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***From the Editors: The Greta Effect***

Swedish 16 year old climate activist Greta Thunberg was named Person of the Year by Time Magazine. This is quite an honour for the outspoken girl, who started the “school strike” movement around the world and does not hesitate to criticize world leaders and corporations for ignoring the perils of climate change. Will it

have an effect? Of course. We are inspired by her actions and wish her some well-deserved rest with her family, and a happy holiday.

Join our movement for sustainable consumption and production, and help us come up with solutions!

- Editors

## **International Film Festival On Organic Farming 2019**

The 13th International Film Festival On Organic Farming will be held on 8 December, 2019 (Sun) from 9:30 AM at the Ekoda Campus of Musashino University in Tokyo. Films from Senegal, Burkina Faso, France, and Japan will be screened (original languages/Japanese subtitles).

IFO: PARC, Japan Organic Agriculture Association, Consumers Union of Japan

For more information, please see [www.yuki-eiga.com](http://www.yuki-eiga.com)

## **GMO Warning by Professor Gilles-Eric Séralini in Tokyo**

Consumers Union of Japan and the No! GMO Campaign invited Professor Gilles-Eric Séralini to speak about his landmark study that showed how Roundup causes cancer in rats. He warned about genetically modified foods, that are engineered to tolerate Roundup, especially GM soy and GM corn. Séralini is professor of molecular biology at the University of Caen, France, and president of the scientific board of CRIIGEN (Committee of Independent Research and Information on Genetic Engineering). The research conducted by Séralini's team has serious implications for public health and the environment and should be addressed rationally and on scientific grounds.

Gilles-Eric Séralini has run the research group that has published the most on GMOs and pesticides toxicities in the world. Since he has discovered practices of the big companies to hide this, he was the most cited in the Monsanto Papers and he has won seven court affairs against the biotech lobbies. With his co-author of three recent books, the organic French Chef Jérôme Douzelet, he worked on how to recognize the taste of these pollutants, especially in wines, and methods of detoxication for everybody. The news and views on these topics will be detailed for the general public in a very original manner.

Everyone is welcome to learn more about the risks associated with genetically modified food.

Date: October 31, 2019

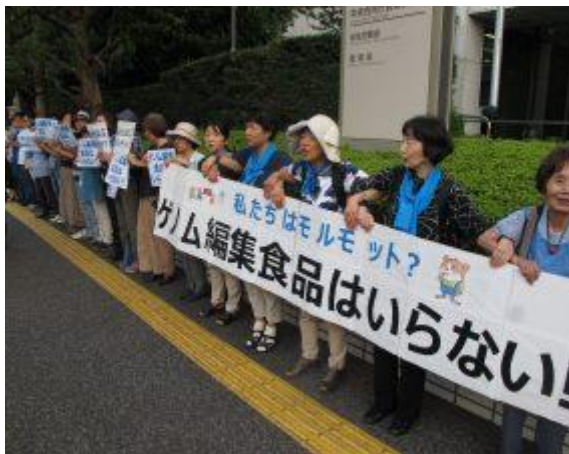
Time: 12:30-16:30

Place: Tokyo Women's Plaza, Shibuya, Tokyo

## **Gene Editing: Human Chain Outside Health Ministry in Tokyo**

We held a protest action outside the Ministry of Health in Tokyo today on Wednesday, 25 September to protest against the lack of rules to deal with gene edited foods. Gene editing or genome editing may soon appear in food stores as the novel technology appears to gain ground among crops abroad. The lack of labelling in Japan is a serious problem.

Some 43% of respondents to a University of Tokyo internet survey said they would not want to eat agricultural products developed with genome editing technology, [according to The Mainichi Newspaper](#) and the figure topped 53% when people were asked about whether they would eat genome-edited animal products. The poll results were unveiled at a June 5 meeting of the Japanese Society for Genome Editing in Tokyo. The survey team led by Masato Uchiyama, a guest researcher at the University of Tokyo's Institute of Medical Science, queried some 38,000 men and women aged 20-69 in May and June last year, receiving around 10,700 valid responses.



Meanwhile, Consumers Union of Japan was invited to share our views at the NHK TV program Closeup Gendai on 24 September about the lack of regulations.

## About That Expensive F35 Fighter Jet

The Prefectural Nagoya Airport is located in a congested housing district in Komaki City. I can reach it from my home in Iwakura City in 20 minutes by car. It is next to the Komaki Base of the Japan Self-Defense Forces, and nearby the Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Komaki South Factory is busy constructing F35A fighter planes. They seem to have expanded the factory site recently.

