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Negative: GMO Labels - bad

By “Coach Vance” Trefethen, Eric Meinerding, Emily Jensen and Anna Little

***Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially reform its agriculture and/or food safety policy in the United States.***

This brief argues against the need for mandatory or improved labeling of food products containing Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) or Genetically Engineered (GE) organisms.

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NEGATIVE BRIEF: GMO Labels - bad

NEGATIVE PHILOSOPHY

Fears of the few should not prevent benefits for the many

Dr. David Zilberman 2014. (PhD, Agricultural Resources Economics Department, Univ of California) “GMOs and Global Food Security” December 18th, 2014. <https://www.geneticliteracyproject.org/2014/12/18/gmos-and-global-food-security/>

Most of the foods we now consume are modified. In thousands of years, farmers and societies have developed varieties of corn, rice and potatoes that are totally different from their ancestors. That’s allowed us to utilize our resources much more effectively. Genetic engineering helps us understand how to breed, and how to do it more precisely and in a more sustainable manner. While fears of new technologies are understandable, the exaggerated anxiety of the few should not prevent the many from reaping the proven and safe benefits of science

INHERENCY

1. Already federal law requiring GMO labels

Obama signed mandatory federal GMO labeling in Aug 2016, takes effect in 2 years

Associated Press 2016. “Obama signs federal bill requiring labeling of GMO foods” 1 Aug 2016 <http://www.foxnews.com/leisure/2016/08/01/obama-signs-federal-bill-requiring-labeling-gmo-foods/>

President Barack Obama has signed into law a bill that will require labeling of genetically modified ingredients for the first time. The legislation passed by Congress two weeks ago will require most food packages to carry a text label, a symbol or an electronic code readable by smartphone that indicates whether the food contains genetically modified organisms, or GMOs. The Agriculture Department has two years to write the rules, which will pre-empt a Vermont law that kicked in earlier this month.

1. Voluntary labeling solves

Consumers have all the info they need today: GMO-free foods are proud to label themselves

Henry I. Miller 2013 (physician, is the Robert Wesson Fellow in Scientific Philosophy and Public [Policy](http://www.forbes.com/policy/) at [Stanford University’s](http://www.forbes.com/colleges/stanford-university/) Hoover Institution; he was the founding director of the FDA Office of Biotechnology) Mandatory Labeling Of Genetically Engineered Foods Deserves A Warning Label Of Its Own, October 9th, 2013, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/henrymiller/2013/10/09/mandatory-labeling-of-genetically-engineered-foods-deserves-a-warning-label-of-its-own/2/#56ac028541c3>

Activists’ claims to the contrary, consumers already have plenty of information about the source of the foods they buy.  From 2000 to 2009 alone, roughly 7,000 new foods and beverages with voluntary “GE-free” labeling debuted in U.S. supermarkets.  Among these are large numbers of dairy products that proudly advertise their non-GE pedigrees. The organic industry boasts that certified foods cannot contain GE ingredients, and various food companies and activist groups have created websites, pocket guides, and even smart phone apps that direct purchasers to GE-free products.  With all this information freely available, consumers already have what they need to choose.

Former FDA Commissioner says voluntary labeling addresses consumers’ need for GMO information

Ian Kullgren 2016. (POLITICO Pro Agriculture reporter) “Hamburg worries about mandatory GMO labeling.” June 6th, 2016. <http://www.politico.com/tipsheets/morning-agriculture/2016/06/hamburg-worries-about-mandatory-gmo-labeling-214661> (brackets added)

“I do worry that the calls for mandatory labeling of GMOs potentially send the message that these are dangerous and that concerns me going forward,” she [Former FDA Commissioner Margaret Hamburg] said. “I think if people don’t want to consume GMO containing foods, they should be able to access products that meet those needs and voluntary labeling can address that.”

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE

1. GMOs aren’t dangerous, so no need to label them

FDA testing shows GMOs are all safe. Labeling movement embraces a fear-fueled philosophy

The Editors of Scientific American 2013. (Scientific American, the longest continuously published magazine in the U.S. ) “Labels for GMO Foods Are a Bad Idea” September 1st, 2013. (brackets in original) <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/labels-for-gmo-foods-are-a-bad-idea/>

Instead of providing people with useful information, mandatory GMO labels would only intensify the misconception that so-called Frankenfoods endanger people's health [see “[The Truth about Genetically Modified Food](http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=the-truth-about-genetically-modified-food)”]. The American Association for the Advancement of Science, the World Health Organization and the exceptionally vigilant European Union agree that GMOs are just as safe as other foods. Compared with conventional breeding techniques—which swap giant chunks of DNA between one plant and another—genetic engineering is far more precise and, in most cases, is less likely to produce an unexpected result. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has tested all the GMOs on the market to determine whether they are toxic or allergenic. They are not. (The GMO-fearing can seek out “100 Percent Organic” products, indicating that a food contains no genetically modified ingredients, among other requirements.)

National Academy of Sciences study: 400 page report demonstrating the safety of GMO foods

National Academy of Sciences 2016. (The National Academy of Sciences (NASwas established in 1863 by an Act of Congress, signed by President Lincoln, as a private, nongovernmental institution to advise the nation on issues related to science and technology. Members are elected by their peers for outstanding contributions to research.) “Genetically Engineered Crops: Experiences and Prospects” <http://www.nap.edu/catalog/23395/genetically-engineered-crops-experiences-and-prospects>

Prior National Research Council reports have argued that there is no strict dichotomy between genetic engineering and other forms of plant breeding with respect to risk. Recent developments in genome editing and other emerging genetic-engineering technologies make it even more apparent that regulatory approaches that focus on some form of breeding “process” as an indicator of risk are less and less technically defensible. Some emerging genetic-engineering technologies are likely to create new crop varieties that are indistinguishable from those developed with conventional plant breeding, whereas other technologies, such as mutagenesis, that are not covered by existing laws could create new crop varieties with substantial changes to plant phenotypes. The size and extent of the genetic transformation has relatively little relevance to the extent of the change in the plant and consequently to the risk that it poses to the environment or to food safety. The committee recommends the development of a tiered approach to regulation that is based not on the breeding process but on considerations of novelty, potential hazard, and exposure as criteria. The application of -omics technologies can help to provide greater assurance that no unintended differences have been introduced by whatever breeding technique is used.

