

## **GM Science Review First Report**

### **Response by Prof Mick Fuller, University of Plymouth**

The immense undertaking by Sir David King and his Review Panel on the issue of GM crops is to be greatly admired. The approach taken and the rational explanation for considering the scientific evidence underpinning concerns and doubts was a very bold attempt to place science at the heart of public concern. It could be argued that this approach panders to the hysterical claims against GM crops, but I welcome the approach and its findings.

The comprehensive review of potential impacts on human health concluded that there were no more risks associated with GM crops than with conventional crops. The advocacy of continued detailed examination and screening applies both to GM and conventionally bred crop varieties and is a sound public health approach even though it will involve a large public expense and could slow the re-introduction of many old crop varieties and types currently being “re-discovered”.

As with any detailed examination of a technological development in its infancy, the Review exposes gaps in knowledge associated not with GM crops but with crop production in general especially on environmental impact assessment. Such findings however, do not present a compelling case for not proceeding with GM technology for improved crop production.

Crop Biotechnology is going to play a hugely significant part in the development of improved varieties of the future for all production systems and GM techniques have a role in this in facilitating rapid change and in enabling new genetic combinations which are impossible by any other technique.

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13<sup>th</sup> October 2003