

Date: *March 12, 2001*

Dockets Management Branch (HFA 305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fisher's Lane, Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

4144 '01 MAR 19 10:17

RE: DOCKET NO. OOD-1598, Labeling of Biotech Food and DOCKET NO. OON-1396

To whom it may concern:

I am outraged by the FDA's new policy that makes labeling of **biotech/genetically** engineered (GE) foods voluntary. Even though tens of thousands of people have already expressed their desire for mandatory labeling and thorough safety testing of GE foods, your agency still fails to require these actions. This new, voluntary policy is an insult to consumers, and irresponsibly ignores strong scientific evidence of numerous potential health and environmental risks from GE foods.

These foods have not been tested for long-term health effects and have already caused irreparable damage to the environment. GE foods could have reduced nutritional values, be toxic, cause allergic reactions, and prove a continuing drain on the immune system. The FDA failed to consider what could happen to human health once these foods comprise a significant portion of our diets. In finding that GE foods are by definition "substantially equivalent" to non-GE food, and in making safety testing the manufacturer's responsibility, the FDA failed in its duty to protect the American public from corporations that acknowledge that they are in the business of selling food, not testing it for safety.

I am strongly opposed to the voluntary labeling policy, which denies consumers their basic right to know what is in their food. Without mandatory labeling, neither consumers nor health professionals will know if an allergic or toxic reaction was the result of a genetically engineered food. Consumers will also be deprived of the critical knowledge they need to hold food producers liable should any GE foods prove hazardous.

We have a right to choose the food that we believe is the most wholesome and safest food to eat. Without a mandatory labeling scheme for GE foods and irradiated foods, I will have no way of knowing how my food has been processed and altered. I will not accept your attempt to make my family guinea pigs and lab rats for these untested foods. I urge you to require consumer labeling of ALL foods produced using **biotechnology**.

Sincerely,



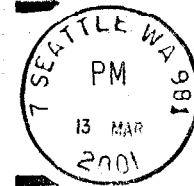
Your name and address

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