

# Canadian Farm and Civil Society Groups Protest Killing of Farm Leader over Genetically Modified Test Crops in Brazil

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Today in Ottawa, Montreal and Arva ON, 3 delegation of farm and civil society leaders from the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network (CBAN) observed a minute of silence and delivered letters of concern over the killing of farm leader Valmir Motade Oliveira and the use of armed militia to protect tests of genetically modified (GM) crops owned by Syngenta in Brazil. </p><p>Today is a global day of action called for by the international peasant movement La Via Campesina, of which the National Farmers Union and Union Paysanne are members. </p><p>On October 21, 2007 protesters of the Landless Rural Workers' Movement (MST) of Brazil were attacked by armed men who shot Mr. Mota in the chest at point blank range. The farmers were occupying land owned by Syngenta and used for testing its GM seeds? land located in an ecologically sensitive zone near a national park and in legal contest by Parana State. MST says the attack was aimed at Mr. Mota and other leaders who had already received death threats. Aguard was also killed, though the cause is not known. </p><p>?Canadian farmers who buy Syngenta's seeds should know that farmers in Brazil are being killed so the company can test its genetically modified crops, ?said Colleen Ross, NFU Women's President and member of La Via Campesina Biodiversity Commission. Ross joined the CBAN delegation in Ottawa to deliver a letter at the Brazilian Embassy. The delegation also included representatives from the Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario and international development groups Inter Pares and USCC Canada. </p><p>In Montreal, CBAN member Union Paysanne was joined by local people at the Brazilian Consulate. "It is deeply shocking that farm activists are threatened and killed while exercising their democratic right to protest, &quot; said Karen Rothschild of Union Paysanne. </p><p>In Arva Ontario, local area farmers delivered a letter directly to the Head Office of Syngenta Seeds Canada and observed a minute of silence outside. ?We observe this moment of silence to remember our fallen comrade, Valmir Motade Oliveira, as well as the fall guard who died under unknown circumstances, ?said Allan Slater, Ontario representative on the international committee of National Farmers' Union. </p><p>Syngenta is the largest agrochemical company in the world and the 3rd largest seed company. Syngenta sells genetically modified insect-resistant corn varieties in Canada. </p><p>-30-

</p><p>Information: Lucy Sharratt, Coordinator, Canadian Biotechnology Action Network, 613 241 2267 ; Karen Rothschild, Union Paysanne 450 451 2207; Colleen Ross, National Farmers Union, cell 613 213 1522; Allan Slater, National Farmers Union, 519 349 2611. </p><p><a href="http://www.cban.ca/Action/Repression-and-murder-of-rural-workers-over-GM-crops" target="\_self">Click here for more information</a></p>