Details on the National Academy of Sciences study

Andre Pollack 2016. (Writer for the New York Times specializing in Business and Science in the field of Biotechnology since 2000) “Genetically Engineered Crops are Safe, Analysis Finds.” May 17, 2016. <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/18/business/genetically-engineered-crops-are-safe-analysis-finds.html?_r=0>

The new report was written by a committee of 20, almost all of them from academia. There was no one from crop biotechnology companies like Monsanto or DuPont on the committee, though some members have developed genetically engineered crops and might have been consultants to the companies. The committee examined more than 1,000 studies, heard testimony from 80 witnesses in a series of public meetings and webinars, and analyzed 700 comments submitted by the public.

A/T “GMO Foods are Dangerous to eat” - No Evidence Supports this

National Academy of Sciences 2016. (The National Academy of Sciences (NAS was established in 1863 by an Act of Congress, signed by President Lincoln, as a private, nongovernmental institution to advise the nation on issues related to science and technology. Members are elected by their peers for outstanding contributions to research.) “Genetically Engineered Crops: Experiences and Prospects” <http://www.nap.edu/catalog/23395/genetically-engineered-crops-experiences-and-prospects>

The committee’s objective in this chapter was to examine the evidence that supports or negates specific hypotheses and claims about the risks and benefits associated with foods derived from GE crops. As acknowledged at the beginning of the chapter, understanding the health effects of any food, whether non-GE or GE, can be difficult. The properties of most plant secondary metabolites are not understood, and isolating the effects of diet on animals, including humans, is challenging. Although there are well developed methods for assessing potential allergenicity of novel foods, these methods could miss some allergens. However, the research that has been conducted in studies with animals and on chemical composition of GE food reveals no differences that would implicate a higher risk to human health from eating GE foods than from eating their non-GE counterparts. Long-term epidemiological studies have not directly addressed GE food consumption, but available time-series epidemiological data do not show any disease or chronic conditions in populations that correlate with consumption of GE foods. The committee could not find persuasive evidence of adverse health effects directly attributable to consumption of GE foods.

1. “Right to Know” is bogus

“Right to Know” is meaningless and confusing

James Hamblin MD 2015. (Senior Editor at The Atlantic) “No One Is Denying a ‘Right to Know What's in My Food’” July 24th, 2015. <http://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2015/07/no-one-is-denying-a-right-to-know-whats-in-my-food/399536/>

The central and debilitating fallacy of the “right to know” argument is the meaninglessness and misleading nature of what is being known. Humans have been practicing bioengineering for centuries with selective breeding and cultivation. The Non-GMO Project [defines](http://www.nongmoproject.org/learn-more/what-is-gmo/) “genetically modified organisms” as those “artificially manipulated in a laboratory” as opposed to “traditional cross-breeding methods,” wherein a laboratory is the nidus of transgression. It was only as recently as 1979 that Gallatin Valley Seed won the [All American Selection Award](http://all-americaselections.org/winners/details.cfm?WinID=492) for creating a variety of pea known as sugar snap, which is now ubiquitous, but carries no Franken-crop warning label. Indeed, most any act of agriculture could be considered an imposition of “unnatural” human activity into malleable, unassuming ecosystems. The domain of bioengineering is too vast and complex to know what exactly to make of blanket “GMO” labels; the hopeful premise that this is a binary indicator of good or evil is false. Should I have the “right to know” if my food contains ghosts?

“Right to know” has no scientific or moral basis and is outweighed by the right not to pay extra for labels they don’t want

Thomas A Hemphill and Syagnik Banerjee 2015 (Hemphill is a professor of strategy, innovation and public policy at the School of Management University of Michigan-Flint. Banerjee is an associate professor of mobile and interactive marketing at the school of management). September 2nd, 2015. “Genetically Modified Organisms and the U.S. Retail Food Labeling Controversy: Consumer Perceptions, Regulation, and Public Policy.” [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/basr.12062/full](file:///C:/Users/coustomer/Downloads/article%20request.pdf)

A “right” to know, as a moral right, requires that an individual act with due regard for other people’s interests, as well as his or her own; there must be a mutual sharing of the benefit of the right to know and the burdens of duties, and thus it involves a mutuality of consideration and altruism, rather than egoism. In the case of GMO food labeling, individuals have a right to accurately know if their food is “GMO free,” and thus are able to choose to purchase such food products in the marketplace. However, considering that there is no scientific basis for differentiating GMO versus non-GMO food products and that there exists no U.S. legal requirement to label food as containing GMO or non-GMO food ingredients, offering a nonbiased, standardized form of labeling of GMO free food is reasonable for those demanding it. Yet, this GMO free labeling standard should be adopted on a voluntary basis, and the market access to such food should equitably reflect the full range of costs associated with food products being GMO free. Market demand should dictate the availability and price of GMO food products, and these additional economic costs should not be borne by those not demanding GMO free food.

