

Harvest of Greed – The Merger of Bayer and Monsanto

Source: [Dr. Mercola](#)

Story at-a-glance

- “Harvest of Greed” investigates a number of the many issues and concerns brought about by the merger of Monsanto and Bayer AG
- U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) approved the merger in April 2018, following the EU’s approval in March. DOJ has also given the Dow-DuPont merger the green light, and the Federal Trade Commission recently approved ChemChina’s acquisition of Syngenta
- The Bayer-Monsanto entity is now the largest seed and pesticide company in the world, controlling more than 25 percent of the global seed and pesticide supply. In all, just three companies now dominate the global seed and pesticide market
- Farmers are concerned about what the merger might do to prices and quality, as less competition inevitably tends to lead to price hikes, while reducing incentive for innovation
- The merger will also give the subsequent entity even more power to pressure and manipulate governments into accepting the unacceptable risks posed by GMOs and toxic pesticides

by **Dr. Mercola**

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The featured documentary, “Harvest of Greed,” investigates a

number of the many issues brought about by the merger of Monsanto and Bayer AG. The merger was initially announced in May 2016, when Monsanto accepted Bayer's \$66 billion takeover offer – the largest all-cash buyout on record.^{1,2,3}

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) approved the merger in April this year,⁴ following the European Union's (EU) approval in March. As a condition of the DOJ's approval, Bayer will sell some of its assets to BASF – its German competitor – before the finalization of the merger.

This includes its soybean, cottonseed and glufosinate weed killer businesses, which overlap with Monsanto's and were antitrust sticking points. Combined, Bayer and Monsanto used to control nearly 60 percent of the American cottonseed market. Monsanto also owns the rights to 80 percent of corn and 90 percent of soybeans grown in the U.S.⁵ The EU also demanded Bayer eliminate about \$7.4 billion-worth of its various firms "to ensure fair competition."⁶

Mega-Entity Now Controls Large Portion of Global Seed Supply

This new entity is now the largest seed and pesticide company in the world, controlling more than 25 percent of the global seed and pesticide supply. In all, just three companies now dominate the global seed and pesticide market.⁷ (In addition to the Bayer-Monsanto merger, the DOJ has also given the Dow-DuPont merger the green light, and the Federal Trade Commission recently approved ChemChina's acquisition of Syngenta.)

The Bayer-Monsanto merger generated deep concerns right from the start, and anti-competition regulators were urged to investigate the takeover. Bernie Sanders went on record saying the takeover poses "a threat to all Americans" and needed to be blocked.⁸ He also urged the DOJ to "reopen its investigation

of Monsanto's monopoly over the seed and chemical market." Farmers have also expressed concern over what the merger might do to prices, as less competition inevitably tends to lead to price hikes.

As just one example, the price of a bag of seed corn has risen from \$80 to \$300 over the past decade alone – a price hike attributed to the consolidation of seed companies and reduced competition. The merger of Bayer and Monsanto is predicted to make matters worse. Farmers also worry that consolidation will result in lower quality products by reducing incentive for innovation. Organic farmers have their concerns as well. As noted by Food and Power:⁹

"For Kristina Hubbard, director of advocacy and communications for the Organic Seed Alliance, the merger presents a particular threat to organic farmers. She notes that the National Organic Program's regulations on organic seeds generally dictate that growers must use organic seeds to grow their crops. But there is an exception granted for non-organic seed when 'an equivalent organically produced variety is not commercially available.'

Acceptable non-organic seeds are generally owned by the giant seed companies. 'That exemption is important because currently the supply [of organic seeds] isn't sufficient to meet the diverse and regional needs of all organic farmers,' she says. With continued consolidation in the seed industry, she says farmers that rely on those non-organic seed options may find themselves faced with even fewer options as the merged companies cut down on research and development."

Bayer-Monsanto Merger Unlikely to Benefit Anyone but Its Shareholders

Bayer AG's CEO, Werner Baumann, has stated that "it is not our plan or our ambition or our intent to prevent farmers from

having choice.”¹⁰ But the history of Monsanto and Bayer both suggest it would be naïve to believe him. As noted by Mark Connelly, an agriculture analyst at the investment group CLSA Americas, “These companies want to make more money, they want to raise prices. No company in this industry needs these deals in order to innovate.”¹¹

Indeed, there can be little doubt that the Bayer-Monsanto merger will give the subsequent entity even more power to [bully farmers into paying more](#) and pressuring and manipulating governments into accepting the unacceptable risks posed by [genetically engineered \(GE\) crops](#) and mounting use of ever [more toxic pesticides](#).

