

THE ORGANIC & NON-GMO REPORT

Information to ensure a safe, healthy, and sustainable food supply

Issue #151 • March 2015



Non-GMO Purple Corn

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Editor's Note



One bad GMO apple...

The US Department of Agriculture recently approved the genetically modified Arctic apple that doesn't turn brown—despite receiving thousands of comments opposing it.

Does the world need a GMO apple that doesn't turn brown? No, based on a big thumbs down from apple growers, food companies, and consumers.

Plus, there are already apple varieties that are slow to turn brown. The Opal Golden Delicious apple has been available since 2010, and it is Non-GMO Project verified. Washington State University recently released a non-GMO apple that also is extremely slow to brown.

The Arctic apple is an example of a new GMO being hyped by the media when successful alternatives, developed using traditional non-GMO plant breeding, are already being grown and delivering benefits.

There are others. We've heard for 15 plus years that GM “golden rice” with its increased beta carotene is going to prevent blindness in millions of children around the world. Meanwhile, a non-GMO corn with higher levels of beta carotene has been growing in four African countries since 2012. There are also non-GMO red and purple potatoes with higher levels of antioxidants. There are non-GMO soybeans with higher levels of oleic acid to produce healthier oils. There are drought tolerant varieties of non-GMO corn, rice, and wheat, and salt tolerant non-GMO wheat, potatoes, rice, and soybeans. The list goes on.

The availability of these non-GMO alternatives begs the question: Why does the world even need GMOs? We don't, but the biotech industry tells us we do in order to “feed the world,” which is PR baloney.

Will the GMO apple be accepted by consumers? It looks doubtful. Unfortunately, people won't have the choice of whether or not to eat it because it won't be labeled as GMO.

For me, I'm ordering an heirloom apple tree from Seed Savers Exchange and am looking forward to planting it this spring.

Ken Roseboro
Editor

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Is non-GMO hurting organic?

Natural food retailers have concerns about non-GMO label but say it's necessary for consumer choice

BY KEN ROSEBORO

While some natural food retailers are concerned about the impact of Non-GMO Project verified products on sales of organic foods, most believe that—without mandatory labeling of genetically modified foods—the non-GMO label is needed to give consumers a choice in the marketplace.

Non-GMO could hurt organic sales

Organic foods prohibit the use of genetically modified ingredients, but many consumers don't know that and are turning to Non-GMO Project verified products. Is this hurting organic food sales? Some organic industry members think this may be the case. (*The Organic & Non-GMO Report*, June 2013)

Some market data backs these concerns. Research by marketing firm Mambo Sprouts found that 56% of consumers say that non-GMO was key to brand buying compared to 52% who cited organic.

Is this true in natural food retailers stores and cooperatives?

It could be, says Jimbo Someck, owner of Jimbo's...Naturally, based in San Diego, CA. "There is good and bad in this situation," he says. "Putting another label on a product can create confusion. Customers are looking for non-GMO but may not know that organic is non-GMO. But the demand for non-GMO speaks strongly to the fact that consumers want to know what's in their food."

Sean Balsley, general manager at Nature's Food Patch in Clearwater, FL, also cites a lack of consumer knowledge. "People are not educated about standards for organic—that organic foods by definition do not contain GMOs," says Balsley, whose store has committed to full GMO transparency.

In fact, a survey by the Hartman Group found that only 8% of core organic consumers understand that certified organic products cannot contain GM ingredients.

Melanie Bettehausen, marketing and membership director, North Coast Co-op in Arcata, CA, also sees more consumer focus on non-GMO. "What we noticed in our



shoppers was a shift away from organic and toward non-GMO, which was concerning because the focus was no longer on sustainable practices, but rather on individual health," she says.

Non-GMO complements organic

But at Whole Foods Market, non-GMO and organic are complementary labels that "are necessary for each other," says Errol Schweizer, the company's executive global grocery coordinator. "We see customer preference for both labels."

This is backed by Whole Foods' sales data, which shows that products that are organic, Non-GMO Project verified, and products that have both labels are all exceeding sales of other products sold in the retailer's stores.

"That indicates to us there is no conflict," Schweizer says. "There is a huge customer preference for (GMO) transparency and for the multiple attributes that organic products provide such as no pesticides and sustainable practices."

Several other retailers also don't see a problem. "Non-GMO Project verified products aren't taking market share from

organic products," says John Wood, co-owner of Green Grocer, Portsmouth, RI. "There is a complement there, and consumers enjoy seeing that choice."

The same is true at Everybody's Whole Foods Market in Fairfield, IA, according to co-owner Nathan Garnet. "I don't think the Non-GMO Project label is hurting sales of organic. Our customers really want and appreciate (the non-GMO label)," he says.

"The reason the Non-GMO Project label is so appealing is because there is only one, it is easy to identify, and it means one thing: no GMOs."

Claudia David-Roscoe, owner of Health Foods by Claudia, in Toledo, OH says the issue comes down to different customer types. "Our older

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customer base gets that the organic label already means 'no GMOs'; for them the Non-GMO Project label is not an issue," she says. "But the newer customers don't have that knowledge."

In her store David-Roscoe doesn't see a conflict between the two labels. "It's because we are educating our customers about the difference," she says.

At Dean's Natural Foods in Ocean, NJ, customers prefer organic products, says store owner Dean Nelson. "They acknowledge that organic is the gold standard. Non-GMO adds an extra boost," he says.

According to market research firm SPINS, about 50% of all Non-GMO Project verified products are also certified organic.

Non-GMO Project focus solely on GMO avoidance

A big concern among organic supporters is that consumers will perceive more value in the non-GMO label than in the certified organic seal.

"The Non-GMO Project logo identifies products that lack ingredients produced in agricultural systems that depend on glyphosate and artificially mutated seed genomes. That's all it does," says Alan Lewis, director of special projects at Colorado-based Natural Grocers. "It does not attempt to address critical issues associated with industrial farming, chemical fertilizers and pesticides, or the vertically integrated control of processing and marketing."

Supporters of the Non-GMO Project say it was launched by natural food retailers and organic food industry leaders solely to address concerns about the GMO threat to organic foods.

The non-GMO label's single focus may be why it is so successful. "The reason the Non-GMO Project label is so appealing is because there is only one, it is easy to identify, and it means one thing: no GMOs," Bettehausen says.

Another concern is that consumers may think that products that don't have the label will contain GMOs. "My concern is that the non-GMO label muddies the water, giving the impression that that label ensures everything good about the product," says Balsley.

"The label implies that anything without the label has GMOs, which isn't the case, especially if it is organic," Bettehausen says. "Most consumers don't know the difference between all of the certified organic labels either. Food labeling in general is confusing."

Consumer education important

Retailers say that consumer education is needed on differences between the two labels. "The onus is on the retailer to educate consumers on what the label means," Someck says.

"The industry needs to articulate and strengthen the message that how food is grown matters," Lewis says.

"We realized that we needed to be clearer in our messaging

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that non-GMO does not inherently indicate sustainable practices, as does organic, and that we can't lose focus on the benefits of organic on the health of the planet," Bettehausen says.

Bettehausen recommends that organic companies focus on non-GMO as the primary message. "Hook them with GMO-free and then regale them with all of the other amazing benefits of organic," she says.

The Organic Trade Association has promoted organic as

"non-GMO and much more."

The National Co-op Grocers also emphasizes that the organic seal is "the gold standard" to help consumers avoid GMOs.

"I think we can all come together as an industry to help educate the public," David-Roscoe says.

Without GMO labeling, non-GMO label necessary

Despite concerns about the

Non-GMO Project label, natural food retailers agree that it is needed to give US consumers non-GMO choices especially without mandatory GMO labeling in the United States.

