



15 May 2009

**Important Information for Participants**

**The GMAC Student Reporters' Challenge 2009  
"The Facts and Myths of Genetically Modified Foods"**

**A) INTRODUCTION**

Established under the purview of the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI), the Genetic Modification Advisory Committee (GMAC) is the multi-agency national committee that oversees and advises on the research and development, production, use, handling and release of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) in Singapore. Through a specialized Subcommittee on Public Awareness, GMAC is also committed to objectively impart scientifically-sound information on gene modification (GM) technology and GMOs to the Singapore public.

2 The GMAC Student Reporters' Challenge 2009 – an inter-school video creation competition – is organized as part of GMAC's ongoing efforts in educating the public on GM-related issues. Through this competition, GMAC aims to promote active learning and to stimulate students' interest in the science behind GM technology and GMOs. This year's competition is conducted in two categories catering separately for students at the:

- i) Lower Secondary (Secondary 1 or 2 or equivalent); and
- ii) Upper Secondary (Secondary 3 or 4 or 5 or equivalent) levels.

3 Unless otherwise stated, participants of the Lower Secondary and Upper Secondary categories of the competition are to follow the same rules and instructions stipulated in this document.

**B) THE TASK**

- 4 *"I see durians sold in the shops all year round. Are durians now genetically modified too?"*  
*"Why are the cooking oils more yellow than they used to be? Are they genetically modified?"*  
*"If I eat genetically modified foods, will the foreign genes enter my cells and make me genetically modified?"*  
*"Will I turn green if I ate them?"*

5 The above are some questions that GMAC had heard from members of the public. These questions reflect the public's unfamiliarity with, and perhaps lack of real understanding of, what GM technology, GMOs, and GM foods are.

6 The 2009 GMAC Student Reporters are to create educational video clips to help demystify GM technology, GMOs, and GM foods, to members of the Singapore public. Their task, specifically, is as follows:

*“There is increasing adoption of GM crops worldwide. Proponents say that GM technology and GM crops offer one solution towards food shortage and food security issues, and argue that GM foods are at least as safe as, if not safer, than their conventional counterparts. Opponents, on the other hand, are skeptical of the actual benefits of GM crops and GM foods, and question their safety on human health and the environment.*

*You and your colleagues are reporters of the SSC (Singapore Science Channel). In view of the controversy and intense debate surrounding GM crops and GM foods, your boss tasked your team to produce a video feature on the facts and myths of GM foods. As part of the project, you are to interview residents of the Singapore heartlands to find out what their views on GM foods are, and what they understand, misunderstand, or do not understand about the subject. As responsible reporters, you are to debunk common misconceptions about GM foods, and unravel the science-based truth.”*

### **C) GENERAL RULES**

7 Within each competition category, participants form groups of fives. Each group of five students will submit one video entry. GMAC does not allow a school to send in more than one entry for each category of the competition.

8 Registration for the competition has closed. Only groups which had registered for the competition, and which had received confirmation of their registration status, are eligible to participate in the GMAC Student Reporters' Challenge 2009.

9 The rule of five students per group within each competition category is to be strictly adhered to. Changes in member composition within groups are to be avoided, unless accompanied by strong reasons (e.g. should a student become unable to remain in the group due to transfer to another school). GMAC's permission needs to be sought prior to any change in the member composition of each group, and GMAC reserves the rights to approve or disapprove such requests.

### **D) RULES ON CONTENT OF ENTRIES**

#### *Theme of Competition*

10 The educational video clips, for both categories of the competition, are to be based on the theme of **“The Facts and Myths of Genetically Modified Foods”**.

### Objective and Intended Audience

11 Each video clip is to be created with the objective of educating members of the public on GM technology, GMOs, and in particular, GM foods. In producing the video clips, participants should bear in mind that their intended audience are average Singaporeans who may have limited background and understanding on the science behind GM technology and GM foods. As such, the video clips need to be designed in ways that would engage and interest a layman audience, and the contents should be presented such that they could be easily appreciated by the average Singaporean. As a rule of thumb, participants should minimize the use of technical jargons and seek instead to communicate scientifically-correct concepts and facts in simple terms.

### Compulsory Section

12 It is compulsory for each video to include a component where the Student Reporters interview residents of the heartlands to find out what they understand, misunderstand, or do not understand about GM foods. The interviewed residents of the heartlands can be family members and relatives of the Student Reporters.

13 Where the interviews with residents of the heartlands reveal misconceptions towards GM foods, the Student Reporters should try to correct these. The videos should point out where the misunderstandings and inaccuracies lie, and put forth scientifically-correct information to address the misconceptions.

### Flexibility

14 In creating the videos and fulfilling the specified rules and requirements, the Student Reporters are free to design their own methodologies. GMAC wishes to give participants the greatest room for creativity. Depending on their preferences, participants may choose to incorporate photographs, music, subtitles, footages, animations, etc, into their videos. However, participants must ensure that they do not fall foul of any copyright rules and that they obtain all necessary permissions from concerned parties (see Section F - "Copyrights and Permissions").