One example of Monsanto’s strong-arm tactics included in the film is that of India, where more than 300,000 farmers have committed suicide due to farm-related debt. When the government attempted to regulate the price of seed – the main cause leading to these debts – Monsanto sued the Indian government.

Between 1997 and 2014, Monsanto also sued 147 farmers for “improperly reusing patented seeds.”¹² They never lost a single case, even in cases where organic fields were contaminated or cross-pollinated with unwanted GE seeds.

Billions Against Bayer

In response to the announcement of the merger in 2016, the Organic Consumers Association (OCA) launched a boycott against Bayer. The “Billions Against Bayer” campaign is essentially a continuation of the successful “Millions Against Monsanto” campaign. Following the DOJ’s April approval of the merger, OCA renewed its call for consumers around the world to join the boycott. You can follow the campaign and get the latest news updates on Facebook.¹³ As noted in a September 2016 press release:¹⁴

“Two of the world’s most foul corporate criminals will be one. Monsanto will pack up its headquarters and head overseas. The much-maligned Monsanto name will be retired. But a corporate criminal by any other name – or size – is still a corporate criminal.

This merger only heightens the urgency, and strengthens our resolve, to hunt down the corporations that are poisoning everything in sight. We will follow them to the ends of the earth, if need be. We will expose their crimes. We will end the toxic tyranny. We will become the Billions Against Bayer. And we will need your help ...”

Even many Bayer employees are leery of the merger. While both companies have checkered pasts, Bayer has managed to escape the brunt of the kind of criticism, if not hatred, leveled at Monsanto over the years.

According to the featured documentary, Bayer claims the merger has widespread support among its staff, yet when Bayer employees were approached under the promise of anonymity, the general consensus was one of dismay at inheriting Monsanto’s tarnished reputation. Such fears are likely to come true sooner rather than later. Activists in Argentina, for example, promise Monsanto’s ill reputation cannot be washed clean but will now transfer over to Bayer.

Glyphosate – A Toxic Legacy

Both Bayer and Monsanto insist that [glyphosate](#), the active ingredient in Monsanto’s weed killer Roundup and other herbicide formulations, is “a very safe product when used properly.” In the video, Bayer CEO Werner Baumann stresses that more than 3,000 studies support the chemical’s safety. Yet numerous studies have reached the converse conclusion, showing it poses [toxic risks to soil](#), animals and humans.

“The things you hear in the public debate are ultimately based on misinformation about the risks of this product,” Baumann says. “So, we think glyphosate, even if it does belong to our company, is a good product, and its license should be renewed.”

At the end of 2017, the EU did indeed renew its approval of glyphosate for the next five years,¹⁵ but the process was not without its critics, such as Martin Häusling, member of the Green Party and the European Parliament, who noted that many of the studies exonerating glyphosate were funded by Monsanto itself, while independent research keeps finding problems.

Indeed, scientists have discovered it not only may be carcinogenic,¹⁶ but may also affect your body’s ability to produce fully functioning proteins, inhibit the [shikimate pathway](#) (found in gut bacteria) and interfere with the function of [cytochrome P450 enzymes](#) (required for activation of vitamin D and the creation of nitric oxide and cholesterol sulfate).

Glyphosate also chelates important minerals, disrupts sulfate synthesis and transport, interferes with the synthesis of aromatic amino acids and methionine, resulting in folate and neurotransmitter shortages, disrupts your microbiome by acting as an antibiotic, impairs methylation pathways, and inhibits pituitary release of thyroid stimulating hormone, which can lead to hypothyroidism.