"It absolutely has value," Someck says. "It really speaks to a potentially different consumer and has raised awareness about the GMO issue."

"Yes, it's helpful to customers—it's a good intention," says Balsley.

"We still don't have a GMO labeling mandate from our government," Bettehausen says. "Until we do, the Non-GMO Project label will be needed."

Schweizer thinks the industry should focus on bigger issues. "Creating a division between non-GMO and organic takes us away from the discussion about GMO transparency and from the need to transition non-GMO farmers to organic," he says. ■

NON-GMO NEWS

South Carolina milling company goes "all in" with non-GMO foods

Palmetto Farms, a milling company based in rural South Carolina, has committed its product lines in 2015 and beyond to be non-GMO and will only offer products that do not have genetically modified ingredients.

Family-owned Palmetto Farms, which began grinding grain in traditional stone mills in the early 1930s, continues the same process today to make grits, cornbread, and cornmeal. Through this time proven method, the grain retains all of the natural oils found in the heart of the corn, unlike the common highly processed options found on most store shelves.

"Our family has literally been grinding away for customers since the 1930s because we believe in providing the absolute best products, no matter how time consuming it is to make," said David Dorman, a third generation owner of Pal-

metto Farms. "We enjoy creating these classic Southern foods. They are natural, healthy, and delicious. People love them, and we are proud to keep this tradition alive."

In its commitment to providing only non-GMO foods, Palmetto Farms has chosen to use corn grown from conventional corn seed. These seeds are developed using traditional plant breeding without the use of genetic modification techniques to ensure the product is as pure as possible.

Palmetto Farms offers natural products like grits, cornbread, and cornmeal sold through retailers like Whole Foods and The Fresh Market. ■



(Left to right) Andrew and Devin Dorman, sons of David Dorman, third-generation owner of Palmetto Farms

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Non-GMO crops prove lucrative for farmers

A small but growing number of farmers are turning away from growing genetically modified crops to grown non-GMO, according to the *Wall Street Journal*.

One such farmer is Indiana-based Jim Benham, who, for the first time in 20 years, grew non-GMO soybeans. He grew non-GMO for a 14 percent per bushel premium paid by a local grain terminal, which sells them to Asian feed producers.

"I was profitable because I made the switch," Benham said. "In our business margins are so critical that we chase a dollar anytime we can."

More US consumers are demanding non-GMO foods; retail sales of non-GMO food products increased 15 percent to \$9.6 billion in 2014, making it one of fastest-growing US food segments.

GM crops have dominated US agriculture since 1996 but their growth has begun to level off.

With a 50 percent drop in US corn prices and 35 percent in soybeans over the past two years, some farmers are considering growing non-GMO crops to earn a profit. Non-GMO seeds can also cost as much as 50% less than GM seeds.

"We're seeing more interest in producing for the [non-GMO] markets than we ever have," said Lynn Clarkson, president of Clarkson Grain Co., a company in Cerro Gordo, Ill., that contracts with farmers to grow non-GMO crops.

Smaller seed companies

that specialize in non-GMO seeds are seeing increasing demand. Beck's Superior Hybrids Inc., is sold out of non-GMO soybean varieties. Non-GMO seed sales at Albert Lea Seed House will increase by one-fifth this year, and they are also sold out of some varieties. Illinois-based Prairie Hybrids expects to sell 15 percent more non-GMO seeds this year.

Wendel Lutz, who farms about 500 acres near Dewey, IL has shifted to growing all non-GMO soybeans and plans to plant more non-GMO corn this year.

"I'll be looking to do it from here on out," he says.

(SOURCE: *Wall Street Journal*) ■



Breyers dumps GMO bovine growth hormone, rBST

Breyers® recently announced it's now the largest packaged US ice cream brand to source only milk and cream from farmers who don't treat their cows with artificial growth hormones, particularly genetically modified hormone rBST, also known as rBGH.

All Unilever ice cream brands—including Fruttare®, Good Humor®, Klondike®, Magnum® and Popsicle® Brands—will follow the Breyers lead and transition to sourcing milk and cream from

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10 ►

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cows not treated with rBST in 2015, making Unilever the largest ice cream manufacturer in the world to make this commitment.

As part of the Breyers quality commitment, the brand also launched a new initiative with the Rainforest Alliance

an international nonprofit working to conserve biodiversity and ensure sustainable livelihoods. Through this initiative, all Breyers vanilla will come from sustainably sourced and Rainforest Alliance Certified vanilla beans from Madagascar. ■

Nielsen survey: Global consumers say GMO-free is very important health attribute

A recent global survey found that, when asked what health attributes are important when buying food, consumers ranked “all-natural” and “GMO-free” at the top.

The survey was conducted by market research firm Nielsen, which polled 30,000 online respondents in 60 countries.

Nielsen’s Global Health and Wellness Survey asked consumers to rate 27 health attributes of food from “very important” to “not important” in their purchase decisions.

The top two, which were considered very important by 43% of the respondents, were foods with all natural ingredients and foods without genetically modified ingredients.

GMO-free was valued more in Europe where 47% of consumers rated it a very important health attribute and Latin America with 46%, while only 32% of North American consumers considered it very important.

(SOURCE: *Minneapolis Star Tribune*) ■

Snowville Creamery receives approval to label its products coming from cows fed non-GMO diet

Ohio-based Snowville Creamery, which produces minimum-heat pasteurized, non-homogenized milk and dairy products sourced from grass-grazed cows, has been given approval by the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) to label its products as coming from pastured cows fed only non-GMO feeds and forage. Snowville is the only non-organic dairy in the country approved to label its products in this manner.

“Our customers have told us they prefer food void of genetically modified organisms,” says Warren Taylor, one of the founders and owners of Snowville Creamery. “We are compliant with the Ohio Department of Agriculture regulations and non-GMO testing methods. The ODA has approved our packaging and claims that our dairy products are from cows fed only non-GMO feeds and forage.” ■



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Suntava Non-GMO purple corn packs potent nutritional punch

Suntava developing many applications for antioxidant-rich purple corn

BY ARIANNE PFOUTZ

By Suntava CEO's own admission, five years ago you wouldn't have even heard of this superfood of the plant kingdom that his company has been built around. Dense with nutrients, Suntava Purple Corn,TM is the result of years of cross-breeding across hemispheres, the latest strain of an ancient maize that originated in Peru thousands of years ago.

It packs a potent purple punch: loaded with antioxidants called anthocyanins, Suntava Purple Corn has twice the antioxidant load of blueberries, and the highest ORAC (Oxygen Radical Absorbance Capacity) score of all blue, yellow and white corn varieties. The nutritive value lies in the pigment responsible for the rich purple color of the corn, and is finding its way into natural dyes, corn chips, milled grain products, snacks, purees, freeze dried products, supplements...the possibilities

seem endless.

"I never knew where the remarkable properties of purple corn could take us...the interest we're getting from manufacturers eager to launch nutritious, non-GMO products is amazing," said CEO Bill Petrich.

Many potential applications

Since the Minnesota-based company launched in the spring of 2007, growth has been akin to kernels of popping corn. A warm-up period,



Suntava Purple Corn can be processed into flour, tortilla chips, flour tortillas and other applications

then bursts of energy here, there, and all at once, in many directions.

"The challenge now is managing the growth, deciding which opportunities provide the right direction to move in," Petrich said.

He knew he was on to something when he learned from the breeders of the natural pigment and antioxidants present in the purple corn. Petrich, whose years with the Schwan Food Company included work in the technical group as well buying businesses and starting

new ventures, saw a compelling opportunity. The idea of a natural dye was intriguing, in light of the landmark Southampton Study coming out of the UK in 2007, linking artificial colors (synthetic dyes such as Red 40) to hyperactivity.