## **E) LENGTH AND FORMAT OF ENTRIES**

15 Each group of five students will create one video clip. Each video clip is to take the form of live reporting, or could be presented as a documentary.

16 The length of each video clip is to be between 5-7 minutes. Video entries that exceed the time limit will be penalized.

17 Each entry should not exceed 850MB in file size, and is to be of the following specifications:

- i) Dimensions:
  - 320 x 240 pixels (minimum);
  - 640 x 480 pixels (recommended)
- ii) Codec: MPEG-2 or WMW

18 The video entries must be viewable, with reasonable resolution, on the standard Windows Media Player. Depending on the quality of the entries, GMAC may decide to upload selected video clips for public sharing via Youtube. As such, participants should also ensure that the formats of their video clips are Youtube-compatible.

## F) COPYRIGHTS & PERMISSIONS

19 GMAC would like to stress upon participants that plagiarism will result in direct disqualification from the competition. The schools and Teachers-in-Charge are responsible for ensuring the originality of their students' work.

20 Participants should note that there are strict copyright laws governing the use of materials such as images, diagrams, photographs, text, footages, animations, music, etc, from other sources. The basic principle is that participants must not use materials not created by themselves, unless written permission from the creators have been sought. It is not enough to acknowledge the original creators in the video credits (although credits and acknowledgements must certainly be included in the video entries should participants receive formal permission to use materials created by others). More information on copyrights are available from the website of the Intellectual Property Office of Singapore at <http://www.ipos.gov.sg/topNav/hom/>

21 In getting around copyright issues, GMAC urge participants to be original and to restrict their use of images, diagrams, photographs, text, footages, animations, music, etc, to those that they have created themselves. GMAC will give credit to originality of work.

22 GMAC's logo is not to be used in the video entries. Each video entry is to begin with the following text introduction:

“This video, entitled \_\_\_\_\_ *(to insert title of video)*, was created by \_\_\_\_\_ *(to insert of names of participants)* of \_\_\_\_\_ *(to insert name of school)*, as an entry to the \_\_\_\_\_ *(to insert either 'Lower Secondary Category' or 'Upper Secondary Category')* of the GMAC Student Reporters' Challenge 2009. The GMAC Student Reporters' Challenge 2009 is an inter-school educational video creation competition organized by Singapore's Genetic Modification Advisory Committee (GMAC). GMAC seeks to educate the public on gene modification technology and genetically modified organisms, from a neutral and objective standpoint that is based on sound science. The contents of this video entry may not necessarily reflect the views of GMAC.”

23 Filming and video recordings may be prohibited at certain locations. Participants must ensure that they have secured all necessary permits before they proceed with the filming and recordings. In addition, all videoed individuals must be aware of, and must give their consent to, their being captured on the video. In seeking the permissions, participants must inform the relevant individuals and authorities that the video clips might eventually be made available for public view

(e.g. during public video screening sessions, or online via GMAC's website or Youtube).

24 By submitting the video entries to GMAC, all participants agree to grant to the GMAC, free of charge, permission to use the materials in any way it wants, including modifying and adapting them for operational and editorial reasons, or to make them available for public view (e.g. during public video screening sessions, or online via GMAC's website or Youtube).

## **G) SUBMISSION OF ENTRIES**

25 Each video clip entry is to be submitted to GMAC in a single CD or DVD. Each CD and/or DVD should be clearly labelled, as depicted in Annex A, and should be accompanied by a duly-completed Submission Form, given as Annex B.

26 All entries for the GMAC Student Reporters' Challenge 2009 are to be submitted to:

Attn: Ms Tan Kim Ping  
Secretariat, Genetic Modification Advisory Committee  
20 Biopolis Way  
#08-01 Centros  
Singapore 138668

27 All submissions must reach the above addressee **by 6 Jul 2009, 5PM.**

28 All submissions should be made through the Teachers-in-Charge of participating teams. In ensuring that the entries reach GMAC in a timely manner, GMAC suggests that Teachers-in-Charge consider engaging courier service. Alternatively, should Teachers-in-Charge prefer to personally hand-deliver their students' entries, they may drop off the submissions at the Level 1 Receptionist Counter of the Centros building of 20 Biopolis Way. Submission of entries via normal post is not encouraged; GMAC had previously encountered cases where schools' submissions were delayed or lost in the mail. Please note that entries that do not reach GMAC by the submission deadline may be penalized or disqualified from the competition.

29 Teachers-in-Charge will receive, via email, an Acknowledgement of Receipt of their submissions, by 9 Jul 2009. Teachers-in-Charge who fail to receive this Acknowledgement of Receipt by 9 Jul 2009 should contact the GMAC Secretariat immediately.