People who demand “right to know” don’t know very much: They also want labels on food containing DNA

**[Duh. Doesn’t all food contain DNA at some point?]**

Katherine Mangu-Ward 2016 (journalist, editor of REASON magazine) “[80 Percent of Americans Want to Label Food That Contains DNA](https://reason.com/blog/2016/05/24/80-percent-of-americans-want-to-label-fo)” 24 May 2016 <https://reason.com/blog/2016/05/24/80-percent-of-americans-want-to-label-fo>

You might have heard that Americans overwhelmingly favor mandatory labeling for foods containing genetically modified ingredients. That's true, according to a new [study](http://fred.ifas.ufl.edu/news/gmo-knowledge-gap/): 84 percent of respondents said they support the labels. But a nearly identical percentage—80 percent—in the same survey said they'd also like to see labels on food containing DNA.

A/T “Right to Know” – The “DNA” survey [cited above] proves we can’t use surveys to guide public policy on GMO food

Katherine Mangu-Ward 2016 (journalist, editor of REASON magazine) “[80 Percent of Americans Want to Label Food That Contains DNA](https://reason.com/blog/2016/05/24/80-percent-of-americans-want-to-label-fo)” 24 May 2016 <https://reason.com/blog/2016/05/24/80-percent-of-americans-want-to-label-fo>

University of Florida food economist Brandon R. McFadden and his co-author Jayson L. Lusk surveyed 1,000 American consumers and [discovered](http://ageconsearch.umn.edu/bitstream/235325/2/Manuscript%20Text%20File.pdf) that "consumers think they know more than they actually do about GM food." In fact, the authors say, "the findings question the usefulness of results from opinion polls as motivation for public policy surrounding GM food."  My summary for laymen: When it comes to genetically modified food, people don't know much, they don't know what they don't know, and they sure as heck aren't letting that stop them from having strong opinions.

AFF violates “right to know” because the surveys didn’t tell them about the cost. Didn’t they have a “right to know” that too?

Jeff Daniels 2015. (Coordinating Producer at CNBC). “GMOs: Congress may block states from requiring labeling.” 22 July 2015. <http://www.cnbc.com/2015/07/22/gmos-congress-may-block-states.html> (brackets added)

[Center for Food Safety Director for Govt. Affairs, Colin] O'Neil said opinion surveys show around 90 percent of Americans favor requiring labels on GMO foods, although [HR1599 sponsor Rep. Mike] Pompeo countered that those surveys were "inherently flawed" since participants were not told "they'd have to pay $500 a year or more to have that labeling."

1. Specific scientific claims of GMO harm debunked

GMO tomato with fish gene killed a guy in Spain – HOAX STORY FROM A JOKE NEWS SITE

David Mikkelson 2015 (founder of Snopes, a website that researches and debunks hoaxes on the internet) GMOverdose 13 Mar 2015 SNOPES <http://www.snopes.com/media/notnews/gmodeath.asp> (Mikkelson’s quotes from the World News Daily Report, a satirical joke hoax news site, are in tinted background)

On 18 January 2015, the web site World News Daily Report published an [article](http://www.donotlink.com/dzgm) titled "Doctors Confirm First Human Death Officially Caused by GMOs." The site claimed a man named Juan Pedro Ramos had died due to an allergic reaction to genetically modified tomatoes that had been altered with genes from fish:   
Juan Pedro Ramos died from anaphylaxis after eating some recently developed tomatoes containing fish genes, which provoked a violent and lethal allergic reaction. The medical examiners and forensic experts at the Carlos III hospital had to execute a lot of tests and analysis before they could precisely determine what caused Mr. Ramos to die of an allergic reaction to seafood, since all he had eaten before his death was a bacon, lettuce and tomato sandwich with a diet cola. They were astonished when they discovered that the tomato he had ingested, not only contained some fish-related allergens, but also some antibiotic resistant genes which had prevented Mr. Ramos'white blood cell from saving his life.  
The article claimed that Ramos' cause of death was confirmed through testing of the tomatoes he'd purportedly consumed before falling ill:   
"At first we thought that there had been some form of contamination of his food, from contact with fish or seafood during the preparation" explained Dr. Rafael Perez-Santamarina. "It was only when we tested the tomato itself that we noticed that it contained some allergens usually found in seafood. We did many different analysis and they all confirmed that the tomato was indeed the source of the allergens that killed Mr. Ramos."  
However, World News Daily Report is one of a number of fake news outlets known for spreading marginally plausible but completely fabricated claims to be shared via Facebook and Twitter, including the story linked above. The site's [disclaimer](http://www.donotlink.com/d4oi) page states:   
World News Daily Report is a news and political satire web publication, which may or may not use real names, often in semi-real or mostly fictitious ways. All news articles contained within worldnewsdailyreport.com are fiction, and presumably fake news. Any resemblance to the truth is purely coincidental, except for all references to politicians and/or celebrities, in which case they are based on real people, but still based almost entirely in fiction.

No link to gluten allergies or celiac disease: Claims were made without any study

Dr. Layla Katiraee 2015 (PhD in Molecular Genetics from the University of Toronto and an undergraduate degree in biochemistry from the University of Western Ontario) 10 studies proving GMOs are harmful? Not if science matters 13 Nov 2015 <https://www.geneticliteracyproject.org/2015/11/13/10-studies-proving-gmos-are-harmful-not-if-science-matters/>

The article quotes for an alleged “study” by the Institute for Responsible Technology (IRT). But there is no study on the link of GMOs to gluten allergies. There’s a link to a post on a webpage, but there isn’t a peer-reviewed article. IRT is a one-man band run by activist Jeffrey Smith. It is an NGO that [advocates for the elimination of GMOs from our food supply](https://www.geneticliteracyproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/GLP-right-to-know-infographic.pdf). It’s not a university, college or research institution. It doesn’t do studies. I’ve written about [g](http://frankenfoodfacts.blogspot.com/2013/09/link-between-gmos-and-gluten-allergies.html)luten allergies and GMOs. The Celiac Disease foundation has [spoken out](https://www.geneticliteracyproject.org/2014/03/28/do-genetically-modified-foods-cause-gluten-allergies/) against the IRT’s report. GMO wheat has not been commercialized, so any association of gluten allergies with the consumption of GMO wheat is on its face absurd. As for charts that track an increase in GMO consumption in general and gluten allergies, it’s a case of association with no causation (i.e. the incidence of gluten allergies have increased over the past decade and the amount of GMOs we eat have increased too. But, so have the number of plasma screens manufactured).