The first ingredient the company debuted was a natural red dye—extracted from the purple corn using a water-only process. But the entire plant, from stalk to cob to kernels, contains valuable free radical-fighting anthocyanins as well as oils,

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proteins and fiber. Manufacturers from many different industries are calling Suntava to explore the potential applications.

“After the dye, we started looking at the grain markets to make use of the kernels,” Petrich said. “What if we mill it for corn meal, flour, then grits, and snack meal? One company wanted to make a beer out of the purple corn. Another wanted to grind it, and another wanted a nectar (extract) for snack bars. We’ll soon be moving into the supplement market. Now we’re up to nearly ten ingredients we supply.”

Suntava collaborates with other companies for each application of the original product. “We provide Suntava Purple Corn and marketing support—and help manufacturers get started by directing them to makers of the ingredients they need, whether it’s nectar or milled meal,” Petrich said.

Non-GMO Project verified

The traditional purple corn has always been non-GMO, but manufacturers wanted to make sure. When they asked if Suntava Purple Corn was Non-GMO Project verified, the company decided to go for it. The kernels received verification in 2013, and the milled products are in process.

“We have about six to twelve growers of our purple corn in the Midwest, and the number is rising,” Petrich said. “We’re working with growers in Canada, California, and Pennsylvania to test how the corn does in different regions. As far as protection from GMO contamination, it’s an ongoing battle, we are always checking.”

“The process of getting verified was challenging but worth it,” Petrich said. “Our timing has been fortunate, because companies are on the hunt for nutritious, innovative ingredients, like chia, for example. Our purple corn draws them in because it’s beautiful to look at; its nutritional profile is impressive; and it’s easy to incorporate into other products.”

Recent scientific research on anthocyanins points to anti-inflammatory properties; a heart disease, obesity and diabetes preventive, and an anti-cancer agent. Suntava Purple Corn contains three powerful anthocyanin antioxidants: Cyanidin-3-Glucoside (C3G), Pelargonidin, and Peonidin, each with its own potential health benefits.



Tortilla chips are one application for Suntava Purple Corn

On the retail level, Suntava Purple Corn can be found in Mystic Harvest corn chips, Rhythm Superfoods, and General Mills (Cascadian Farm), and Berry Vanilla Puffs, and Udi’s bread, to name a few. ■



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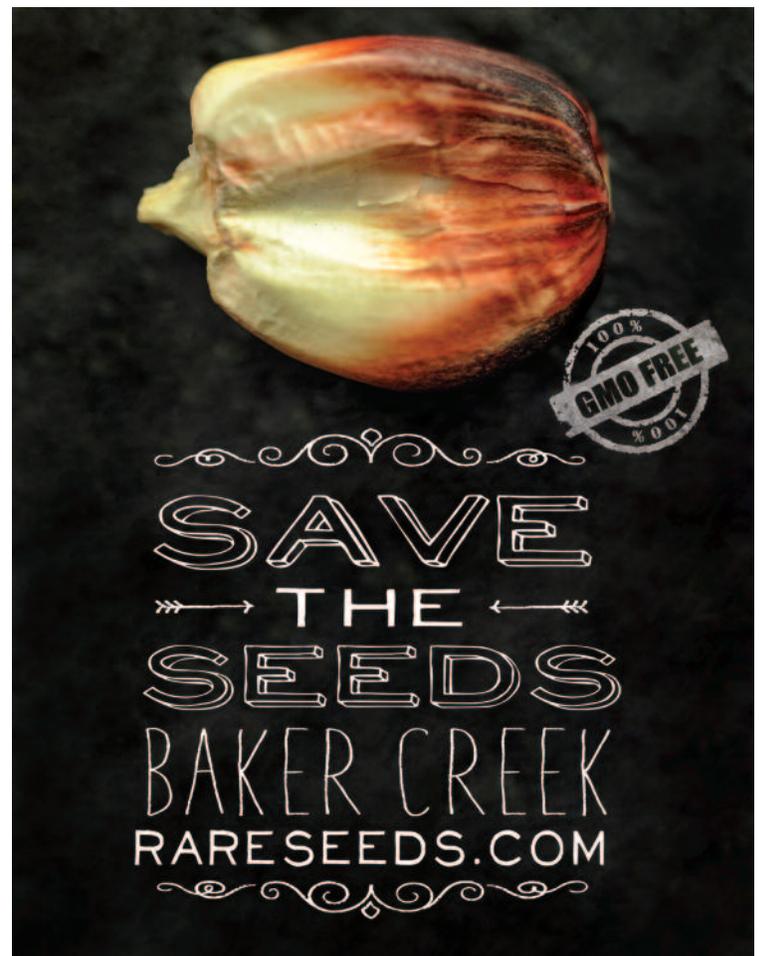
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Orange, Black and Yellow.

Color Garden colors, which can be used in food (even home-made dog treats) and crafts projects, are non-GMO, gluten-free, allergen-free and vegan.

For more information, visit www.colorgarden.net. ■

Ingredient announces Non-GMO Project Verification

Ingredient Incorporated, a global provider of ingredient solutions, recently announced that a number of the company's key texturizer and nutrition solutions have achieved Non-GMO Project Verified status. Products veri-

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Non-GMO emulsifier helps manufacturers enter growing market

Biobased ingredient producer Corbion has added a new non-GMO emulsifier to its portfolio: Emplex® Non GMO.

Its application ranges from yeast-leavened bakery products to chewing gum, pancakes to pastas, powdered beverage mixes to dehydrated potatoes.

With US sales of non-GMO foods and beverages projected to grow at a rate of 13% in the next five years, more manufacturers may need Corbion's non-GMO emulsifiers to move into the non-GMO market. Non-GMO

food and beverages could account for 30% of the market with a value of \$264 billion in 2017. ■

AIDP offers non-GMO corn-based prebiotic ingredient

Ingredient supplier AIDP is offering a new ingredient, PreBix, a corn-derived form of oligosaccharide manufactured by Life Bridge International, based in China.

Edward Lee, president of AIDP, told *NutraIngredients-USA* that the ingredient is a form of oligosaccharide called a xylooligosaccharide, or XOS, and is derived from corn cobs. Lee said research has shown that XOS fosters the growth of bifidobacteria, one of the main groups of beneficial bacteria in the human gut.

The non-GMO verified ingredient has seen strong sales in the Asian markets for several years, based on greater awareness of the benefits of prebiotics on gut health.

The product will be launched in the US at Natural Products Expo West tradeshow, booth #183.

(SOURCE: *NutraIngredients-USA*) ■

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MARKET NEWS

Arkansas releases high-protein non-GMO soybean aimed at feed market

A new high-yield, high-protein non-GMO soybean variety from the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture promises to make an ideal choice for the animal feed market.

Division soybean breeder Pengyin Chen said the non-GMO soybean's high protein content offers improved feed efficiency for poultry, beef, and aquaculture producers. He added that the high yields and relatively low cost of a public variety will make the seed attractive to growers.

The new variety, called UA 5814HP, is a maturity group V soybean that averaged 58.8 bushels per acre over four years of testing in 12 locations around Arkansas, Chen said. It was also evaluated in seven southern region locations outside Arkansas where it averaged 64.8 bushels per acre.

In both tests, Chen said, UA 5814HP yielded at or near the top against popular varieties that were used for comparison.

UA 5814HP's protein level is about 45.5 percent of dry weight, Chen said. It produces a feed meal with about 52.6 percent protein. He said some poultry companies have expressed interest in it because of the soybean's potential offer of higher nutrition value per pound in animal feed.

