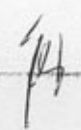


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SENATE  
P. S. Res. No. 668

RECEIVED BY: 

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*Introduced by Senator M. A. Madrigal*

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**RESOLUTION**

**DIRECTING THE COMMITTEES ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD  
AND ON ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO  
CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE  
DANGERS OF INTRODUCING AND COMMERCIALIZING  
GENETICALLY-MODIFIED RICE**

**WHEREAS** the Philippines is an agricultural country, with rice as its primary staple;

**WHEREAS** being a center of biodiversity and source of rice production, the country holds thousands of rice varieties which farmers have continually freely traded, developed and planted for the consumption of the public;

**WHEREAS** there are a number of safe and proven methods of increasing rice production, developing new varieties that are resistant to diseases and pests and with higher yield potential through conventional means and modern agricultural biotechnology;

**WHEREAS** Executive Order 481, signed on 27 December 2005, declared it a policy of the State to develop organic agriculture nationwide as a farming scheme, recognizing its potential in increasing value-added levels in agricultural export and local consumption products as well as in enhancing global competitiveness, environmental integrity, food security and safety and productivity and in alleviating poverty;

**WHEREAS** despite the importance of rice to Philippine farming and heritage, and the declared state policy to promote and develop organic agriculture nationwide, genetically modified and genetically engineered (GM/GE) rice is being sought to be introduced and commercialized in the country;

**WHEREAS** GM/GE rice is an unproven, unpredictable and dangerous technology that can threaten human health, the environment and farmers' livelihoods, and the commercial propagation and importation of GM/GE rice for direct use in food, feeds and processing could contaminate local rice varieties;

**WHEREAS** in 2006, the United States lost more than US\$1 billion in rice exports upon the discovery of *contaminated*, unauthorized experimental genetically modified rice developed by Bayer made available for public consumption, which prompted countries, including the Philippines, to ban or restrict rice imports from the US;

**WHEREAS** following the discovery of GM/GE rice contamination in the US, at least two cases of contamination of rice were reported in the country: in September 2006 and April 2008, when GM/GE rice were found being sold in supermarkets;

**WHEREAS** Department of Agriculture Administrative Order No. 8 Series of 2002, providing for "Rules and Regulations for the Importation and Release into the Environment of Plants and Plant Products Derived from the Use of Modern Biotechnology," is inadequate in conducting risk assessment of genetically modified organisms and does not ensure appropriate public participation in the process of approvals. Despite the inherent and unknown risks coming from GMOs, statistics of approval versus disapprovals are 50 vs. 0;

**WHEREAS** non-government development organizations and advocacy groups, particularly the Southeast Asia Regional Initiatives for Community Empowerment (SEARICE) and Greenpeace, together with other concerned groups, managed to secure a preliminary writ of injunction before a Quezon City regional trial court to preclude the Department of Agriculture from approving an application by Bayer for the direct use in food, feeds and processing of genetically modified rice in September 2008, but which is presently under petition for review by the Court of Appeals;

**WHEREAS** laws and policies aimed at protecting biodiversity and the promotion of ecologically sustainable farming practices are persistently threatened by the introduction of GMOs into the environment;

**WHEREAS** there is a need to protect and preserve our rich biodiversity, particularly our indigenous rice varieties and farmers' livelihoods from increasing dependence on expensive yet unnecessary inputs and resources from foreign agro-chemical and seed companies;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED,** to direct the Committees on Agriculture and Food and on Environment and Natural Resources, to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the dangers of introducing and commercializing genetically-modified rice.

**Adopted,**

  
**M. A. MADRIGAL**