Study claiming GMO corn caused tumors was flawed and had to be retracted

Dr. Layla Katiraee 2015 (PhD in Molecular Genetics from the University of Toronto and an undergraduate degree in biochemistry from the University of Western Ontario) 10 studies proving GMOs are harmful? Not if science matters 13 Nov 2015 <https://www.geneticliteracyproject.org/2015/11/13/10-studies-proving-gmos-are-harmful-not-if-science-matters/>

This claim is the infamous Seralini paper, which was retracted, and [recently republished,](http://www.forbes.com/sites/jonentine/2014/06/24/zombie-retracted-seralini-gmo-maize-rat-study-republished-to-hostile-scientist-reactions/) in a different journal without being peer reviewed. The paper identified tumors in rats that were fed GMOs and/or the herbicide glyphosate longterm. But the strain of rat used was predisposed to tumors. The paper did not perform statistical analyses and used too few rats, so it was not possible to determine if the tumors were due to the food, the chemical or to the fact that the strain of rats would get tumors regardless of what they were fed. Finally, the findings from Seralini’s paper are contrary to other long-term feeding studies.

Study claiming GMOs cause stomach inflammation in pigs is flawed

Dr. Layla Katiraee 2015 (PhD in Molecular Genetics from the University of Toronto and an undergraduate degree in biochemistry from the University of Western Ontario) 10 studies proving GMOs are harmful? Not if science matters 13 Nov 2015 <https://www.geneticliteracyproject.org/2015/11/13/10-studies-proving-gmos-are-harmful-not-if-science-matters/>

In the study on which this claim is based, the researchers gave pigs GMO feed and non-GMO feed and identified the differences between the two groups. The paper has been thoroughly challenged by many journalists and scientists:   
Journalist Mark Lynas highlighted the degree to which the data is cherry-picked. The difference in “inflammation” between the GM-fed and non-GM-fed pigs is apparent only when you break down the degree of inflammation into subcategories, but there’s no difference if you view it as a single category. Overall, there’s a high rate of inflammation for both groups, which is not explained in the paper. At the same time, there are several parameters where GM-feed could be argued as having a protective effect (there are 50 percent fewer heart-abnormalities in pigs fed GM-grain), but this isn’t discussed.  
As explained by geneticist Anastasia Bodnar, the authors do not analyze the compositional differences in the feed between the two groups. Previous studies have determined that the environment (i.e., water, soil, geography) of a crop has a greater impact on proteins and metabolites than whether or not the crop is a GMO. As such, the differences seen in the pigs may not be due pesticides or presence/absence of the transgenic protein; rather, they are most likely due to differences in composition of the feed

SOLVENCY

1. Doesn’t help consumers #1: Decreases consumer choice

Mandatory GMO labels decrease consumer choice – takes away the option to choose GMO food

The Editors of Scientific American 2013. (Scientific American, the longest continuously published magazine in the U.S. ) “Labels for GMO Foods Are a Bad Idea” September 1st, 2013. <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/labels-for-gmo-foods-are-a-bad-idea/>

Many people argue for GMO labels in the name of increased consumer choice. On the contrary, such labels have limited people's options. In 1997, a time of growing opposition to GMOs in Europe, the E.U. began to require them. By 1999, to avoid labels that might drive customers away, most major European retailers had removed genetically modified ingredients from products bearing their brand. Major food producers such as Nestlé followed suit. Today it is virtually impossible to find GMOs in European supermarkets.

1. Doesn’t help consumers #2: Misleads consumers

GMO labels falsely imply that GMOs are bad

Thomas A Hemphill and Syagnik Banerjee 2015 (Hemphill is a professor of strategy, innovation and public policy at the School of Management University of Michigan-Flint. Banerjee is an associate professor of mobile and interactive marketing at the school of management). September 2nd, 2015. “Genetically Modified Organisms and the U.S. Retail Food Labeling Controversy: Consumer Perceptions, Regulation, and Public Policy.” [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/basr.12062/full](file:///C:/Users/coustomer/Downloads/article%20request.pdf)

As to labeling processed retail food containing GMOs, the FDA is the lead federal agency and has the administrative authority to prevent false and misleading labeling of foods and drugs (Acosta 2014). Because, as a matter of policy, the FDA views genetically engineered food as not materially different from traditional food products, there is no need to specifically label these products as GMO retail processed food or change the name of the food product (Bashur 2013). The FDA views such a label statement as implying to consumers that GMO food is inferior or unsafe (Bashur 2013).

Labels would intensify misconception that GMO foods are dangerous

Scientific American 2013 won the 2011 National Magazine Award for General Excellence. “Labels For GMO Foods Are A Bad Idea”, September 1, 2013, <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/labels-for-gmo-foods-are-a-bad-idea/> (brackets in original)

Instead of providing people with useful information, mandatory GMO labels would only intensify the misconception that so-called Frankenfoods endanger people's health [see “[The Truth about Genetically Modified Food](https://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=the-truth-about-genetically-modified-food)”]. The American Association for the Advancement of Science, the World Health Organization and the exceptionally vigilant European Union agree that GMOs are just as safe as other foods. Compared with conventional breeding techniques—which swap giant chunks of DNA between one plant and another—genetic engineering is far more precise and, in most cases, is less likely to produce an unexpected result. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has tested all the GMOs on the market to determine whether they are toxic or allergenic. They are not.

