

Thankyou for giving the community the chance to participate in the decision to allow the patenting of genes, or not, in Australia.

I am a farmer and keep pigs and grow vegetables and fruit, as well as other endeavours.

I have been alarmed to learn via the internet (You Tube : Patent for a Pig) that multi national corporations can obtain a patent for the genes of living organisms, such as pigs and plants.

I join the Catholic Columban Missionaries who say they find this concept abhorrent. No company or individual should be able to own the genes of a creature that belongs to all of us. This notion of patenting life forms was always prohibited by the American patent office until a supreme court **one** vote decision to allow a patent for an oil eating microbe overturned the patent office's longstanding ban on the ownership of genes. This was a decision based on ignorance from the start, the lawyers involved were not biologists and did not recognise the microbe as a living organism, but described it as an enzyme.

The fact that Monsanto can now own not only a seed but the progeny of the seed, and can sue innocent farmers and seed cleaners whose paddocks or machinery inadvertently contain that plant or seed for patent infringements, should alert us to the dangers of this whole crazy concept.

Monsanto could be poised to make additional huge sums of money out of suing pig farmers for raising pigs whose genes they hold a patent for. I believe that in Germany, DNA testing of traditional breeds of pig at several small piggeries revealed that 75% of pigs tested had the gene "owned" by Monsanto.

Would you please ensure that this outrageous situation (or anything like it) can never occur in Australia.

Thankyou for considering my views.

Bee Winfield