

‘Culture of confrontation’: Professor on abusive use of Freedom of Information Act in GMO debate

[Editor’s note: David Zilberman is a professor of agriculture and resource economics at UC-Berkeley.]

[A] few weeks ago, I received a letter informing me that Mr. Russell Carollo – who I discovered is a Pulitzer-winning author — wants access to all the records of private funding of my university research and all my communication related to GMOs and related topics. ... [H]e might have suspected that I [am] a paid agent of Monsanto.

...

Googling my name he could have easily discovered [Were you paid by Monsanto? • The Berkeley Blog](#), where I state that I received \$10,000 for reviewing some papers for Monsanto (out of millions of dollars of support grants for my research over the years from many sources). He would have known that I have made many contributions to support environmental causes. He could even have called or emailed me ... and he would have better knowledge about his “suspect.” If after this initial and more personal investigation he would have asked me to provide him with information, I would have been happy to oblige according to the FOIA.

I am left with a feeling of disappointment in our culture of confrontation and lack of collegiality. ... In a way, FOIA is like GMOs, a very valuable tool, which has to be applied with care.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [Do your homework before you apply FOIA](#)