Mandatory labeling is misleading: erroneously implies a meaningful difference

Henry I. Miller 2013 (physician, is the Robert Wesson Fellow in Scientific Philosophy and Public [Policy](http://www.forbes.com/policy/) at [Stanford University’s](http://www.forbes.com/colleges/stanford-university/) Hoover Institution; he was the founding director of the FDA Office of Biotechnology) Mandatory Labeling Of Genetically Engineered Foods Deserves A Warning Label Of Its Own, October 9th, 2013, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/henrymiller/2013/10/09/mandatory-labeling-of-genetically-engineered-foods-deserves-a-warning-label-of-its-own/2/#56ac028541c3>

The term “genetically engineered” itself is misleading. GE foods are not in any way a meaningful “category,” which makes any choice of what to include wholly arbitrary.  Nor are they less safe or less “natural” than thousands of other common foods.  In fact, as federal regulators have said, a mandatory label erroneously implies a meaningful difference where none exists.

DISADVANTAGES

1. Global food security threatened

Link: Fear. Mandatory GMO labels falsely discourages the use of GMO crops, which threatens global food security

Ian Kullgren 2016. (POLITICO Pro Agriculture reporter) “Hamburg worries about mandatory GMO labeling.” June 6th, 2016. <http://www.politico.com/tipsheets/morning-agriculture/2016/06/hamburg-worries-about-mandatory-gmo-labeling-214661>

Those opposed to mandatory GMO labeling got some welcome words from a former top Obama administration official on Friday. Former FDA Commissioner Margaret Hamburg said she is concerned it could send the wrong message to consumers. “This is the area that worries me the most, that we not enter a period of what some call science denialism out of fear,” Hamburg said at the O’Neill Institute’s Vote Food 2016 event at Georgetown Law Center, during a conversation about science in food policy. Hamburg said the positives for GMO crops, in particular, are “very compelling especially if we care about food security around the globe.”

Link: Labeling leads to abandonment of GMO food

Thomas A Hemphill and Syagnik Banerjee 2015 (Hemphill is a professor of strategy, innovation and public policy at the School of Management University of Michigan-Flint. Banerjee is an associate professor of mobile and interactive marketing at the school of management). September 2nd, 2015. “Genetically Modified Organisms and the U.S. Retail Food Labeling Controversy: Consumer Perceptions, Regulation, and Public Policy.” [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/basr.12062/full](file:///C:/Users/coustomer/Downloads/article%20request.pdf)

With diminished economic prospects, coupled with high non-GMO purity thresholds, many food processors may decide to abandon genetically engineered food production (Sexton 2012). Previous experiences with mandatory GMO retail food labeling in the European Union, Japan, and New Zealand have resulted in grocery retailers eliminating GMO food products from their shelves, largely due to consumer aversion to these products after mandatory labeling requirements were implemented.

Link: Mandatory labeling hurts genetic engineering, needed to solve global nutrition challenges

Daren Bakst 2016 (quoted by Justin Pose, Communications Manager at The Heritage Foundation. Baskt is an agricultural policy expert at The Heritage Foundation) “Mandatory GMO Labeling Laws “Coercive, Unfounded and Misleading.”  June 8th, 2016.<http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2016/06/mandatory-gmo-labeling-laws-coercive-unfounded-and-misleading>

“Mandatory labeling would likely have a negative effect on genetic engineering, which has so much potential to solve many agricultural and nutrition challenges around the world,” Bakst said. “It also would likely hurt agriculture; about half of U.S. cropland (169 million acres) was used to grow genetically engineered corn, cotton, and soybeans in 2013.”

Link:  US agriculture is key to combating global hunger

Arlene Mitchell 2015 (Executive Director, Global Child Nutrition Foundation)  30 Nov 2015 Agriculture’s Role in Combating Global Hunger, Written testimony to the United States Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry <http://www.agriculture.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Testimony_Mitchell.pdf>

Agriculture—especially American agriculture—can play a major role in combating global hunger. Hunger is a scourge that has negative ramifications both for the hungry themselves and even for those far removed. The hungry suffer the direct anguish and debilitating effects (even death) for themselves and their families; those far removed from hunger also pay a price, through the costs associated with humanitarian assistance and health care as well as the toll of lost education and productivity.   The United Nations World Food Program cites six major causes of hunger: the poverty trap, lack of investment in agriculture, climate and weather, war and displacement, unstable markets, and food wastage. In fact five of those six causes (all but war and displacement) are directly linked to agriculture. It can therefore be argued that the primary solutions to hunger can also be found in agriculture.   There are moral arguments for dealing with hunger at home and abroad, but moral imperative aside, there is self‐interest to consider. American interests are at stake, too. The productivity and competitiveness of American agriculture is closely linked to the issues and changing landscape of agriculture internationally; our own agriculture and the U.S. economy can benefit from progress against global hunger.

Brink: GMOs are key to securing global food supply and preventing starvation. If we let them.