UA 5814HP will be released to private companies through license agreements with the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture. He said about 600 bags are available now through the Foundation Seed Program. ■



UA 5814HP is a new, high-protein soybean variety from the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture soybean breeding program.

US grown non-GMO chia offers strong market opportunity

For the first time, the nutritionally rich chia seed is being farmed in the US, creating a market niche for

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Known as a superfood seed, chia contains abundant omega-3 and other fatty acids, insoluble fiber, protein and minerals.

Kentucky farmer Chris Kummer, president of Heartland Chia, worked with University of Kentucky researchers to develop an early flowering non-GMO chia; until now, chia has come exclusively from tropical regions which accommodate the seed's notoriously late flowering. Current suppliers for the US have been Australia, Mexico, Argentina and Ecuador.

Heartland Chia offers US farmers a high profit margin

crop, while supplying manufacturers with access to a steady local supply of chia. Kummer says the early flowering variety "is exactly the same" nutritionally as the wild type—with omega-3 levels sometimes even higher than South American chia—and can be grown organically.

Kummer learned about the university's chia research in 2009, and his business Kentucky Specialty Grains collaborated to develop and test chia cultivars that could flower earlier in the cooler US climate.

Kummer's goal is to be working with multiple farmers and operating his own processing facility in five years. (SOURCES: *FoodNavigator.com*; *Lexington Herald Leader*) ■

Study finds that eating organic reduces exposure to pesticides

A new study has found that eating organic foods can measurably reduce the levels of toxic pesticides in a person's diet. The study, published in the Feb. 5 edition of *Environmental Health Perspectives*, is among the first to predict a person's pesticide exposure based on information about their usual diet.



The study was led by Cynthia Curl, an assistant professor in Boise State University's School of Allied Health Sciences. Curl and her colleagues analyzed the dietary exposure of nearly 4,500 people from six US cities to organophosphates (OPs), the most common insecticides used on conventionally grown produce in the United States. OP pesticides are linked to a number of detrimental health effects, particularly among agricultural workers who are regularly exposed to the chemicals.

Results showed that among individuals eating similar amounts of fruits and vegetables, those who reported eating organic produce had significantly lower OP pesticide exposures than those consuming conventionally grown produce.

"For most Americans, diet is the primary source of OP pesticide exposure," said Curl. "The study suggests that by eating organically grown versions of

those foods highest in pesticide residues, we can make a measurable difference in the levels of pesticides in our bodies."

One way people can reduce their pesticide exposure, said Curl, is to eat organic versions of those foods that are listed on the Environmental Working Group's "Dirty Dozen" list, which ranks fruits and vegetables according to pesticide residue level. ■

US organic cotton acreage seen highest in almost 20 years

Despite grappling with tight seed supplies, persistent weeds, and a shortage of seasonal labor, US organic cotton growers are estimated to have planted the most acreage to organic cotton in 2014 since 1995, according to the 2013 and Preliminary 2014 U.S. *Organic Cotton Production & Marketing Trends* report published by the Organic Trade Association (OTA).

Respondents to OTA's survey reported a 14% increase in organic cotton acres planted in 2014—from 15,973 in 2013 to 18,234, representing the

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largest planted organic cotton acreage in this country in almost 20 years.

Organic cotton acreage has been on a slow but steady growth trend in the U.S. for the past several years.

Organic cotton is grown in Arizona, California, New Mexico, North Carolina and Texas. West Texas is the leading organic cotton region in the country.

US organic cotton growers command a premium over non-organic cotton.

Organic fiber is now the largest non-food organic category in the market, with organic fiber sales in the US closing in on \$1 billion in 2013. ■

MegaFood™ and Uncle Matt's Organic® establish annual grant program for Florida Certified Organic Growers and Consumers, Inc.

MegaFood, a leading whole food supplement producer, and Uncle Matt's Organic Inc., a family-owned company offering premium-quality organic juices and produce, recently announced that, as part of their relationship, MegaFood has provided \$5,000 to Florida Certified Organic Growers and Consumers, Inc. (FOG) as part of a commitment to support local agriculture in the communities of their valued farm partners. This donation is the first in a planned series of annual gifts to FOG that will last through the duration of MegaFood and Uncle Matt's Organic's partnership.

FOG is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation that supports and promotes organic and sustain-

able agriculture through education and outreach. The yearly grant will be used to help programs like farmer workshops and food justice certifications that are designed to both educate farmers while simultaneously making fresh, organic produce more easily accessible to all.

"Both Matt and I are very dedicated supporters of organic and sustainable farming, and this seemed like a great way to put our money where our mouths are," said Robert Craven, CEO of MegaFood. ■

Denmark commits to "ambitious" boost in organics

A total of 400 million kroner (\$60.8 million) has been allotted to a plan to double organic farming and increase organic offerings in Denmark's public institutions.

Food and Agriculture Minister Dan Jørgensen calls the 67-point plan, Økologiplan Danmark, "the world's most ambitious." "We will strengthen cooperation between municipalities, regions and ministries with a long line of new initiatives (... and) have more organic items on the menu in canteens, hospitals and daycare institutions." Approximately 800,000 meals are served in Denmark's public facilities each day.

One goal is to double the amount of land used for organic farming (as measured in 2007) by 2020, through development and conversion.

The Defense Ministry will also commit to serving more organic foods, and the Ministry of Education will focus on raising children's awareness of organic farming and the production of food.

(SOURCE: *The Local dk*) ■



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Danube Soya works to create GMO-Free Europe

Initiative aims to boost EU's non-GMO soy production to reduce GMO imports, connect Eastern European farmers with Western European consumers

BY KEN ROSEBORO

A new initiative is increasing non-GMO soy production, in Europe to reduce GMO imports and to help Europe's farmers earn a better living. Danube Soya aims to create a GMO-free soy producing region in countries along the Danube River.

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Return soybeans to European fields

Europe is known for its strong anti-GMO stand, but the continent still imports 12 million metric tons of genetically modified soy each year from North and South America for use as animal feed.

Danube Soya aims to make Europe more self-sufficient in soy production, according to the group's managing director Matthias Krön.

"Our goal is to increase non-GMO soy production to develop more (animal) protein," Krön says. "It won't replace

imports but we want to balance that a little."

Flowing across 1,785 miles, the Danube is Europe's second-longest river, passing through Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova, and Ukraine.

The Danube region is also an excellent area for growing soybeans. In fact, it was the first region in the Western hemisphere, before North or South America, to grow soybeans after they were brought from Asia in the late 1800s.

However, Europe's soybean

production declined after World War II, and the 1992 Blair House agreement with the United States restricted soy production further, making Europe dependent on soy imports.

Danube Soy wants to change that. “We are advocating the return of soybeans to European fields under non-GMO growing conditions,” Krön says.

Bill Thompson, managing director of Genetic ID Europe, says food retailers support Danube Soya. “Top German retailers want to become independent of soy and soy meal imports from the United States, Brazil, China, and Argentina and to have a reliable European-based supply to meet the demands of the EU market,” he says.

Successful program, helping farmers

They are succeeding. Since its launch in 2012, Danube Soya has grown from 20 members to more than 170 in 16 countries. Members represent many areas of the food production chain, including farmers, soybean processors, soyfood, ingredient, and feed manufacturers, non-governmental organizations, food retailers, and GMO testing labs, among others.

Non-GMO soybean plantings in the Danube region increased 19 percent from 597,000 hectares (1,475,187 acres) in 2013 to 700,000 hectares (1,729,700 acres) in 2014. Much more is planned.

“We want to double that in the next few years and hope to produce 5 million tons of soy by 2020,” Krön says.

Another goal of the project is to connect poorer farmers in Eastern European countries, such as Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, and Serbia, to more affluent consumers in Western Europe who want non-GMO

soy. Farmers will grow soy that will be processed into animal feed or soyfood products that will be sold in Western Europe.

