

PRESS RELEASE

of the German Public Relations Council (DRPR)

DRPR sees no misconduct in Monsanto lists

Darmstadt, July 18, 2019 – **The German Public Relations Council has completed its examination of the Monsanto case and has decided to close the case. As such, the Council explicitly waives any reprimand or reminder with regard to the Monsanto stakeholder lists. From the Council's point of view, there has been no misconduct with regard to the applicable codes or guidelines.**

The basis for this decision was the examination of the previously anonymized lists by a neutral law firm. It has been found that the lists essentially contain organization and planning relevant information and that all information comes from publicly freely accessible sources. During the examination, the lists proved to be common instruments for maintaining dialog. The impression conveyed in the reports that a terrible injustice had occurred and that work had been performed carelessly is in no way true, at least for the German stakeholder lists.

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About DRPR

The German Public Relations Council (DRPR) is the institution of voluntary self-regulation for the professional field of public relations. The PR Council is legally and conceptually supported by the supporting association of the Deutschen Rates für Public Relations e.V. (Association of German Public Relations Agencies), comprised of the Deutsche Public Relations Gesellschaft e.V. (DPRG, German Public Relations Association), the Bundesverband deutscher Pressesprecher e.V. (BdP, Federal Association of German Press Spokespersons) and the Gesellschaft Public Relations Agenturen (GPRA, Association of Public Relations Agencies).

The members of the Council are industry experts from companies, trade associations, agencies and other organizations. The work of the Council is based on the German Communication Code and other current codes. The German Public Relations Council acts in responsibility towards the entire professional field. The members of the Council work independently, and are answerable only to themselves and their conscience.

The main responsibilities of the German Public Relations Council are to a) to observe the occupational field critically within the scope of its possibilities, b) to formulate and develop communicative norms and c) on the basis of these norms to name communicative misconduct in communication with the public and, if necessary, to reprimand it. The German Public Relations Council deals with all the cases that are brought to its attention in the form of complaints, as well as taking up cases on its own initiative (e.g. due to media coverage). The Council reserves the right to proactively address undesirable developments in the industry and, if necessary, take part in the discussion by means of public statements.

Once the Council has accepted a case for processing, it always researches the current state of affairs with regard to the issue, based on the relevant body of source material. All the organizations or individuals involved will be asked for statements about the complaints. In individual cases or if there are very complex issues at stake, the Council holds an oral hearing. The Council subsequently forms an opinion and decides by a majority. If a reprimand or warning is issued, this takes the form of a well-founded expression of opinion and must not be confused with the judgment of a court.