Newsweek 2015 (journalist Tom Parrett) 21 May 2015 “GMO Scientists Could Save the World From Hunger, If We Let Them” <http://www.newsweek.com/2015/05/29/gmo-scientists-could-save-world-hunger-if-we-let-them-334119.html>

Such disasters are increasingly common on a planet buffeted by climate change and worldwide commerce, where heat burns crops, soil has been ruined by over-farming and drought, and bugs ride across oceans to feast on defenseless plants. Agronomists have been working on these problems for years, but the rapid population growth of humans makes overcoming these challenges increasingly urgent. If we can’t feed the world, it will eventually feed on us. The United Nations and experts say global food production will have to double by 2050, at which point the world population is expected to have grown from 7 billion today to well beyond 9 billion. That’s just 35 years away, and there will be no new arable land then. In fact, there probably will be less. For example, 73 million acres of arable land in the U.S. were lost between 2002 and 2012, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA); more was certainly made fallow during the last several years of severe drought. Looking ahead, growing conditions will only get harsher. The solution, though, appears to be on the way: In 2012, a new tool was invented that revolutionizes how scientists can examine—and manipulate—plant genetic processes. It’s called CRISPR-Cas9, and unlike its predecessors in the world of genetic modification, it is highly specific, allowing scientists to zero in on a single gene and turn it on or off, remove it or exchange it for a different gene. Early signs suggest this tool will be an F-16 jet fighter compared with the Stone Age spear of grafting, the traditional, painstaking means of breeding a new plant hybrid. Biologists and geneticists are confident it can help them build a second Green Revolution—if we’ll let them.

Impact: Millions starve. 870 million are hungry and billions more are coming. We need 70% more food

Dr Tammy Beckham 2015 (DVM, Ph.D., Dean of the Kansas State University College of Veterinary Medicine) testimony before the House Committee on Agriculture 4 Nov 2015 <http://agriculture.house.gov/uploadedfiles/11.4.15_beckham_testimony.pdf>

In addition to understanding the importance of the agricultural industry in the U.S. and its role in supporting national security, it is also important and critical that we understand the role of global food security in securing the homeland. Currently, 870 million people around the world do not have access to safe and nutritious food in a sufficient supply. By the year 2050, the global population is expected to exceed 9 billion people. Nearly all of the growth is expected to occur in developing countries. Feeding 9 billion people will demand that food production is increased by 70% and more specifically, that food production in the developing world double.

Impact: Food shortages, political instability, social unrest, extremism, conflict, and threats to US national security.

Dr Tammy Beckham 2015 (DVM, Ph.D., Dean of the Kansas State University College of Veterinary Medicine) testimony before the House Committee on Agriculture 4 Nov 2015 <http://agriculture.house.gov/uploadedfiles/11.4.15_beckham_testimony.pdf>

Meeting these growing demands will be critical if we hope to maintain political stability in increasingly volatile regions across the globe. Food insecurity and scarcity is well known to be one of the most potent drivers of political instability and social unrest. In fact, according to the Lugar Center, “global food security has both foreign policy and national security implications for the U.S. Diplomatic efforts to maintain peace and stability are much more difficult whenever there are food shortages contributing to extremism and conflict”. Perfect examples of this have been seen throughout the Middle East and North Africa, where countries import over half of their food.

Impact: Higher food prices for the poor, leading to food crises and riots

David Zilberman 2014. (PhD, Agricultural Resources Economics Department, University of California) “GMOs and Global Food Security” December 18th, 2014. <https://www.geneticliteracyproject.org/2014/12/18/gmos-and-global-food-security/>

Because small shortages in food availability lead to drastic increases in prices of food that harm mostly the poor, GMO has already made a significant positive contribution to human well-being. For example, without GMOs the price of soybean would be around 33 percent higher and about 13 percent higher for corn. These increases played a role in preventing the food crises and riots of 2008 and 2011 from becoming a global phenomenon. Without GM, the shortages that occurred during these periods were smaller than the amounts provided by GM; without GM crops, we could experience similar crises in the years ahead.

1. Reduced global standard of living

GMO regulatory uncertainty blocks needed progress on feeding humanity and improving global standards of living

Dr. David Zilberman 2014. (PhD, Agricultural Resources Economics Department, Univ of California) “GMOs and Global Food Security” December 18th, 2014. <https://www.geneticliteracyproject.org/2014/12/18/gmos-and-global-food-security/>

Genetically Modified (GM) foods and crops are a key tool in helping to address the challenge of feeding a growing and more prosperous population, and improving the global standard of living today and for future generations. The high costs and uncertainty about the regulation of GMOs have slowed the rate of innovation of new traits and prevented startups and major companies from developing many second-generation varieties that could improve our well-being, enhance environmental sustainability and make a major contribution to addressing the challenges of climate change.

1. Consumer Cost.

Mandatory GMO labeling increases costs for American families by $500/year

Thomas A Hemphill and Syagnik Banerjee 2015 (Hemphill is a professor of strategy, innovation and public policy at the School of Management University of Michigan-Flint. Banerjee is an associate professor of mobile and interactive marketing at the school of management). September 2nd, 2015. “Genetically Modified Organisms and the U.S. Retail Food Labeling Controversy: Consumer Perceptions, Regulation, and Public Policy.” [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/basr.12062/full](file:///C:/Users/coustomer/Downloads/article%20request.pdf)

Labeling requirements (including specific individual state-mandated GMO percentage thresholds) of GMO processed foods would impose a cost on all consumers—including those not desiring such information. The existing U.S. food system infrastructure, that is, involving separate planting, storage, processing/packaging, and transportation, is inadequate to accommodate this segregation of GMO and non-GMO products and meet the legislative requirements of high non-GMO purity standards, thus requiring significant capital investment on the part of the GMO food processing industry and increased costs to the consumer (Byrne 2010; Sexton 2012; Washington State Academy of Sciences 2013). A study undertaken at Cornell University revealed that New York’s proposed mandatory GMO labeling bill would cost New York State families an average of $500 per year, echoing similar increases in the cost of food for consumers found in earlier studies undertaken in both Washington State and California (Grocery Manufacturers Association 2014b).