“We want to support Eastern European farmers so they earn better incomes,” Krön says.



Non-GMO certification system, sustainability requirements

Danube Soya is developing a non-GMO food labeling certification program based on similar programs—Austria’s “Genetchnikfrei” (GMO-Free) and Germany’s “Ohne Genetchnik” (No Genetic Engineering). In addition to its non-GMO requirement, the program will include sustainability criteria including restrictions on pesticides, and requirements that soy be grown only on traditional agriculture land; no new lands can be converted to agriculture. Soy also can’t be grown in monocultures; it must be part of diverse crop rotations.

Growing more soy will benefit Europe’s agriculture soils, which primarily produce corn, wheat, other grains, and sunflowers.

“By growing soy we are improving the farming system,” Krön says. “It will be good to grow legumes to increase nitrogen in the soil.”

Krön believes the Danube Soya logo, which is appearing on food products, will be viewed favorably by European consumers.

“Danube is a nice brand that

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22 ►

The advertisement for Rumiano Family Organic Cheese features a central image of a brown cow in a green field under a blue sky with clouds. At the top, a gold-bordered oval contains the text "SINCE 1921" and "RUMIANO FAMILY ORGANIC CHEESE" in red and gold, with a banner below it saying "AWARD WINNING FLAVOR". In the top right corner, there are social media icons for Twitter and Facebook next to the text "RumianoCheese". Below the cow image, the text reads "The Certified Non-GMO Organic Cheese" in large yellow letters, followed by "Fourth Generation Family Dairy Farmers" and "Grass Fed Year Round" in black. At the bottom, there are several certification logos: Non-GMO Project Verified, Grass Fed, USDA Organic, American Humane Certified, and KRC. The website "www.rumianocheese.com" and phone number "530.934.5438" are listed at the bottom.

The advertisement for Natural Products, Inc. features a background image of a green field with rows of crops under a blue sky with clouds. At the top, the company name "Natural Products, Inc." is written in a large, black, serif font. Below the name is a logo consisting of a globe with a soybean plant growing from it, a diamond-shaped logo with the letters "NPI", and another globe. Below the logo, the tagline "Applying the natural goodness of soy" is written in a black, serif font. In the center, a white box contains the text "Manufacturers of Food-Grade Non-GMO and Certified Organic Soy Ingredients since 1995" followed by a list of products: "--Enzyme Active Full Fat Soy", "--Roasted Full Fat Soy", "--Spray Dried Soymilk Powder", "--Grits, Meal, Flour, Fine Grind Flour", "--Custom Milling & Blending", and "--Fine Grind Milling". Below the list, it says "For additional information, please visit:" followed by the website "www.npisoy.com" in a large, bold, black font. At the bottom, the address "2211 6th Avenue, Grinnell, Iowa 50112 USA" and phone/fax numbers "Phone 1-641-236-0852 Fax 1-641-236-4835" are listed.

consumers can connect to; they have a nice image of the Danube,” he says.

Part of GMO-Free Europe

Danube Soya is another initiative to keep Europe GMO-

free. There are about 60 GMO-free regions in Europe including Italy’s Tuscany, France’s Brittany, Germany’s Bavaria, and Upper Austria, among others. With the recent ruling by the European Parliament to allow member states to

ban GM crops, there are likely to be more GMO-free initiatives by EU regions and nations. Government officials in Germany and Hungary recently said they want to ban GM crops in their nations. In line with this, Danube Soya is

working with the European GMO-free Regions Network to organize a “GMO-Free Europe” conference this May in Berlin.

As Krön says: “We want to keep Central Europe GM-free.” ■

GMO NEWS

Scientists, environmental and consumer groups blast USDA approval of GM apple

Major food companies, apple growers are already rejecting “Arctic” apple

Scientists, environmental, and consumer groups denounced the US Department of Agriculture’s deregulation of the Arctic® apple, the first genetically modified apple, produced by a Canadian corporation, Okanagan Specialty Fruits. The USDA’s deregulation allows the Arctic apple to be planted and sold without specific oversight, although the FDA may engage Okanagan in a voluntary safety consultation process prior to the GMO apple being available on the US market. According to Okanagan, the apples will be labeled as Arctic, but will not be labeled as genetically engineered.

USDA approved the GM apple despite receiving 73,000 comments, most of which opposed the commercialization of the Arctic Apple.

Apple growers opposed

Despite this approval, major food companies including McDonald’s and Gerber have already stated that they have no plans to source or sell this GM apple. These companies join

major apple growing associations, including USAApple, the Northwest Horticultural Council (representing Washington apple growers who grow more than 60% of US apples), and British Columbia Fruit Growers Association that have stated opposition to this GMO apple.

“We regret that the US is approving the Arctic Granny Smith and Arctic golden delicious,” said Fred Steele, B.C. Fruit Producers Association



president in an interview with the *Vernon Morning Star*. “Our members would like the apple market to remain free of GM apples.”

“Despite the USDA’s flawed approval of the GMO apple, there is no place in the US or global market for genetically engineered apples,” said Lisa Archer, Food and Technology program director at Friends of the Earth. “Farmers don’t want to grow it, food companies don’t want to sell it and consumers

don’t want to eat it.”

“The Canadian market needs to remain closed to this GM apple,” said Lucy Sharratt of the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network. “Health Canada should not approve this apple. Consumers and farmers simply don’t want it on the market.”

Produced using experimental technique

The GMO Arctic Apple is genetically engineered via a new, virtually untested experimental technique called RNA interference—or RNAi—that many scientists are concerned may have negative, unintended impacts on human health and the environment. This technique was used in the Arctic Apple to silence genes related to the production of enzymes which cause apples to brown when cut. Without natural browning, apples may look fresh when they are actually decaying.

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“We are concerned that USDA’s safety evaluation of this apple was inadequate, particularly with regard to the health and environmental implications of this particular RNAi technology,” said Dr. Michael Hansen, senior scientist at Consumers Union.

If grown commercially, organic and conventional farms also face risks of contamination from neighboring GMO apple groves. Apple industry officials have voiced concerns that potential cross-contamination may cause important export markets such as Europe and China to reject US grown apples or require costly testing and certifications from farmers and exporter companies.

Like other GMOs, this GM apple won’t be labeled and won’t have undergone independent safety assessment. ■

Are GMOs safe? No consensus in the science, scientists say in peer-reviewed statement

On the heels of USDA deregulation of the Arctic® apple—the first genetically engineered apple—leading consumer, food safety and environmental groups issued a response to widespread media reports wrongly characterizing the science on GMOs as settled.

The groups, including Consumers Union, Center for Food Safety, Friends of the Earth and Pesticide Action Network, pointed to a January 24 statement in the journal *Environmental Sciences Europe*—signed by 300 scientists, physicians and scholars—that asserts there is no scientific consensus on the safety of GMOs.

The claim of scientific consensus on GMOs frequently

repeated in the media is “an artificial construct that has been falsely perpetuated,” the peer-reviewed statement said.

“Preeminent science bodies like the National Research Council have recognized that some engineered foods could pose considerable risk. It is unfortunate that self-appointed advocates for the technology have selectively cited the literature and organizations to suggest that GE crops, generally, present no risks that warrant concern,” said Doug Gurian-Sherman, PhD, senior scientist and director of sustainable agriculture at the Center for Food Safety.

Entitled “No scientific consensus on GMO safety,” the journal cites a concerted effort by GMO seed developers and some scientists, commentators and journalists to claim that there is a “scientific consensus” on GMO safety, and that debate on the topic is “over.”

