

# GE eucalyptus tree investigation urged

June 15 2007

---

Several U.S. environmental groups are upset concerning a possible link between a pathogenic fungus and genetically engineered eucalyptus trees.

The organizations want the departments of Health & Human Services, Agriculture, Interior, and the Environmental Protection Agency to determine if the pathogenic fungal organism *Cryptococcus gattii* is present in genetically engineered eucalyptus trees being grown by ArborGen LLC in Alabama.

The request was made by the Sierra Club, the Global Justice Ecology Project, The Center for Food Safety, the Dogwood Alliance, and the Southern Forest Network.

"We know the *Cryptococcus gattii* pathogen is associated with eucalyptus trees in other countries and a federal investigation is urgently needed to fully assess ArborGen's proposed Alabama outdoor field trials of genetically engineered eucalyptus," said Neil Carman of the Sierra Club.

Rachel Smolker, a research biologist with the Global Justice Ecology Project, said "*Cryptococcus gattii* is considered by the Centers for Disease Control as an 'emerging infectious disease.' Inhalation of spores causes respiratory and central nervous system infection leading to fatal fungal meningitis."

*Copyright 2007 by United Press International*

Citation: GE eucalyptus tree investigation urged (2007, June 15) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2007-06-ge-eucalyptus-tree-urged.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.