Northbridge Study: GMO Labeling = $400/year added cost for average family in California

The Editors of Scientific American 2013. (Scientific American, the longest continuously published magazine in the U.S. ) “Labels for GMO Foods Are a Bad Idea” September 1st, 2013. <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/labels-for-gmo-foods-are-a-bad-idea/>

Americans who oppose genetically modified foods would celebrate a similar exclusion. Everyone else would pay a price. Because conventional crops often require more water and pesticides than GMOs do, the former are usually more expensive. Consequently, we would all have to pay a premium on non-GMO foods—and for a questionable return. Private research firm Northbridge Environmental Management Consultants estimated that Prop 37 would have raised an average California family's yearly food bill by as much as $400. The measure would also have required farmers, manufacturers and retailers to keep a whole new set of detailed records and to prepare for lawsuits challenging the “naturalness” of their products.

Specific details about WHY labeling substantially raises food production costs

Jon Entine and Bruce Chassey 2015 (Chassy - Professor Emeritus of Food Science and Human Nutrition, University of Illinois-Urbana-Champaign. Entine - executive director of the Genetic Literacy Project, is a Senior Fellow at the World Food Center Institute for Food and Agricultural Literacy, University of California-Davis) The Huffington Post, “The Real Cost of Mandatory GMO Labeling”, December 23, 2015. <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jon-entine/the-real-cost-of-mandator_b_8865742.html>

Segregation of a GM crop from a non-GM crop adds considerably to the cost of food. [Separate facilities](http://nebraskawheatie.com/gmo-labeling-harvest/) would be required to be built from farm to the supermarket to accomplish that end. Separation of GM from non-GM would be particularly difficult on the farm level since GM seeds and grain are indistinguishable from non-GM ones. Farmers would need to duplicate bins, tractors, implements, planters, storage facilities and so on to be able to separate the two products—and they would need costly tests to ensure they have done it right.

1. Chemical fertilizer runoff

Link: Labeling discourages the growth of GMO crops. Cross-apply DA-1 first 3 link cards

Link: GMO crops protect the environment by reducing the amount of land and chemicals needed to grow food

David Zilberman 2014. (PhD, Agricultural Resources Economics Department, University of California) “GMOs and Global Food Security” December 18th, 2014. <https://www.geneticliteracyproject.org/2014/12/18/gmos-and-global-food-security/>

There are sustainability benefits as well. Because GMO increases the productivity of land, it reduces the amount of land we need to farm and the use of chemicals, water, energy, and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from agriculture needed to produce a certain volume of food.

Impact: More land + more fertilizer = massive Dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico as bad as the BP oil spill

Carolyn Lochhead 2010 (journalist) 6 July 2010 “Dead zone in gulf linked to ethanol production” SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE <http://www.sfgate.com/politics/article/Dead-zone-in-gulf-linked-to-ethanol-production-3183032.php>

Each year, nitrogen used to fertilize corn, about a third of which is made into ethanol, leaches from Midwest croplands into the Mississippi River and out into the gulf, where the fertilizer feeds giant algae blooms. As the algae dies, it settles to the ocean floor and decays, consuming oxygen and suffocating marine life. Known as hypoxia, the oxygen depletion kills shrimp, crabs, worms and anything else that cannot escape. The dead zone has doubled since the 1980s and is expected this year to grow as large as 8,500 square miles and hug the Gulf Coast from Alabama to Texas. As to which is worse, the oil spill or the hypoxia, "it's a really tough call," said Nathaniel Ostrom, a zoologist at Michigan State University. "There's no real answer to that question."

Impact: Nutrient pollution from farm runoff causes human sickness and death

Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Task Force 2015 (federal task force under the Environmental Protection Agency that is studying and remedying hypoxia in the Gulf of Mexico) HTF 2015 Report to Congress <https://www.epa.gov/ms-htf/htf-2015-report-congress>

In addition to hypoxia, nutrient pollution has other impacts. High levels of nutrients in drinking water—nitrate in particular—and elevated levels of by-products from the reaction of disinfection agents with organic material (e.g., algae from nutrient excess) have been linked with increased disease risks, illnesses, and even death (State-EPA Nutrient Innovations Task Group 2009). The economic costs of treating nutrient-enriched drinking water are considerable; one USDA study estimates that the cost to all public and private sources of removing nitrate from U.S. drinking water supplies—not just drinking water supplies in HTF states—is over $4.8 billion per year (Ribaudo et al. 2011). Efforts to control Gulf Hypoxia can have the corollary benefit of reducing drinking water concerns and other more localized impacts of nutrient excess in communities located in the MARB. In Ohio, Grand Lake St. Marys, which feeds the Wabash River and flows to the Ohio River before joining the Mississippi River, is a striking example of the environmental and economic impacts of nitrogen and phosphorus pollution. Grand Lake St. Marys covers more than 13,000 acres and is Ohio’s largest inland waterbody. In 2009, nutrient loading from farm runoff, failing septic systems, and lawn fertilizers triggered unprecedented blooms of toxic algae, leading to the death of fish, birds, and dogs, as well as illnesses in at least seven people (State-EPA Nutrient Innovations Task Group 2009).

1. First Amendment violation

Link: Mandatory GMO Labeling Violates the First Amendment

Layla Parker-Katiraee PhD 2015. (PhD in Molecular Genetics from the University of Toronto and a Bachelors degree in biochemistry from the University of Western Ontario. She is a Staff Scientist in DNA Sequencing Product Development). “Is the HR 1599 the SAFE Act or the DARK Act?” September 11th, 2015 <https://www.biofortified.org/2015/09/thesafeact/>

According to some experts, making companies label GMOs is a violation of the 1st amendment. The amendment which protects freedom of speech, also makes it unlawful to force speech, and this freedom is extended to commercial speech. The limits of this commercial freedom of speech have been loosely outlined in a Supreme Court Case from 1985: “Commercial speech that is not false or deceptive and does not concern unlawful activities may be restricted only in the service of a substantial governmental interest, and only through means that directly advance that interest.” It’s on this basis that Vermont’s labeling law is being appealed in court.