That claim “...is misleading and misrepresents or outright ignores the currently available scientific evidence and the broad diversity of scientific opinions among scientists on this issue,” according to the statement. ■

GM mosquitoes may be released in Florida Keys; what could go wrong?

It’s already happened in field trials in the Cayman Islands and Brazil, but it would be a first for a US residential neighborhood—GM bugs in the backyard.

British biotech firm Oxitec has genetically modified the mosquito *Aedes aegypti*, whose biting females spread the tropical viral diseases dengue and chikungunya. Due to climate change and globalization, these

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24 ►

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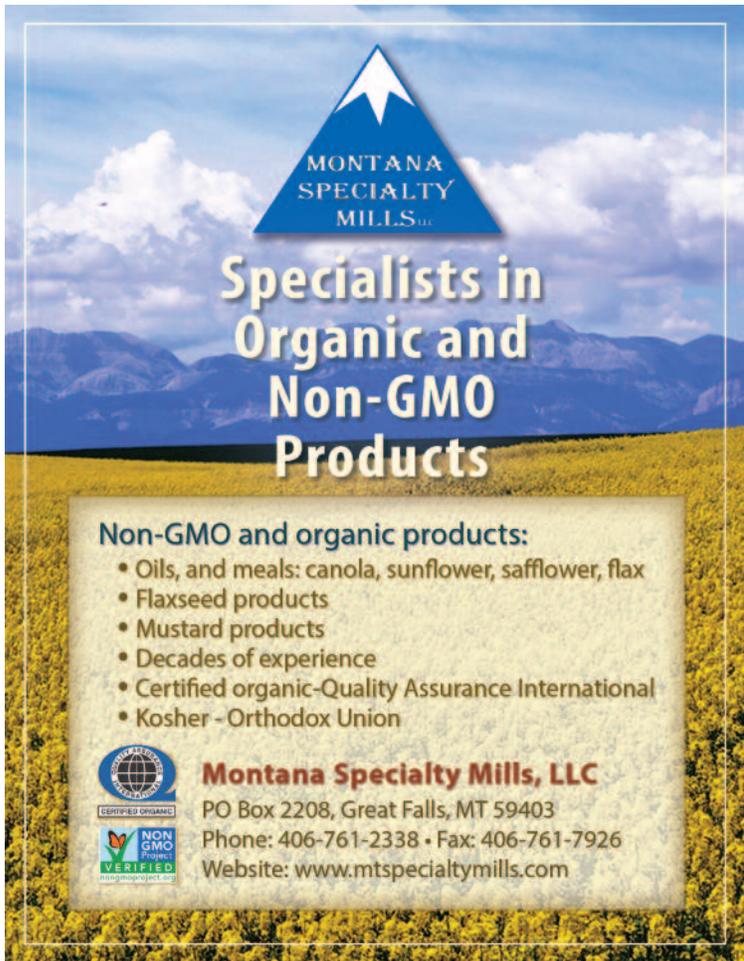


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painful diseases are traveling farther from their equatorial locales, even to the southern US—and no vaccines or cures exist for them.

The mosquito contains a synthetic DNA that kills mosquito larvae; only the modified (non-biting) males would be released, and when they mate with wild females, the offspring die.

Critics don't like the idea of being bitten by an escaped GM bug—130,000 signed a petition against the experiment.

(SOURCE: *Associated Press*) ■

GM tree approved with no regulation or public input

In an unprecedented action, the USDA has allowed biotech tree company ArborGen to pursue unregulated commercial plantings of a loblolly pine genetically engineered for altered wood composition.

The Campaign to STOP GE Trees and its members are actively opposing the USDA's action.

Doug Gurian-Sherman of Center for Food Safety recently exposed a secret letter from USDA's Biotechnology Regulatory Services to ArborGen, agreeing that the GM loblolly pine did not require regulation. The USDA is “deliberately thumbing its nose at the public,” Gurian-Sherman said.

Dr. Rachel Smolker of Biofuelwatch called it “deliberate, irreversible and completely irresponsible contamination of the environment with unknown and possibly devastating consequences. And all this for short term commercial profit.”

Loblolly pines are native to 14 states across the southeastern US; their pollen can travel for hundreds of miles. Winnie Overbeek of the World Rain-

forest Movement worries that unregulated GM trees shipped abroad could cause deforestation, harming the lives of indigenous peoples.

When ArborGen's GM Eucalyptus tree was seeking approval in 2013, the public opposed it 10,000 to 1 through comments. This time the USDA cut the public out completely by refusing to regulate the GM pine. ■

Most US adults consider GM foods unsafe

In a survey of 2,002 American adults conducted by the Pew Research Center, 57% believe genetically modified foods are unsafe to consume, compared with 37% believing they are safe. In contrast, of 3,478 scientists (all members of the American Association for the Advancement of Science), only 11% believe GMOs are unsafe, with 88% confident in their safety.

Why the gap? Possibly because two-thirds of the public (67%) say scientists don't have a clear understanding about the health effects of GM crops.

When shopping, 25% say they always look for GMOs, 31% “never look,” and 25% “sometimes look.”

When asked if it's safe to eat foods grown with pesticides, 28% of US adults said “yes” and 68% of scientists said “yes.”

The widest gap between scientists and the public centered on GM foods.

Americans are generally positive about US scientific achievements but less so than five years ago, suggesting a softening in the perceived value of science to society.

(SOURCE: *Food Business News*) ■

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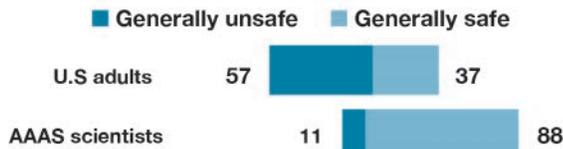
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% of each group saying it is generally safe or unsafe to eat genetically modified foods



Survey of U.S. adults Aug. 15-25, 2014. 088. AAAS scientist survey Sept. 11 - Oct. 13, 2014. Q28 Those saying don't know or giving no answer are not shown

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

A recent Pew Research survey found that 57% of Americans think GM foods are not safe

“Moms Across America” stirs up Monsanto’s annual meeting

A number of non-GMO and advocacy groups rallied at Monsanto headquarters prior to the company’s annual shareholder meeting at the end of January—with one group addressing the meeting at length about the detrimental effects of glyphosate.

“I’m imploring you to choose a new direction,” said the founder of Moms Across America Zen Honeycutt. “Stop poisoning our children.”

Honeycutt linked GMOs and glyphosate to rises in asthma, allergies, autism, autoimmune diseases, diabetes and obesity.

“We mothers say, stop it! Stop it now! We ask Monsanto to have the courage to create a new future for Monsanto and America.”

Honeycutt asked for support of a proxy-access proposal that would allow shareholders to nominate their own board candidates—so a pediatrician could be represented. The measure received 53% support.

(SOURCE: *Wall Street Journal*) ■

Russian bill cracks down on GMO cultivation and imports

A government commission has approved a bill, developed on the request of President Vladimir Putin, to ban cultivation of genetically modified plants and animals except for scientific research applications.

The bill also imposes tighter controls on importers of GMOs, and gives government the right to block import of GM products based on research and monitoring results. Currently, 18 varieties of GMOs are officially allowed for import.

Anti-GMO sentiment is high in Russia, despite GM corn and soy found in 61 products on the market. Putin considers GMOs a national security issue for people and the environment. Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev has announced that Russia does not intend to import GMOs in the future.

Russian Minister of Agriculture Nikolai Fyodorov told rural areas that the country must remain GMO-free and not “poison their citizens.”

