regions. These were all accidental findings by local residents and not by regulatory inspection officials which raises a major red flag as to how much of our wheat is actually GE wheat contaminated. [2,5,8,9]

1. **Oregon Findings:** In 2013, a farmer in Oregon had sprayed his wheat crop with *Roundup™* using it as a desiccant (drying agent) to kill and dry out his wheat evenly. The farmer noticed multiple patches of wheat did not die so the incident was reported and the species was confirmed to be Monsanto's *Roundup Ready™ Wheat*. The sample matched the GE wheat approved for a 2001 Oregon *Monsanto, inc.* field-trial an astounding 12 years previously! However, the official APHIS report stated after their 10 month investigation that this contamination incident was an "isolated incident" despite the report also stating they were "unable to determine how the wheat came to grow in the field." How could the APHIS know with such certainty that it was an "isolated incident" if they never discovered the source of contamination? How could anyone be 100% certain especially when it was an unmonitored, outdoor incident only discovered by happenchance? It leaves a person scratching their head wondering. This setback put the U.S. government at an extreme risk of losing billions of dollars in revenues solely dependent upon the APHIS' final report. If they had revealed illegal GE wheat had spread into our wheat-supply, the consequences would have been incalculable. For example, the U.S. exports 50% of their wheat supply accounting for 10% of all sales worldwide. While in Oregon, exports are an astounding 90% of all wheat grown in that state. Many of our largest international wheat purchasers cancelled their wheat orders during the 10 month investigation which surely was a major motivator to label the event as an "isolated incident" while it should have been labeled as an "inconclusive incident." [3,4,8,9]
2. **Montana Findings:** *Monsanto, inc.* was approved by the APHIS to carry out an outdoor *Roundup Ready™ Wheat* field-trial at *Montana State University's (MSU) Southern Agricultural Research center (SARC)* between the years 2000 and 2003. In 2014, an astounding 11 years after the field-trial was complete, patches of wheat were found to survive after multiple applications of *Roundup™* were applied to clear a section of ground of

unwanted weeds. Upon observing the wheat did not die, SARC staff reported the incident to authorities who confirmed it to be *Roundup Ready™ Wheat*. This case is still under investigation today (8/1/2016) by the APHIS. It's evident that the findings are likely to be worse than those of the Oregon investigation considering this investigation has lasted twice as long so far. [3,4,6,8,9]

3. **Washington (WA) Findings:** In July of 2016, unauthorized *Roundup Ready™ Wheat* was detected growing illegally in the United States again. A wheat farmer in Washington State detected 22 Monsanto genetically engineered wheat plants growing in the farmer's vacant field. The farmer is unsure as to how the GE wheat came to grow in the field ([list of plausible explanations](#)). The USDA's APHIS is currently investigating this incident and will release its findings as soon as the investigation is complete. [2]
4. **Alberta, Canada Findings:** In June of 2018, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency announced that in 2017 Monsanto's glyphosate-resistant GMO wheat had been discovered growing along a rural roadside. Farmers had sprayed said roadside leading into Alberta, Canada and found it resistant to glyphosate. Canadian investigators are unable to determine how the GMO wheat came to be growing in this location. Field trials are reported to have been conducted in Canada but not within 100 km of this site. [1]

### Objective Analysis

This is strong evidence demonstrating our regulatory agencies' inability to contain genetically engineered (GE) food-crops and prevent them from contaminating our food-supply. The APHIS' official statement "diminishing the threat" of GE wheat contamination by labeling them "isolated incidents" with "inconclusive findings" has evoked extreme doubt within the U.S. consumer population and with purchasers worldwide. This is a serious concern because if the APHIS and USDA are complicit in diminishing the severity, there is a likelihood much [more of our grain-supply](#) is also contaminated with GEO genetics. Once the GEOs' genetics are exposed to the agricultural ecology, it is impossible to completely extract their DNA from our food-supply due to nature's natural methods of cross-pollination and seed distribution. This means our wheat in the U.S. is currently under major threat of GEO contamination. The U.S. wheat supply in the 16 states (locations undisclosed) where the *Roundup Ready™ Wheat* had been field-tested by *Monsanto, inc.* between 1998 and 2005 is highly likely already GEO contaminated. It likely just has not yet been uncovered by local farmers or residents as in Oregon, Montana, Washington, and Alberta. Also, it is not in the best interest for Monsanto, Inc. to encourage farmers to report the presence of *Roundup Ready™ Wheat* within those 16 *Roundup Ready™ Wheat* field-trial states. The discovery would significantly disrupt Monsanto's business through more stringent regulatory oversight and possibly even lawsuits. Hence, there's no means of knowing the broad scope of GE wheat contamination in the U.S. until contamination reaches a particular threshold and DNA testing confirms such. [1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10]

### Word of Advice

It would be ideal not to eat wheat grown in the U.S. particularly from Oregon, Montana, Washington, and Alberta if one wants to be certain to avoid Monsanto's *Roundup Ready™ Wheat*.

## Organic Wheat at Greatest Risk

The wheat at greatest risk of GEO contamination is likely the organic wheat grown in the U.S. and Canada. The Oregon, Montana, and Washington Alberta incidences were accidental discoveries of *Roundup Ready™ Wheat* through the application of the toxic herbicide *Roundup™* (active ingredient: *glyphosate*). Unlike the conventional wheat farmers, organic wheat farmers do not apply *Roundup™* to their wheat crops before harvest to completely kill and dry out their entire wheat crop thus **forcing the wheat to ripen uniformly**. Only the GEO *Roundup Ready™ Wheat* can survive the onslaught of the herbicide *Roundup™* enabling the farmer to easily pinpoint the GE wheat before it enters their grain-supply. These facts speak for themselves. GEO *Roundup Ready™ Wheat* has become a **major threat to our organic wheat-supply** in the U.S. and the problem is almost certain to worsen with time. Today, *Monsanto, inc.* is still working tirelessly toward introducing the first breed of GE wheat to be "legally" released onto the wheat market and into the world's ecosystem. [10]

## References

1. [Canada finds unapproved wheat growing in Alberta.](#) (2018). Reuters. R. Nickel.
2. [Detection of GE Wheat Volunteer Plants in Washington State.](#) (2016). *U.S. Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.*
3. [Genetically modified wheat found in Montana, USDA says.](#) (2014). *The Oregonian.*
4. [GMO Wheat Investigation Closed, But Another One Opens.](#) (2014). *National Public Radio.* D. Charles.
5. [Justification for moving GE wheat field trials to permit.](#) (2015). *U.S. Department of Agriculture – Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services.*
6. [MSU's Southern Agricultural Research Center working with USDA after finding genetically engineered wheat at center.](#) (2014). *University Communications: Montana State University.*
7. [Questions and Answers: Genetically Engineered Wheat Investigation.](#) (2014). *U.S. Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.*
8. [Unapproved Genetically Modified Wheat Discovered in Oregon and Montana: Status and Implications.](#) (2014). *Congressional Research Services.* T. Cowan.
9. [USDA Announces Close and Findings of Investigation into the Detection of Genetically Engineered Wheat in Oregon in 2013. Opens New Investigation into Separate Detection of GE Wheat in Montana in 2014.](#) (2014). *U.S. Department of Agriculture.* News Release.
10. [USDA-APHIS Biotechnology Regulatory Services User Guide: Notification.](#) (2011). *U.S. Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service - United States Department of Agriculture.*