Link: When there’s no impact on human health, federal courts have ruled mandatory labeling violates the 1st Amendment. Consumer curiosity doesn’t outweigh 1st Amendment rights

Henry I. Miller 2013 (physician, is the Robert Wesson Fellow in Scientific Philosophy and Public Policy at Stanford University’s Hoover Institution; he was the founding director of the FDA Office of Biotechnology) Mandatory Labeling Of Genetically Engineered Foods Deserves A Warning Label Of Its Own, October 9th, 2013, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/henrymiller/2013/10/09/mandatory-labeling-of-genetically-engineered-foods-deserves-a-warning-label-of-its-own/2/#56ac028541c3> (ellipses and italics in original)

In another federal case relevant to I-522, several food associations and companies challenged a Vermont statute that required labeling to identify milk from cows treated with bioengineered bovine somatotropin.  Because the state could not demonstrate that its labeling requirement was motivated by anything more than satisfying consumer curiosity, the court said it could not compel milk producers to include that information on product labels: “We are aware of no case in which consumer interest alone was sufficient to justify requiring a product’s manufacturers to publish the functional equivalent of a warning about a production method that has no discernible impact on a final product. … Absent some indication that this information bears on a reasonable concern for human health or safety or some other sufficiently substantial governmental concern, the manufacturers cannot be compelled to disclose it,” because it would violate constitutional guarantees of commercial free speech. “Were consumer interest alone sufficient,” said the court, “there is no end to the information that states could require manufacturers to disclose about their production methods.”

Impact: First Amendment is key to protecting our human rights

David L. Hudson 2006 (expert in First Amendment issues and a regular contributor to the First Amendment Center's website; teaches law and was a scholar at the First Amendment Center.) 3 Jan 2006 “Personal & public expression overview” <http://www.firstamendmentcenter.org/personal-public-expression>

The First Amendment remains a vibrant source of protection in our constitutional democracy, our blueprint for personal liberty. Without it, we would be at the government’s mercy when we engaged in both personal and public expression.

1. Food safety risk turn. GMO labeling actually makes food less safe, 2 ways:

Link 1: GMOs are safer than traditional ways of modifying plants because genetic engineering is more precise

Scientific American 2013 won the 2011 National Magazine Award for General Excellence. “Labels For GMO Foods Are A Bad Idea”, September 1, 2013, <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/labels-for-gmo-foods-are-a-bad-idea/> (brackets in original)

Instead of providing people with useful information, mandatory GMO labels would only intensify the misconception that so-called Frankenfoods endanger people's health [see “[The Truth about Genetically Modified Food](https://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=the-truth-about-genetically-modified-food)”]. The American Association for the Advancement of Science, the World Health Organization and the exceptionally vigilant European Union agree that GMOs are just as safe as other foods. Compared with conventional breeding techniques—which swap giant chunks of DNA between one plant and another—genetic engineering is far more precise and, in most cases, is less likely to produce an unexpected result. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has tested all the GMOs on the market to determine whether they are toxic or allergenic. They are not.

Link 2: GMO labels would distract consumers from more important labels that warn of real health issues

Dr. David Edwards 2010. (Ph.D.; Director, Animal Biotechnology, Food & Agriculture Section, Biotechnology Innovation Organization) 19 Nov 2010 “Re: (Docket No. FDA-2010-N-0385) Food Labeling; Labeling of Food Made From AquAdvantage Salmon “ <https://www.bio.org/advocacy/letters/food-labeling-labeling-food-made-aquadvantage-salmon>

As FDA has determined previously, and the courts have upheld, the mere fact of genetic engineering as part of a product’s breeding history is not a material fact that warrants labeling. In other words, labeling is not required for the salmon meat just because genetic engineering was used in the breeding of these salmon. To require special labeling of foods that are indistinguishable based on breeding methods would mislead consumers by falsely implying material differences where none exist. The mandatory addition of immaterial product information on any product label also risks diverting consumer attention from material and important food label information, such as nutritional information.

Impact: Turn the affirmative’s harms. Food safety gets worse, not better.

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* [Stoa Policy Release #11: “Food Labeling” (NEG)](https://www.monumentpublishing.com/stoa-policy-release-11-negative-brief-food-labeling/) (9/12/2016)
* [Stoa Policy Release #10: “Food Labeling” (AFF)](https://www.monumentpublishing.com/stoa-policy-release-10-affirmative-case-food-labeling/) (9/5/2016)
* [Stoa Policy Release #09: “CAFO Emissions Regulation” (NEG)](https://www.monumentpublishing.com/stoa-policy-release-9-negative-brief-cafo-emissions-regulation/) (8/29/2016)
* [Stoa Policy Release #08: “CAFO Emissions Regulation” (AFF)](https://www.monumentpublishing.com/stoa-policy-release-8-affirmative-case-cafo-emissions-regulation/) (8/22/2016)
* [Stoa Policy Release #07: “Crop Insurance” (NEG)](https://www.monumentpublishing.com/stoa-policy-release-7-negative-brief-crop-insurance/) (8/15/2016)
* [Stoa Policy Release #06: “Crop Insurance” (AFF)](https://www.monumentpublishing.com/stoa-policy-release-6-affirmative-case-crop-insurance/) (8/8/2016)
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