

## Testimony in Support of the Genetically Modified Foods Bill, HB 5117

For Wednesday Feb. 22, 2012

from: Janet Heller 452 Adams St. Manchester, CT 06040

I strongly support HB 5117, the Genetically Modified Foods Bill. I have long been concerned about genetically engineered seeds, crops and food. Almost anyone I talk to agrees that Genetically Engineered foods (also known as GMOs) should not be sold to us without our knowing it. As a member of CTNOFA, I know many farmers, gardeners and local food lovers and supporters who are deeply concerned about the spread of GMOs and the largely unknown risks to us when they are found in our food supply.

Some will argue that labeling foods that contain GMOs is unnecessary, because people can choose food labeled "Certified Organic" or "GMO free." However, many people on limited incomes either do not have the money or the time to seek out "Certified Organic" or GMO-free foods, and they especially may be less able to learn about all the new GMO food crops that may soon be hitting the fields, food processing industries, and supermarkets, if left unchallenged. Clear labels on food bought at supermarkets or even picked up at food pantries, will give everyone, regardless of income, the information they need to use or not to use GMO food products.

The public has the right to know what is in the food we are eating, and whether it has been altered in any unnatural way using genetic material forcibly added to its DNA from other species.

Fortunately so far almost all the fresh Connecticut-grown food for human consumption is GMO-free. We want it to stay that way, and so do the farmers who want to sell their produce to us.

Now is the time to pass a labeling law. Time is very important. More information about health problems and other risks of growing and using these products is finally getting out to the wider public. Just Monday we received a press release on the newly discovered dangers to human cells of Bt toxins found in GMO crops, as well as more findings of the dangers of even small amounts of Roundup residues on foods. Since so many GMO crops are engineered to be Roundup Ready, millions of square miles of these crops such as corn and soybeans, are heavily sprayed. You can imagine how many processed foods made with GMOs contain residues of Roundup on them. No one yet knows what the cumulative effect will be of these residues and of the genes from bacteria or viruses and from other species forced into these Genetically Engineered seeds. Europe and other countries around the world are watching us, while they stay mostly GMO free. We are the guinea pigs.

Connecticut can be one of the first of many states to pass a law requiring GMO foods to be labeled. Consider the health of Connecticut's citizens, especially its children who are among the most vulnerable to food and allergy problems that may be created by GMO food products, and may affect their whole lives adding to future health costs to us all. A safe and healthy citizenry requires the knowledge first and foremost of what is in our food! Please let us label it!

I strongly urge you to pass HB 5117, the Genetically Modified Foods Bill.

Please note resolutions on the next page.

Thank you, Janet Heller

**I, Janet Heller, also submit the following two resolutions in support of HB 5117:**

CT NOFA  
PO Box 164, Stevenson,  
CT 06491

**RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT LABELING OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOODS -**

WHEREAS, food is a fundamental prerequisite to human life; and

WHEREAS, the inalienable right to choose the foods we consume is confounded by the absence of labels identifying Genetically Modified Foods; and

WHEREAS, The Connecticut Chapter of the Northeast Farming Association (CTNOFA) places the highest value on promoting informed, educated and knowledgeable consumers;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the CT NOFA Board of Directors Supports efforts to require that all food products shall be labeled to reflect that the food has been Altered, grown or processed as a "Genetically Modified Food."

Approved unanimously by all present at a regular board meeting of CTNOFA on Feb. 18, 2012

*Janet Heller*, board secretary

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Unitarian Universalist Society: East's  
Sustainable Living Committee  
153 Vernon St. West, Manchester, CT 06042-2209

**RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT LABELING OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOODS -**

WHEREAS, food is a fundamental prerequisite to human life; and

WHEREAS, the inalienable right to choose the foods we consume is confounded by the absence of labels identifying Genetically Modified Foods; and

WHEREAS, The Unitarian Universalist Society: East's(UUS:E) Sustainable Living Committee places the highest value on promoting informed, educated and knowledgeable consumers;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UUS:E Sustainable Living Committee Supports efforts to require that all food products shall be labeled to reflect that the food has been altered, grown or processed as a "Genetically Modified Food."

Co-chairs: ***Susan McMillen and Jay Stewart***

Approved unanimously by members of the committee at a regular meeting, and signed on Feb. 14, 2012