Unpermitted use of GMOs will now be considered a crime. (SOURCES: Sustainable Pulse; TASS) ■

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MISSOURI GMO PLENARY



Robyn O'Brien was one of nine speakers at the GMO Plenary

Expert GMO panel—held in Monsanto's home state—speaks out about GM food, glyphosate dangers

Scientists, crop advisors, and educators highlight GMO risks from all sides

A “GMO Plenary” recently held in Springfield, Missouri featured a panel of experts who discussed multiple health and environmental risks with genetically modified crops and foods and glyphosate herbicide.

The plenary, which was held at the Missouri Organic Conference in February in Springfield, Missouri, featured

scientists, crop advisors, farmers, and educators.

Conference organizer Sue Baird said the plenary was pur-

posedly held in Missouri as a counterweight to the pro-GMO influence of St. Louis-based biotech giant Monsanto.

“Greatest civil rights issue of our time”

Plenary speakers attacked GMOs from all sides—from negative health and environmental impacts, spiritual implications, and FDA’s illegal GM food regulation to the lawsuit threat to farmers by Monsanto, GMO contamination of organics, lack of GMO labeling, and non-GMO market growth.

Keynote speaker and food advocate Robyn O’Brien described how she became involved in the GM food fight after her youngest daughter suffered a life-threatening allergic reaction

to a food product.

“Are we allergic to food or what’s been done to it?” she asked.

O’Brien cited statistics showing alarming rates of food allergies, autism, asthma, and cancer in children. She correlated the rise in these diseases to the introduction of GMOs in foods.

“Correlation is not causation, but correlation of this magnitude demands investigation,” she said.

O’Brien called for mandatory GMO labeling. *“Sixty percent of the world’s population is told (whether GMOs are in food), but in the US we have never been given that information,” she said.*

O’Brien said the exploding demand for organic food indicates that a “food awakening”

is happening in the US.

She called for everyone to work together on what she described as *“the greatest civil rights issue of our time.”*

“Together we are so powerful,” O’Brien said.

“GM foods should be banned and the technology stopped”

Steven Druker, an attorney and executive director of the Alliance for Bio-Integrity, lambasted pro-GMO scientists, the biotech industry, and the US Food and Drug Administration, saying GM foods are not safe and are on the market illegally.

He discussed the L-tryptophan disaster in the late 1980s, when dozens of people died and hundreds maimed after consuming a GM version

of the supplement.

“It’s more likely than not that genetic engineering caused the toxic contamination that led to the deaths and illnesses,” said Druker, author of a hard-hitting new book about GMOs, *Altered Genes, and Twisted Truth*.

Druker said the FDA is violating its own policy on food additives, which states that additives developed through new technologies must be proven safe before they enter the market.

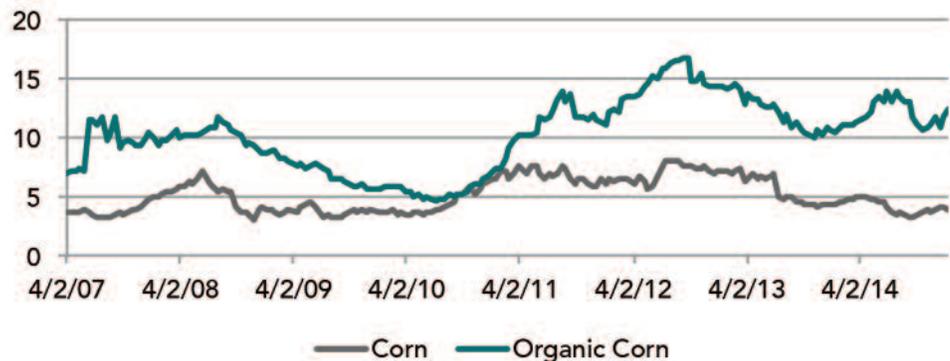
“This food had no business going to market,” he said.

GM foods, Druker argued, haven’t been proven safe, are produced using a “reckless” technology, and the agency’s own scientists raised alarms

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28 ►

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about their safety in the early 1990s.

"Government scientists raised concerns but they were ignored," said Druker, who gained access to internal FDA documents revealing agency scientists' objections to GM technology during his lawsuit against the agency.

He said the FDA is lying when it says GM foods are safe. "The FDA has broken the law on this since 1992," he said.

As a result, Druker said: "These foods should be banned, and the technology should be stopped. It's time to tell the truth."

Glyphosate dangers

Robert Kremer, a microbiologist with the University of Missouri, discussed negative environmental risks with both GM crops and glyphosate herbicide, which is used extensively with the crops.

He said that GM seeds are "inherently weak," citing an example of GM seed that had a germination rate of just 5% after being stored for two years compared to 75% for conventional seed stored for the same amount of time.

Kremer listed a range of negative impacts from glyphosate herbicide, including harm to beneficial soil microbes, increase of soil pathogens such as fusarium fungal toxins, and immobilization of nutrients such as manganese.

"Glyphosate creates a proliferation of pathogens in the soil," he said.

Kremer criticized the biotech industry's "solution" to weed resistance to glyphosate, which are new GM crops that work with 2,4-D and dicamba herbicides.

"2,4-D and dicamba resistant crops may make plants more susceptible to disease. This obviously

won't be a sustainable approach," he said.

Finally, Kremer said "Food should be produced in a way that enhances environmental quality. It is in our interest to educate consumers about how GM crops and the use of glyphosate may impact agricultural production systems to develop an awareness of how our food is produced and how food quality might be affected."

Glyphosate found everywhere

Iowa farmer and crop consultant Howard Vlieger also focused on harm caused by glyphosate. He said the herbicide is everywhere—in the air, waterways, and rain—according to the US Geological Survey. It's also found in many food crops and foods, such as Froot Loops cereal.

"What will it take to wake people up?" he asked. "You and I."

Agronomist Michael McNeil discussed the "shot in the dark" approach of genetic engineering that can cause harmful unintended consequences to other genes.

"The industry tells us 'we insert one gene and it doesn't change much,' but it does," he said.

Jim Gerritsen, organic farmer and president of the Organic Seed Growers Trade Association, discussed the lawsuit his group filed against Monsanto to prevent the company from suing farmers whose crops are accidentally contaminated by the company's patented GMOs.

Ken Roseboro, editor of *The Organic & Non-GMO Report*, highlighted the exploding demand for non-GMO foods spurred by companies such as Whole Foods, Ben & Jerry's, and Chipotle. ■

NEGATIVE GMO IMPACTS



Tests find GMOs, herbicide in popular food products

GM corn and glyphosate detected in Froot Loops and SunChips

Laboratory tests have found genetically modified corn and glyphosate herbicide in Kellogg's Froot Loops cereal and Frito Lay's SunChips snack food.

Analyses by an independent GMO testing laboratory found that 100% of the corn in both Froot Loops and SunChips was genetically modified.

Tests conducted by another laboratory documented the presence of glyphosate, the main ingredient in Roundup herbicide, in Froot Loops at the level of 0.12 parts per million (ppm) and in SunChips at 0.14 ppm.

Published studies have linked glyphosate to health and environmental harm including endocrine disruptive capability, birth defects, male infertility, and chronic kidney disease.

The tests were commissioned by GMO Free USA, which recently launched "OPERATION: LABEL GMOs" to test popular food products for GM ingredients and glyphosate, which is heavily sprayed on GMO crops.

Commenting on the test results with Froot Loops, Diana Reeves, executive director of GMO Free USA, said:

"We find it disturbing that Kellogg's is feeding children unlabeled GMOs and toxic herbicides. Parents need to know what they're feeding their children, and Kellogg's is spending millions to keep the composition of their products hidden."

