

GMOs in Austin, Texas

Main Talking Points

+ Over 70% of the corn grown in the US is grown from genetically engineered seeds from Monsanto, and it is estimated that 80% of food in most grocery stores contain genetically modified ingredients.

+ GMOs can cause severe allergic reactions, increased number of allergies, antibiotic resistance, immune suppression, organ failure and cancer, especially in children.

+ The GMO corn made by Monsanto is classified by the EPA as an Insecticide. Monsanto also makes potatoes altered with bacteria genes, "super" pigs altered with human growth genes, tomatoes altered with fish genes, and fish altered with cattle growth genes.

+ Over ten years ago, the Task Force on Genetically Modified Foods here in Texas recommended GMO Labeling to all Texans. In the ten years since this taskforce reported back, nothing has been done; no legislation on this issue has been passed, or even voted on, at the national, state or local level.

+ National polls show that between 87 and 96% of the entire US agrees that GMOs should be labeled. <http://JustLabelIt.org>

+ Similar initiatives are moving forward in Seattle, California and Vermont at the state level, and nationally through Representative Dennis Kucinich. Over 40 nations across the planet require GMOs to be labeled, including nearly all of Europe, Japan, Brazil, Mexico, China, Australia and Russia.

+ The major opponent to labeling here in the US has been Monsanto, whose former and future executives have been top officials at the FDA in every administration from Reagan to Obama.

+ Austin is home to Whole Foods who has been very active on this issue nationally. Most recently, their recommendations were once again dismissed by the FDA. Whole Foods commonly frames the issue as a labor rights issue for organic farmers victimized by Monsanto's business practices.

+ This is about education, not regulation. We are simply asking for the ability to be educated consumers.

+ We are asking for City Council to do what all of Austin has already said it wants. Doing nothing is not an option.