Stop GE Trees Petition: Sign on to the Letter Below Demanding Rejection of ArborGen's Request to Plant 260,000 Genetically Engineered Eucalyptus Trees Across the U.S. Southeast:

To USDA/APHIS

We the undersigned oppose the planting over a quarter of a million GE eucalyptus across the U.S. South.

Approval of these field trials represents precedent setting approval for the large-scale outdoor release of GE trees that flower and produce seeds. This will facilitate the approval of commercial large-scale release of GE eucalyptus or other GE trees.

APHIS failed to conduct and prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to comprehensively address all relevant issues related to the proposed GE Eucalyptus field trials.

Eucalyptus are not native to the U.S. but have become invasive in parts of California and Florida. Creating cold-tolerant eucalyptus will vastly expand the areas where it can become invasive. Because they are not native, they displace wildlife and other biodiversity.

In regions where droughts occur, eucalyptus are known to be at high risk of catching fire. Wildfires in eucalyptus groves in Australia in 2009, which were worsened by a drought, killed 173 people. Additionally, eucalyptus trees, with deep tap roots, use very large quantities of water. The U.S. Forest Service has stated that eucalyptus plantations lower water tables, and affect groundwater recharge and local stream flows, in some cases eliminating seasonal streams.

The fatal fungal pathogen, *Crytococcus Gattii* has been found in the U.S. It can cause fatal fungal meningitis among people and animals that inhale its spores. One of the eucalyptus species used in the GE eucalyptus hybrid (E. *grandis*) is a known host for C*ryptococcus gattii*. Creating extensive habitat for this fatal fungal pathogen is dangerous and foolhardy.

I believe the GE eucalyptus field trials should be ended and the trees destroyed before it is too late.

Sincerely,

Name	**Address**	**Email**

Please return completed petition to STOP GE Trees, PO Box 412, Hinesburg, VT 05461 USA