When talking about the F35A fighter, it is the same type of airplane which took off from Aomori Prefecture Misawa Base and crashed into the Pacific Ocean in April 2019. The cause has not yet been ascertained. We found out that the fighter plane which crashed was constructed here at the Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Komaki South Factory, thus evoking the interest of the residents in Iwakura City as well as Komaki city. There have also been troubles during test flights and an urgent landing at the Prefectural Nagoya Airport.

The price of one F35A fighter jet is 11,600,000,000 yen. The Abe government is planning to buy a total of 147 planes, so our taxes will have to cover a total amount of 1,700,000,000,000 yen, at current prices.

Compare that to the entire general annual budget for 2019 of Iwakura City which is 15,700,000,000 yen. That is just a little more than the cost of a single F35 fighter plane. This August, I found it interesting to note that citizens are becoming aware that 11,600,000,000 for just one airplane is such a waste. Also, more people are becoming opposed to using our local airport as an emergency landing strip for Japan's new fighter jet.

Mizuhara Hiroko

**Please Join Our One Million Signature Petition Campaign: "Regulate All Gene-edited Food!"**

Dear Friends and Fellow Anti-GMO Campaigners,

Please Join Our One Million Signature Petition Campaign: "Regulate All Gene-edited Food!"

In March 2019, the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare of Japan concluded that no regulation is needed for most of gene-edited food to be sold in Japan. The Ministry of the Environment also announced its decision to require regulation only for limited gene-edited food using created with specific processes. Consequently, some sources expect gene-edited food to be available as early as this summer of 2019 in Japan.

We, Consumers Union of Japan, together with concerned grassroots organizations and Co-ops across Japan, have been advocating the

strictest possible regulation at a level that is at least equal to GMO regulations over the last few years, but our voice has not been reflected in the government's decision making as of now. Our demand is fully in accordance with our consumers' rights stipulated in the Basic Act on Consumers Policies.

We are highly concerned about this situation. No regulation means basically no enforced safety tests, no transparency and no labelling. Due in part to the fact that Japan is a country with less than 40% of food self-sufficiency, consumers can only expect a marketplace that is a virtual hell filled with uncontrolled gene-edited food produced possibly both domestically and globally, unless we take action.

We have decided that now is the time to scale up our campaign. As we launch this One Million Signature Petition Campaign throughout Japan, we have a request to our global friends and colleagues.

If you share our concerns and support our petition (below) addressed to the Japanese government, then please email ([nogeneediting@nishoren.org](mailto:nogeneediting@nishoren.org)) your name and title or the full name of your organization, the country which you are based and also the contact person name. The collected signatures will be submitted to the Government of Japan in September 2019 when we will hand over our signatures to it.

[Organization]

Name of organization:

Contact person:

Country:

Email:

[Individual]

Your name:

Title:

Country:

Email:

2. We are collecting pictures with the banner indicating "Regulate All Gene-edited Food!" We welcome your pictures with the banner attached in this email, or any banner you have. It will be great to see the keymessage in your language, together with English message.

Please send us the picture to the email address ([nogeneediting@nishoren.org](mailto:nogeneediting@nishoren.org)).

We greatly appreciate your solidarity and collaboration.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at the office of Consumers Union of Japan.

Sincerely,  
Keisuke Amagasa, Michiyo Koketsu,  
Kaori Hirouchi and Martin J. Frid  
The Anti-GMO Campaign  
International Coordinators,  
Consumers Union of Japan

To:

Mr. Nemoto Takumi, Minister of Health, Labor, and Welfare  
Mr. Yoshikawa Takamori, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries  
Mr. Harada Yoshiaki, Minister of the Environment

Mr. Okamura Kazumi, Commissioner of Consumer Affairs Agency

We strongly demand proper regulations for gene-edited food. As we learn that unpredicted results could occur by a gene-editing method, including "off-target" effects, our concern over the technology and its impact on our food has not been cleared. However, both Ministry of the Environment and Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare decided that gene-edited organisms are not regulated by law unless external genes remain in the organism.

The food with voluntary registration with no enforced labelling system and no environmental assessment could soon be on our table. Our right to know, our right to choose and our right to live a healthy life are now at risk. We strongly demand that environmental assessment, food safety inspection and labelling on all gene-edited food without exception.

We demand:

1. Mandatory environmental impact assessment for all gene-edited food including crops and other produces, livestock and fish.
2. Mandatory food safety assessment for all gene-edited crops and other produces, livestock and fish.
3. Mandatory labeling for all gene-edited crops, other produces, and processed food that contain gene-edited ingredients.

# ***Consumers Union of Japan***

**CUJ is a politically and financially independent non-governmental organization (NGO). We are funded by membership fees, sales of publications and donations.**

**CUJ was founded in April 1969 as Japan's first nationwide grassroots consumer organization. CUJ is officially certified as a non-profit organization by the Japanese NPO legislation.**

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