



PRESS RELEASE

MORE THAN 100,000 PEOPLE ADD THEIR VOICE TO THE DEFENSE OF NATIVE MAIZE

-  In less than two weeks, more than 100,000 people have joined the initiative to send a collective letter to the Panelists.
-  This letter is addressed to Christian Häberli, Jean E. Kalicki and Hugo Perezcano Díaz, Panelists appointed to decide the controversy over genetically modified maize.

Mexico City, June 25th, 2024.- More than 100,000 people have signed the collective letter in defense of native maize, promoted by the National Campaign 'Sin Maíz No Hay País' (Without Maize There is No Country), the Alliance for Food Health and the Maiz Class Lawsuit.

Through a citizenship effort, an email was sent via a signature collection platform to Christian Häberli, Jean E. Kalicki and Hugo Perezcano Díaz, who have been appointed as panelists to decide the dispute over transgenic maize, in order to make them aware about the importance of native maize for culture, environment, health and food in Mexico. Representatives of the governments of Mexico and the United States have also received the same number of messages.

It should be noted that during the collection of these signatures, several attempts were made to breach the digital security of the website of the 'Sin Maíz No Hay País' campaign, as well as its Facebook page. It is also known that in previous days, the email accounts of officials of the Mexican Ministry of Economy blocked the email address from which the letters from citizens were being sent to them.

Since October 2023, the three panelists have received arguments from the Mexican and U.S. governments, as well as technical opinions from non-governmental entities, regarding the importation of transgenic maize from the United States to Mexico under the framework of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA).

According to the USMCA provisions, the panelists must hold public hearings, which will take place in Mexico City from June 26th to 27th, where representatives of the two governments will be able to present their opinions orally. In this context, the letter seeks that the panelists also listen to the opinions of Mexican society, as well as sectors of U.S. and Canadian society that support biocultural diversity and healthy food.

The letter argues that there are no risk analyses or scientific studies that assess the health impact of the consumption of genetically modified maize in a diet such as Mexico's, where each person consumes, on average, eleven times more maize than people in the United States.



Therefore, the letter argues that given this lack of scientific certainty, the precautionary principle should be applied: when there are well-founded suspicions of risks to public health or the environment, protective measures should be adopted for consumers and ecosystems.

Scientific research, on the contrary, has already detected genetic contamination of native Mexican varieties with genes from modified varieties imported from the United States. This contamination puts Mexico's biocultural diversity at risk. To the extent that our country serves as an immense living and updated seed bank for the rest of humanity, genetic contamination also puts at risk the planting of maize in many different latitudes around the world.

As the center of origin, domestication and constant diversification of maize, Mexico is in a position to offer the rest of the world maize that is adapted to extreme environmental conditions, such as those accentuated by climate change. In this context, the contamination of native varieties may affect not only consumers in Mexico, but worldwide.

The letter also explains that the argument that the ban on the use of genetically modified maize for dough and tortillas affects maize imports from the United States is a fallacy, since the overwhelming majority of these imports are used for fodder and industrial purposes.

In the two weeks that Mexicans have been able to sign the letter, the initiative has been supported by organizations such as Mujeres Incendiarias and science communicators such as Cristina Ayala, Laura Moreno and Sofia Probert.

The letter can be signed at the following link:
<https://elpoderdelconsumidor.good.do/es/defensadelmaiz/defensadelmaiz/>



Press contact:

Victor Manuel Chima Ortíz | victor.manuelchima.ortiz@gmail.com | 5541919336