GMO Free USA is calling on Kellogg's to commit to removing GMO ingredients from all of their products and enroll in Non-GMO Project Verification. ■

Study finds glyphosate herbicide in honey and soy sauce

Researchers from Abraxis, LLC and Boston University have further confirmed that the world's most used herbicide—glyphosate—is widespread in food products around the globe. The researchers tested honey, pancake and corn syrup,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30 ►



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soy sauce, soy milk and tofu purchased in the Philadelphia, PA metropolitan area.

Samples of honey, pancake and corn syrup, soy sauce, soy milk, and tofu were purchased in the Philadelphia area in 2014 and then analyzed for glyphosate residue using ELISA testing.

Of the sixty-nine honey samples analyzed, forty-one samples, or 59%, had glyphosate concentrations above the limit of quantification (LOQ) of 15 parts per billion (ppb), with an average of 64 ppb.

In addition five of the eleven organic honey samples, or

45%, contained glyphosate concentrations above the LOQ, with an average of 50 ppb.

Glyphosate concentrations above LOQ (75 ppb) were also found in ten of the twenty-eight soy sauce samples tested (36%), with an average of 242 ppb.

The study was published in *The Journal of Environmental and Analytical Toxicology*.

Despite testing for hundreds of pesticides in food commodities, the USDA does not test for glyphosate residues. (SOURCE: *Sustainable Pulse*) ■

Bee losses may increase risk of malnutrition, disease

The first study to demonstrate how declining pollinator populations could affect human nutritional health—and therefore vulnerability to disease—has unearthed some grim scenarios.

Scientists from the University of Vermont and Harvard's School of Public Health estimate that more than half of the people in some developing countries could become newly at risk for malnutrition and diseases if crop pollinators like bees continue to decline. Pollinators supply up to 40% of the world's nutrients. Vitamin and mineral deficiencies probably affect 1 in 4 people, globally—particularly for Vitamin A, which can cause blindness and death from malaria.

The study closely examined daily diets of people in parts of Zambia, Mozambique, Uganda and Bangladesh. Connecting what is eaten with pollination requirements of those crops enabled researchers to quantify the impacts of pollinator declines.

We could begin to see neural tube defects from folate deficiency, for example, said Samuel Myers of Harvard, “because we have transformed our landscapes in ways that don't support animal pollinators anymore.”

It's a case of epidemiology meeting ecology—so conservation can now be thought of as an investment in public health. ■

Monsanto's Roundup Ready crop system puts monarch butterflies at brink of extinction

The Center for Food Safety recently released a detailed, 80-page scientific report, “Monarchs in Peril: Herbicide-Resistant Crops and the Decline of Monarch Butterflies in North America.” The comprehensive report reveals the severe impacts of herbicide-resistant genetically modified crops on the monarch population, which has plummeted by 90% in less than 20 years.

The report makes it abundantly clear: two decades of Roundup Ready crops have nearly eradicated milkweed—the monarch caterpillar's sole source of food—in cropland of the monarch's vital Midwest breeding ground. At the urgent request of scientists and public interest groups, the US Fish and Wildlife Service is currently considering listing the monarch as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act.

The report was presented to Congress in February at an expert briefing on the decline of the monarch butterflies. ■

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Photo courtesy of Center for Food Safety

Senator Barbara Boxer speaks about legislation to label GM foods with (from left) Rep. Peter DeFazio, Chef Tom Colicchio, and Senator Richard Blumenthal

Chef Colicchio, activists, lawmakers demand action on GMO labeling

Chef Tom Colicchio joined Sens. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.) and Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.) and Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-Ore.) as they recently reintroduced bipartisan legislation that would give Americans more information about what's in their food and how it was produced.

The bill—titled the Genetically Engineered Food Right-to-Know Act—would direct the Food and Drug Administration to require that food manufacturers label foods that contain genetically modified ingredients. It was reintroduced in both the Senate and the House.

“We cannot continue to keep Americans in the dark about the food they eat,” said Rep. DeFazio. “More than sixty other countries make it easy for con-

sumers to choose. Why should the U.S. be any different?”

“I applaud Senators Boxer and Blumenthal and Representative DeFazio for their leadership and urge their colleagues to join them in standing up for the 93 percent of Americans who want to know whether their food has been genetically modified,” said Colicchio, owner of Craft Restaurants and co-founder of Food Policy Action. ■

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Majority of Massachusetts state legislators support GMO food labeling

Bill could pass and go to the governor this legislative session

A coalition of Massachusetts consumer, community, farming, and public health organizations recently announced that a majority of the state's house of representatives and senate have signed on as co-sponsors of GMO food labeling legislation. A total of 154 out of 200 Massachusetts legislators - including 125 from the House of Representatives and 29 from the Senate - have signed on as co-sponsors to the GMO labeling bill.

The bill, currently known as House Docket 369—*An Act establishing the genetic engineering transparency food and seed labeling act*—would ensure that all foods sold in Massachusetts that contain genetically engineered ingredients be clearly labeled. Connecticut, Maine and Vermont have already passed GMO labeling laws.

According to the *Mt. Vernon Register News*, the legislators say they have enough support to send the bill to Governor Charlie Baker in the current legislative session.

"Over the last two years, we have increased the number

of co-sponsors on GMO labeling legislation more than sevenfold," said Representative Ellen Story (D-Amherst). "This issue resonates with everyone because it is a reasonable request about a basic right we all should have: tell us what is in our food. I truly believe that this will be our year to pass this bill."

"People have the right to know and understand the products that are contained within our food in order to make informed and healthy decisions to meet their dietary needs," said Senate Minority Leader Bruce Tarr (R-Gloucester). ■

GM labeling bills flood state legislatures

As 2015 begins, at least six states have introduced bills requiring labeling of genetically modified goods. In Florida, Democrats have filed two more, in the House (HB 351) and Senate (SB 416). They would initially require labels on 25 raw fruits and vegetables as well as any product containing rGBH, by Jan.1, 2017.

In Arizona, HB 2462 requires labeling of GM foods and prohibits the "all natural" label on any GMO product. Representative Juan Mendez says the bill simply affirms a consumer's right to know, as they can now access nutritional facts and ingredients on a product.

In Minnesota, State Senators John Marty and Fong Hawj introduced SB 335, which requires disclosure of genetically engineered food beginning January 1, 2017.

Rhode Island introduced two bills on January 15. "I've introduced this bill for four

years,” Rep. Raymond Hull said. “It gets just so far and then it stops. But there is more momentum now than there has been in the past. We’re very optimistic.”

Other states introducing labeling bills include Indiana and Virginia.

(SOURCES: *Palm Beach Post*; *Phoenix New Times*; *Meat & Poultry*; *Brown Daily Herald*) ■

Vermont confident in GM labeling lawsuit

Attorney General William Sorrell feels Vermont’s defense of the recently passed GMO labeling legislation is strong.

The plaintiffs, who include the Grocery Manufacturers Association, claim the state is

restricting their right to free speech by forcing labeling on products containing GMOs. Sorrell’s response is that “compelled speech” can be legitimate when health or environmental issues are at stake.

The plaintiffs also want the right to call a product “natural” even if it contains GMOs. But Monsanto’s own website describes GMOs as “plants or animals that have had their genetic makeup altered to exhibit traits that are not naturally theirs.”

Sorrell also tore down the argument that labeling presents an “undue burden” on interstate commerce, noting that manufacturers have been given two years to transition to labeling.

Sorrell expects a ruling on the initial motions in the next three months.

(SOURCES: *Rutland Herald*; *Associated Press*) ■



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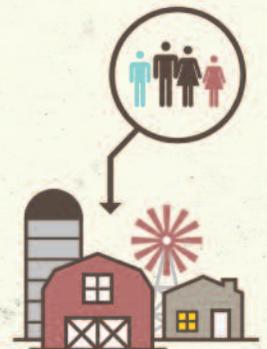
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