Recent Government Tests Show Roundup Is More Toxic Than Glyphosate in Isolation

Most recently, toxicology testing¹⁷ by the U.S. National Toxicology Program (NTP) concluded the Roundup formula is actually far more toxic than glyphosate alone.¹⁸ The NTP testing was done by request from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) following the International Agency for

Research on Cancer (IARC) reclassification of glyphosate as a Class 2A probable carcinogen three years ago.¹⁹

At the time, the IARC noted concerns about [glyphosate formulations](#) possibly having increased toxicity due to synergistic interactions. As it turns out, that's exactly what the NTP testing found. According to the NTP's summary of the results, glyphosate formulations "significantly altered" the viability of human cells by disrupting the functionality of cell membranes.

Mike DeVito, acting chief of the NTP Laboratory commented on the results saying, "We see the formulations are much more toxic. The formulations were killing the cells. The glyphosate really didn't do it."

Internal documents from Monsanto, obtained through previous Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, reveal Monsanto's own employees have not been convinced the product is harmless either. For example, in a 2002 email, Monsanto executive William Heydens said, "Glyphosate is OK but the formulated product ... does the damage."²⁰

Monsanto Charged With Crimes Against Humanity

October 16, 2016 (on World Food Day), Monsanto was put on trial for "crimes against nature and humanity" at a tribunal in The Hague, Netherlands. The steering committee²¹ included Vandana Shiva, Corinne Lepage (former environment minister of France), Giles-Eric Séralini (toxicologist researching [toxicities of GMOs](#) and glyphosate), and Olivier De Schutter (former U.N. Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food), among others. The legal opinion on the evidence presented at the tribunal was delivered April 18, 2017. As reported by Corporate Europe Observatory:²² *"The tribunal concluded that:*

- *Monsanto has violated human rights to food, health, a healthy environment and the freedom indispensable for independent scientific research*
- *‘Ecocide’ should be recognized as a crime in international law*
- *Human rights and environmental laws are undermined by corporate-friendly trade and investment regulation”*

When asked if Bayer will continue Monsanto’s underhanded business practices, Baumann said the new entity will be managed “according to our standards,” adding that “Bayer stands for transparency, reliability and a different style of debate.”

Monsanto – A Destroyer of the Natural World

In addition to GE seeds and its flagship product, Roundup, Monsanto has also been a leading producer of Agent Orange, PCBs, DDT, recombinant bovine growth hormone and aspartame – the history of which is summarized in “The Complete History of Monsanto, ‘The World’s Most Evil Corporation,’”²³ originally published by Waking Times in 2014.²⁴

Monsanto also made its mark on history by participating in the Manhattan Project to build the first atomic bomb, thereby becoming a “war horse” ally to the United States government – an alliance that still holds today. As noted in “The Complete History,” article:

“To add insult to world injury, Monsanto and their partners in crime Archer Daniels Midland, Sodexo and Tyson Foods write and sponsor The Food Safety Modernization Act of 2009: HR 875.²⁵ This ‘act’ gives the corporate factory farms a virtual monopoly to police and control all foods grown anywhere, including one’s own backyard, and provides harsh penalties and jail sentences for those who do not use chemicals and fertilizers. President Obama ... gave his approval.

With this Act, Monsanto claims that only GM [genetically modified] foods are safe and organic or homegrown foods potentially spread disease, therefore must be regulated out of existence for the safety of the world ... As further revelations have broken open regarding this evil giant's true intentions, Monsanto crafted the ridiculous HR 933 Continuing Resolution,²⁶ aka Monsanto Protection Act, which Obama robo-signed into law as well.

This law states that no matter how harmful Monsanto's GMO crops are and no matter how much devastation they wreak upon the country, U.S. federal courts cannot stop them from continuing to plant them anywhere they choose. Yes, Obama signed a provision that makes Monsanto above any laws and makes them more powerful than the government itself."

Bayer Also Has a Long, Dark, Destructive History of Genocide

Despite having a far "cleaner" public reputation than Monsanto, Bayer is really just more of the same. Founded in Germany in 1863 by Friedrich Bayer and Johann Wescott, it too has a long, sordid history of creating poisons and mass destruction.²⁷ During World War II, Bayer (then I.G. Farben) produced Zyklon B gas, used in the Nazi gas chambers to eradicate 11 million people whose only crime was to be born a Jew.

According to Alliance for Human Research Protection, the company was also "intimately involved with the human experimental atrocities committed by Mengele at Auschwitz."²⁸ In one case, Bayer purchased 150 healthy female prisoners from the camp commander of Auschwitz for use as test subjects for a new sleep drug. All the test subjects died, and another order for prisoners was placed.

