

Attn: Connecticut Legislative Leadership

Sub: HB 6519 and HB 6527 "Mandated Labeling of Genetically Modified Foods and Seeds for Connecticut Consumers"

1) I am a resident of Naugatuck and an organic farmer in the state of Connecticut.

(2) I am writing because I want you to support the GMO labeling bills HB 6519 and HB 6527.

(3) As a consumer I would not select a GMO food product over a natural organic food item. I have the right to know what is in my food so I can make the right choices about what food to feed my family. I have the right to know because I don't want to support agriculture that is dependent on chemicals. GMOs have never been proven safe by our government and there are numerous studies that link GMOs with infertility, gastrointestinal disease and cancer.

(4) Please support HB 6519 and HB 6527 and urge your colleagues in the legislative leadership branch to support GMO labeling.

GMO Health Risks: Amazingly, since 1996 Americans have been eating genetically modified (GM) ingredients in most processed foods. GM plants, such as soybean, corn, cottonseed, and canola have had foreign genes forced into their DNA and the inserted genes come from species, such as bacteria and viruses, that have never been in the human food supply. Genetically modified organisms (GMOs) are not safe. They have been linked to thousands of toxic and allergenic reactions, thousands of sick, sterile, and dead livestock, and damage to virtually every organ and system studied in lab animals.

The FDA does not require any safety evaluations for GMOs. Instead, biotech companies, who have been found guilty of hiding toxic effects of their chemical products, are now in charge of determining whether their GM foods are safe.

GM foods on the market: The primary reason companies genetically engineer plants are to make them tolerant to their brand of herbicide. The four major GM plants, soy, corn, canola, and cotton, are designed to survive an otherwise deadly dose of weed killer. These crops have much higher residues of toxic herbicides. About 68% of GM crops are herbicide tolerant. The second GM trait is a built-in pesticide.

A gene from the soil bacterium called Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) is inserted into corn and cotton DNA, where it secretes the insect-killing Bt-toxin in every cell. About 19% of GM crops produce their own pesticide. Another 13% produce a pesticide and are herbicide tolerant.

Bt corn and cotton linked to allergies: The biotech industry claims that Bt-toxin is harmless to humans and mammals because the natural bacteria version has been used as a spray by farmers for years. In reality, hundreds of people exposed to Bt spray had allergic-type symptoms and mice fed Bt had powerful immune responses and damaged intestines.

Functioning GM genes remain inside you: Unlike safety evaluations for drugs, there are no human clinical trials of GM foods. The only published human feeding experiment verified that genetic material inserted into GM soy transfers into the DNA of intestinal bacteria and continues to function. This means that long after we stop eating GM foods, we may still have their GM proteins produced continuously inside of us.

If the antibiotic gene inserted into most GM crops were to transfer, it could create super diseases, resistant to antibiotics. If the gene that creates Bt -toxin in GM corn were to transfer, it might turn our intestinal flora into living pesticide factories. GMO corn fields can also cross-pollinate to organic corn fields so there is no end to this madness and we need to put a stop to it now.

The American Academy of Environmental Medicine (AAEM) has warned that GMOs pose a serious threat to health, and it is no accident that there can be a correlation between it and adverse health effects. In fact, the AAEM has advised doctors to tell their patients to avoid GMOs as the introduction of GMOs into the current food supply has correlated with an alarming rise in chronic diseases and food allergies.

As consumers we demand honest "Identification" and "Labeling" of all GMO/GME foods and seeds entering the Connecticut Food chain and its markets. We have a right to know and a right to choice.

Sincerely,



Joanne Charon
Autumn Harvest Orchard, LLC