

## Biotech professor's emails show no misconduct in battling anti-GMO propaganda, but Monsanto tie noted

Michelle McGuire, a nutrition scientist at Washington State University in Pullman, was stunned when anti-GMO activists asked to read her email. McGuire is one of 40 U.S. researchers who have now been targeted by U.S. Right to Know, which is probing what it sees as collusion between the agricultural biotechnology industry and academics.

That investigation has just started to yield documents. These include roughly 4,600 pages of emails and other records from Kevin Folta, a plant scientist at the University of Florida in Gainesville and a well-known advocate of GM organisms. The records do not suggest scientific misconduct or wrongdoing by Folta. But they do reveal his close ties to Monsanto and other biotechnology-industry interests. "Nobody ever told me what to say," says Folta, who considers public outreach to be a key part of his job (and who informed *Nature* of the document release). "There's nothing I have ever said or done that is not consistent with the science."

McGuire is not sure why the group is seeking her records, but some of her recent research refutes claims that glyphosate, an herbicide often used on GM crops, accumulates in breast milk; it relies on an assay developed with assistance from Monsanto. Still, McGuire says, "I'm a milk-lactation researcher."

Michael Halpern, an expert on scientific integrity at the Union of Concerned Scientists in Washington D.C., suggests universities should do more to educate researchers on what constitutes a conflict of interest and what financial relationships should be disclosed. "It behooves scientists to disclose their funding sources so there's no perception of inappropriate influence," Halpern says. "But that doesn't mean all private money is tainted or suspect."

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [GM-crop opponents expand probe into ties between scientists and industry](#)**

**To read Kevin Folta's response regarding US Right to Know's record request please see "[Kevin Folta responds to questions about funding of his biotech outreach efforts](#)"**