Genetically Engineered Food and Genetically Modified Organisms — What's in YOUR food?

GE food and "GMOs" are interchangeable terms for the genetic engineering of plants and an

imals. By being able to take the genetic material from one organism and insert it into the permanent genetic code of another, biotechnologists have engineered numerous novel creations, such as potatoes with bacteria genes, "super" pigs with human growth genes, fish with cattle growth genes, tomatoes with flounder genes, and thousands of other plants, animals and insects. At an alarming rate, these creations are now being patented and released into the environment — and our food supply.

A number of studies over the past decade have revealed that GE foods can pose serious risks to humans, domesticated animals, wildlife and the environment. Human health effects can include higher risks of toxicity, allergenicity, antibiotic resistance, immune-suppression, cancer and birth defects.

As for environmental impacts, the use of genetic engineering in agriculture will lead to uncontrolled biological pollution, threatening numerous microbial, plant and animal species with extinction, and the potential contamination of all non-genetically engineered life forms with novel and possibly hazardous genetic material.

Most Americans say they would not eat GMOs if labeled, but unlike most other industrialized countries, the U.S. does not require labeling.

The best ways to avoid GMOs are:

1. Buy Organic
2. Look for Non-GMO Verified labels
3. Avoid at-risk ingredients made from corn, soy, canola, cottonseed oil or sugar beets. These ingredients go by many other names:

Corn — Corn flour, meal, oil, starch, gluten, and syrup Sweeteners such as fructose, dextrose, and glucose Modified food starch

Soy — Soy flour, lecithin, protein, isolate, and isoflavone Vegetable oil and vegetable protein (May be derived from other sources)

Canola — Canola oil, also called rapeseed oil

Cotton — Cottonseed oil (often used in processed foods and one of the most heavily sprayed crops)

Sugar beet — sugar recently entered the food supply. Look for organic and non-GMO sweeteners, candy and chocolate products made with 100% cane sugar, evaporated cane juice, agave, or organic sugar, to avoid GM beet sugar.

4. Use a one of the following shopping guide: guide 1 or guide 2 . These guides are also available as a smart phone app:

iphone and android .

Links and Resources

- Will Labeling Raise Prices for Consumers?
- Why Hasn't Walmart Rejected Monsanto's GE Sweet Corn?
- 10 Things Monsanto Does Not Want You to Know
- What You Can Do Today to Avoid Monsanto's GMOs
- Food Democracy Now
- Responses to the support of the NO on the 37 Campaign
- Prop 37: Is your grocer selling-out your values?
- GMO's: Corporate Charlatans Versus Organic Heroes

The Co-op's Statement on GMOs

Without federally required labeling of products containing Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), SNFC cannot guarantee all the products it carries are GMO-free. Because 85–90% of all soybeans, corn, cotton, sugar beets and canola grown in this country contain Monsanto's patented genetically altered genes, products that include these ingredients and were grown using conventional agricultural practices may contain GMOs. For this reason, the CO-OP is committed to providing, whenever possible, at least one product in each food category that is certified by a third party to be organically grown.

Current USDA regulations prohibit the use of GMOs in organic production, so buying USDA Certified organic products is a good way to avoid GMOs and to drive them out of the food system. If the label says "made with organic ingredients," only 70% of the ingredients must be organic, but even those non-organic ingredients cannot be produced from GMOs. Certain crops,

like corn, however, are wind-pollinated, so there is a chance for genetic drift from a GMO corn field to contaminate an organic corn field. In other words, being certain that a product is 100% GMO-free will be difficult while the use of GMOs themselves is widespread and they are not required to be labeled.

Many of the manufacturers whose products are available at the Co-op are going through Non-GMO Project verification for some or all of their products. Choosing products that are Non-GMO verified is another way to avoid GMOs. Look for labeling on our shelves, on product packaging, or visit nongmoproject.org for a list of verified vendors and products.

The Co-op seeks to expand customer awareness of GMOs. This includes providing information about the possible health and environmental risks, pending legislation and opportunities for action. Some ways concerned consumers can get involved include: writing to members of Congress to encourage support of legislation to require mandatory labeling; supporting the Center for Food Safety, and choosing products that are certified organic or Non-GMO verified.

More information on Monsanto, and the impact they pose to the environment.

- Lean about Roundup's Disturbing Legacy
- A recent report published by Earth Open Source, an organization that uses open source collaboration to advance sustainable food production, states that industry regulators have known for years that Roundup, the world's best-selling herbicide produced by Monsanto, causes birth defects. Read the full story here.
- On March 18, 2011 the Center for Food Safety, Earthjustice, Sierra Club, Cornucopia Institute, California Farmers Union, and others filed a lawsuit against Tom Vilsack and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), arguing that the agency's recent unrestricted approval of genetically engineered (GE) "Roundup Ready" alfalfa was unlawful. Read the full story here.

- T&D Willey Farms and Others File a Public Patent Complaint Against Monsanto. Read the full story here.

- According to Food Democracy Now one big PR firm dedicates over 50 staff fulltime to the Monsanto account. On top of this, Monsanto themselves already have 75 staff working solely to investigate and prosecute farmers.

Genetic engineering: The world's greatest scam?

Watch Robyn O'Brien speak about the human health effects of GMOs in the food supply.

It's Time for a Food Fight from NO GMO