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?GMO?s what have we gained and lost?? ? MC2 sponsors community information session

The Environment Committee of the Mono Mulmur Citizens' Coalition (MC2) invites those interested to a free information session on the use of genetically modified organisms (GMO's) and how they affect us on a local and global level. The presentation will take place at Monora Park on Saturday, November 7th from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Founded in 1988, one of the important mandates of MC2 is to ?keep members and residents informed on a wide range of important topics.? The organization takes issues to Municipal Councils and has addressed issues at the Provincial level to ?ensure that local voices have been heard.?

Chairperson of the Environment Committee, as well as a member of the Board of MC2, Arnold DeGraaff says the focal point for choosing the topic of GMO's was that ?it is becoming a growing concern for many people and there is a lot of confusion about the issue.? Presenters will include Ralph Manktelow with ?An Update on the Condition of the Bees;? Arnold DeGraaff speaking on the ?Perspective on the Science of Genetic Engineering;? and Gerald Poechma with a ?Discussion of GMO's and his farming experience.?

According to Mr. DeGraaff, ?Controversies about genetic engineering (GE) and GMO's often become muddled and prevent honest discussions.? He says research makes it clear that ?those who oppose genetically engineered crops and GMO's in our food are not against science and technology.? Rather, on the contrary, ?they want better longer term scientific studies and safer technology.? He says, ?A brief overview of genetic engineering in staple crops will allow us to take a little distance to all the controversies about GE crops and GMO's in our food.?

DeGraaff says the coalition's goal for the meeting is ?that people will consider buying more non-GMO and organic foods for the sake of the environment, climate change, social justice and our own health and that of our children. Secondly, that they will support local efforts like HFFA (Headwaters' Food and Farming Alliance) and their Farm to Food school program, farmers markets, and local growers.? He says MC2 will have a display and handouts on non-GMO and organic foods for those in attendance.

Next year, ?MC2 will probably follow up with presentations on processed food, GMO's in our food, as well as other chemicals in relation to our health,? says DeGraaff.

All are invited to the information session at Monora Park on Saturday, November 7th from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. There will be free refreshments, including coffee.

By Marni Walsh