## H) SHORTLISTING OF SUBMITTED ENTRIES

30 All entries will go through a preliminary round of selection by a GMAC-appointed panel. The selection criteria are as follows:

Criteria (1 <sup>st</sup> Round Selection)	Weightage
Objectivity & scientific accuracy of presented information	60%
Entertainment and aesthetic appeal ( <i>ability to engage and interest a layman audience</i> )	20%
Creativity and innovation	20%

31 Teachers-in-Charge will be informed of the results of the preliminary round of selection by 12 Aug 2009.

## I) FINAL JUDGING OF SHORTLISTED ENTRIES & VIDEO SCREENING SESSION

32 Creators of shortlisted entries would be required to attend a Video Screening Session, tentatively scheduled on 5 Sep 2009. The shortlisted entries would be screened during this session, and subjected to the final round of judging based on the following criteria:

Criteria (Final Judging)	Weightage
Objectivity & scientific accuracy of presented information	50%
Entertainment and aesthetic appeal ( <i>ability to engage and interest a layman audience</i> )	20%
Creativity and innovation	20%
<b>“Special Component”</b>	10%

33 During the Video Screening Session, representatives from each shortlisted team might be required to give a 1-2min verbal introduction on the team’s experiences in creating the video (e.g. on the methodologies adopted, what they have learned, unique encounters and/or observations, etc).

34 The “Special Component” would require little additional efforts on the participants’ part. However, GMAC is keeping the exact identity of this “Special Component” a mystery till later. (*Hint: Through the competition, GMAC seeks not only to educate student participants, but we also want participants to share their knowledge and findings with a wider audience*).

35 The Video Screening Session will be held in Biopolis. The Programme of the session, and the exact nature of the “Special Component”, would be revealed to participants by 12 Aug 2009, along with the results of the preliminary round of selection of entries.

36 Regardless of whether their entries have been shortlisted or not, GMAC encourages all participants of the GMAC Student Reporters' Challenge 2009, and their Teachers-in-Charge, to attend the Video Screening Session. The Video Screening Session will incorporate a Question and Answer component where members of the audience can pose their questions on GM technology, GMOs, and GM foods to a professional panel. Participants should thus keep the day of 5 Sep 2009 free.

## J) PRIZES & PRIZE PRESENTATION

37 The best teams for each of the two competition categories will be awarded as follows:

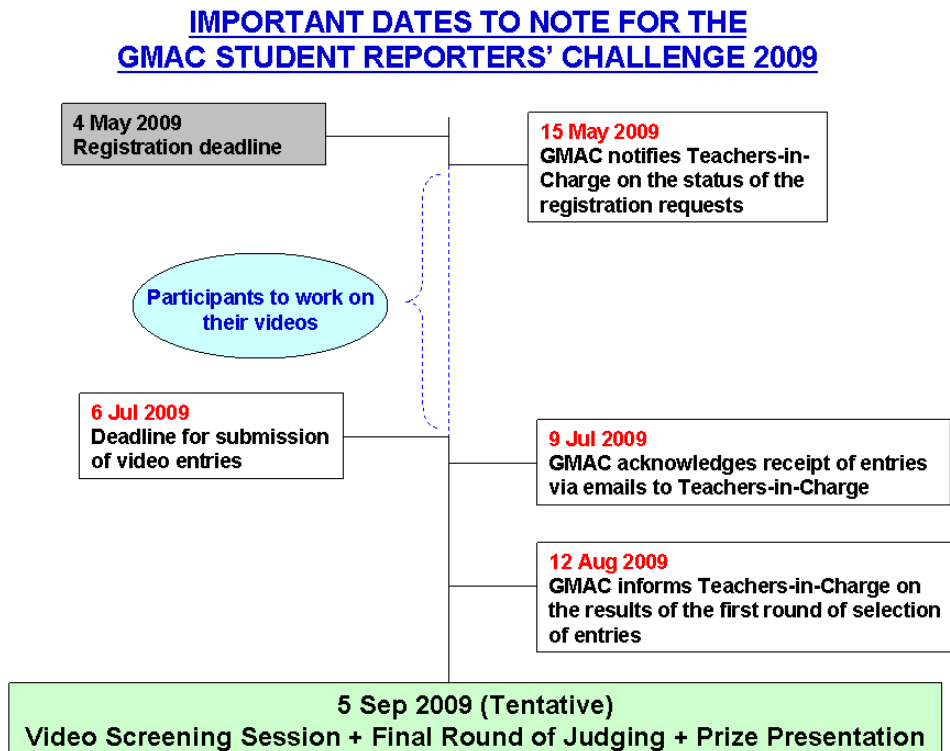
- First Prize - \$1,000 in cash (to be shared among group members)
- Second Prize - \$600 in cash (to be shared among group members)
- Third Prize - \$300 in cash (to be shared among group members)

38 All participants will also receive certificates.

39 The prizes and certificates will be presented during the Video Screening Session.

## K) IMPORTANT DATES TO NOTE

40 The important dates to note are summarized below:



## **L) IMPORTANT NOTE TO PARTICIPANTS & TEACHERS-IN-CHARGE**

41 The rules of the GMAC Student Reporters' Challenge 2009 and the instructions for participants, as stipulated in this document, are to be strictly adhered to. Participants and their Teachers-in-Charge are responsible for ensuring compliance to the rules and instructions, and failure to comply may lead to disqualification from the GMAC Student Reporters' Challenge 2009.

*Issued by GMAC*

*For all enquiries, please contact:*

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