While some of its board members ended up being arrested and

tried for their crimes against humanity, others escaped and helped create the Federal Reserve.²⁹ If you think the passing of time might have made this corporate entity kinder, safer and gentler, think again.

In 2003, it was revealed Bayer sold blood-clotting medicine tainted with the HIV virus to Asian, Latin American and Europe in the mid-1980s.³⁰ The drug, Factor VIII concentrate, was worth millions of dollars, and the company continued to sell the tainted drug for a year after the contamination was discovered. In Hong Kong and Taiwan alone, more than 100 hemophiliacs contracted HIV and died after using the medicine.

Bayer's drug Trasylol – used to control bleeding during surgery – was also eventually found to be responsible for at least 1,000 deaths each month for the 14 years it was on the market.³¹ In 2006, documents proved Bayer hid evidence showing unfavorable results from the drug in order to continue selling it. Lawsuits have also been filed against Bayer for the untimely death of 190 young women taking their birth control pill Yaz, which raises your risk of blood clots by 300 percent.

Bayer Unlikely to Shift Public Perception of GMOs and Toxic Agriculture

Between 2006 and 2007, Bayer was also responsible for contaminating U.S. rice imports with three unapproved varieties of GE rice under development by Bayer CropScience. Bayer also makes [neonicotinoid pesticides](#), suspected of being responsible for mass die-offs of bees around the world, thereby threatening the global food supply, and made the plastic chemical bisphenol-A, now known to have a dangerous impact on the human endocrine system.

In short, Bayer's history is just as dark and unethical as Monsanto's, if not more, and some have rightfully referred to

the merger of these two destructive behemoths as a “marriage made in hell.”³² While change is possible, it seems improbable that this new Bayer-Monsanto mega-entity will radically change, and based on their combined histories, the world better get ready for a monumental fight.

Biotech Companies Are Gaining Power by Taking Over the Government

Monsanto and their industry allies will not willingly surrender their stranglehold on the food supply. They must be resisted and rolled back at every turn. There is no doubt in my mind that GMOs and the chemical-intensive agricultural model of which they are part and parcel, pose a serious threat to the environment and our health. Yet, government agencies not only turn a blind eye to the damage they are inflicting on the planet, but actively work to further the interests of the biotech giants.

This is not surprising. It is well-known that there is a revolving door between regulatory agencies and private corporations. This has allowed companies such as Monsanto to manipulate science, defang regulations and even control the free press, all from their commanding position within the halls of government.

Consider for a moment that on paper, the U.S. may have the strictest safety regulations in the world governing new food additives, but has repeatedly allowed GMOs and their accompanying pesticides such as Roundup to circumvent these laws.

In fact, the only legal basis for allowing GE foods to be marketed in the U.S. is the FDA’s tenuous claim that these foods are inherently safe, a claim which is demonstrably false. Documents released as a result of a lawsuit against the FDA reveal that the agency’s own scientists warned their superiors about the detrimental risks of GE foods. But their

warnings fell on deaf ears.

