

FDA Commissioner
Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

4454 '01 FEB 15 P3 '09

**RE: Docket No. OOD -1598 (labeling of genetically engineered food)
and Docket No. ON -1396 (pre-market testing of genetically engineered foods)**

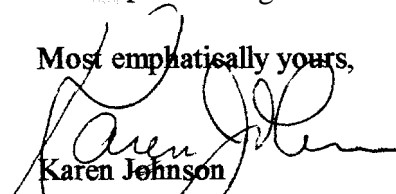
I am extremely concerned about your proposed policies on genetically engineered foods. Despite **overwhelming** consumer demand, your agency is still **failing** to require basic safety testing or mandatory labeling for GE foods. Labels on GE foods are required in Japan, Russia, and throughout Europe, and opinion polls state that the majority of Americans want testing and labeling, yet your new proposal would deny the **freedom** of Americans to know what is in our food. **If the FDA cannot or will not inform** and protect us, who will?

There has been ample evidence submitted to the FDA revealing that genetically engineered foods are not substantially equivalent to non-genetically engineered foods. There are numerous health and environmental risks according to knowledgeable geneticists. As species boundaries are crossed, new and potentially toxic proteins could be created. We are eating experimental food never before consumed in the history of mankind. Failure to require **long-term** studies done by *independent* laboratories would seem to be failure of the FDA to do its job which is to assure the safety of our food and, in this case, the integrity of existing food chains.

The FDA voluntary labeling guidelines (Docket No. OOD-1598) put the foxes in charge of the hen house (again). Clearly the industry will *not* choose to label genetically modified food because, as **has** happened in Europe, informed people will choose *not* to buy it without **sufficient** testing. Labeling must be required if Americans are to make informed choices. I have the right to know what genetic material is in my food. Further, without labeling, any suspected health effects would be **difficult** to trace. The second proposed rule [Docket No. **ON-1396**] requiring companies to **notify** FDA before bringing GE foods to our supermarket shelves is purposeless. Mere notification requires nothing of Monsanto and Aventis who are well on the way to *owning* the world's food supply. Who will protect my organic, vegetarian garden **from cross-pollination** containing genetic material **from** animals, bacteria, and pesticides? ***I am asking that the FDA to do its job and reject these two rules which place corporate interests above those of American citizens.***

Recently, both the **E.U./U.S. Biotechnology Consultative Forum** and the Consumer Federation of America recommended mandatory labeling of genetically engineered foods. **The** FDA's decisions should make companies prove the **safety** of their products before they are produced. Your decisions will have a permanent **effect** on the well-being of future generations of Americans for better or for worse. Better is to **require** testing and labeling of GM foods.

Most emphatically yours,


Karen Johnson
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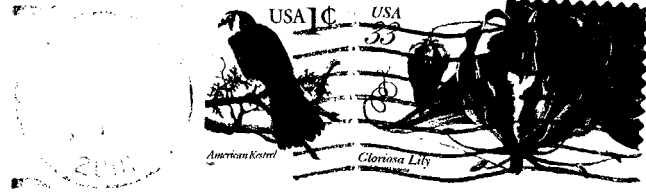
cc: Senators **Snowe & Collins**
Rep. Baldacci

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C. 542



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