

# 5 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT GMOs

## **You have the right to know what's in the food you eat.**

More than 40 nations, including the European Union countries, Australia, Saudi Arabia, Russia, Japan and China, label genetically modified organisms, also known as genetically engineered food.<sup>1</sup> Polls show that more than 9 of 10 Americans want labeling of GMOs.<sup>2</sup> Over the past year, more than 1 million Americans have signed a petition asking the federal Food and Drug Administration to require it.

## **The supermarket (and likely your breakfast) is full of GMOs.**

The most common genetically engineered ingredients -- corn, soy and canola oil -- find their way into 70 percent of popular processed foods<sup>3</sup> like breakfast cereal, cookies, chips, soda and frozen meals. Biotechnology companies are lobbying the government to let them market new crops and a genetically engineered fish.

## **The long-term safety of genetically engineered foods has not been proved.**

When government agencies approve GMOs, they rely on quick studies involving short-lived laboratory animals. These cannot determine the long-term consequences when people eat genetically engineered foods over a lifetime. Some scientists have observed changes in the metabolism of animals fed genetically engineered foods.<sup>4</sup> These alterations may indicate a risk to human health-- we just don't know.

## **GMOs encourage the development of superweeds and harm biodiversity.**

Many genetically engineered crops are engineered to withstand high doses of pesticides like Roundup. Indiscriminate planting of these crops and the extensive use of their associated pesticides have led to the proliferation of pesticide-resistant superweeds.<sup>5</sup> A vicious cycle ensues: farmers use more and stronger pesticides to combat superweeds.<sup>6</sup> Genetically engineered crops and associated pesticides also harm many beneficial insects such as butterflies.<sup>7,8</sup>

## **Genetic engineering hasn't ended hunger.**

Producers of genetically engineered crops argue that their technology will solve world hunger. The reality is starkly the opposite. After nearly two decades, genetically engineered crops have failed to make any meaningful difference for hungry people.<sup>9</sup> <sup>10</sup> <sup>11</sup> Instead, GMO crops drive out locally adapted crop varieties that are suited to particular soils and climates, undermining sustainability and resilience of local farms around the world and contributing to hunger globally.

Will you join us?

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The Environmental Working  
Group is one of 500  
organizations calling on the  
FDA to Just Label It.  
<http://justlabelit.org/>

## References:

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