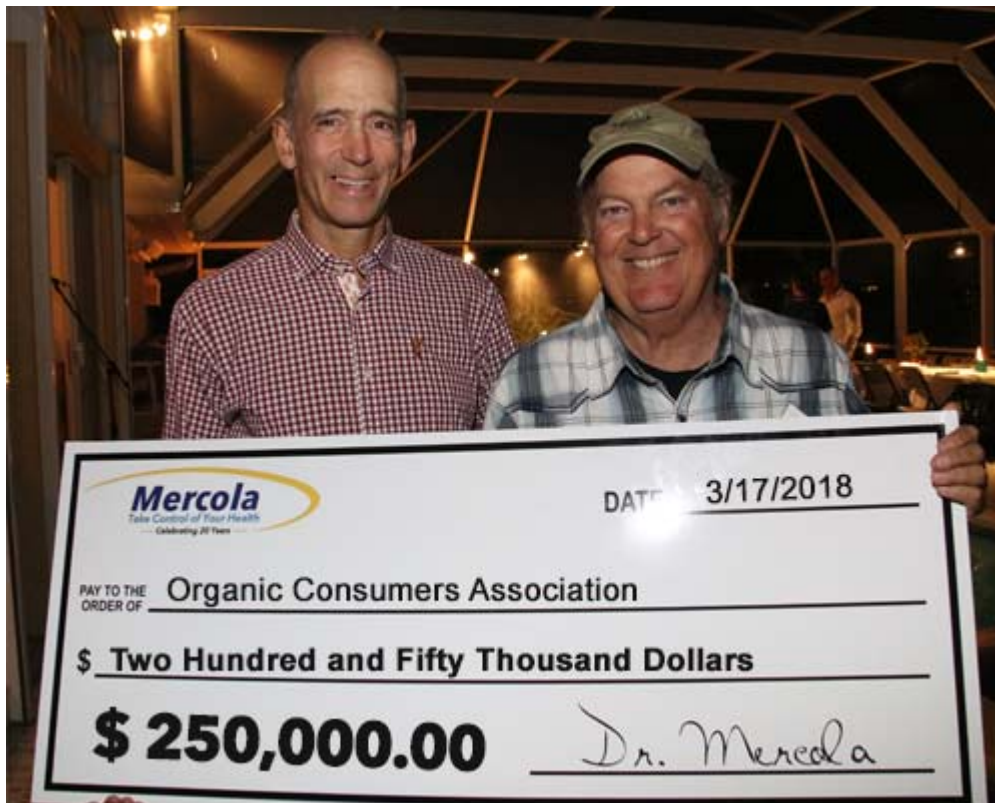
Don't Be Duped by Industry Shills!

In a further effort to deceive the public, Monsanto and its cohorts spoon-feed scientists, academics and journalists a diet of questionable studies that depict them in a positive light. By hiring "third-party experts," biotech companies are able to take information of dubious validity, and present it as independent and authoritative.

Industry front groups also abound. The Genetic Literacy Project and the American Council for Science and Health are both Monsanto-funded. Even [WebMD](#), a website that is often presented as a trustworthy source of "independent and objective" health information, is heavily reliant on advertising dollars. It is no coincidence that they promote corporate-backed health strategies and products.

There's No Better Time to Act Than NOW – Here's What You Can Do

The biotech giants have deep pocketbooks and political influence, and are fighting to maintain their position of dominance. It is only because of educated consumers and groups like the Organic Consumers Association (OCA) that their failed GMO experiment is on the ropes. We thank all of the donors who helped OCA achieve their fundraising goal. I made a commitment to triple match all donations to OCA during awareness week. It is with great pleasure to present a check to this fantastic organization for \$250,000.



At the end of the day, we must shatter Monsanto's grip on the agricultural sector. There is no way to recall GMOs once they have been released into the environment. The stakes could not be higher. Will you continue supporting the corrupt, toxic and unsustainable food system that Monsanto and its industry allies are working so hard to protect?

For more and more people, the answer is no. Consumers are rejecting genetically engineered and pesticide laden foods. Another positive trend is that there has been strong [growth in the global organic and grass fed sectors](#). This just proves one thing: We can make a difference if we steadily work toward the same goal.

One of the best things you can do is to buy your foods from a local farmer who runs a small business and uses diverse methods that promote regenerative agriculture. You can also join a community-supported agriculture (CSA) program, where you can buy a "share" of the vegetables produced by the farm, so that you get a regular supply of fresh food. I believe that joining a CSA is a powerful investment not only in your own

health, but in that of your local community and economy as well.

In addition, you should also adopt preventive strategies that can help [reduce the toxic chemical pollution](#) that assaults your body. I recommend visiting these trustworthy sites for non-GMO food resources in your country as well:

Organic Food Directory (Australia)	Eat Wild (Canada)
Organic Explorer (New Zealand)	Eat Well Guide (United States and Canada)
Farm Match (United States)	Local Harvest (United States)
Weston A. Price Foundation (United States)	The Cornucopia Institute

Monsanto and its allies want you to think that they control everything, but they are on the wrong side of history. It's you, the informed and empowered, who hold the future in your hands. Let's all work together to topple the biotech industry's house of cards. Remember – it all starts with shopping smart and making the best food purchases for you and your family.