



**BUTCHER SHOP & DELI**  
RICH'S BUTCHER SHOP, INC.  
April 19, 2001

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

RE: Docket No. 00D-1598

Dear Commissioner,

I am writing on behalf of S&S Produce and Natural Foods to comment on the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) proposals regarding genetically engineered food.

Since 1968, our customers have relied on S&S Produce and Natural Foods to provide them safe and healthy foods. The commercialization of genetically engineered foods without labeling or long term safety testing impacts our ability to give our customers the safe food they want and deserve.

The FDA's current proposal on genetically engineered food fails to protect consumers and the environment from these experimental foods. The agency is aware that its proposed "voluntary" labeling guidelines run contrary to the demand of the vast majority of Americans, who want labels to be required on genetically engineered foods. FDA's own focus group report found that "Virtually all participants said that bioengineered foods should be labeled as such so that they could tell whether a given food was a product of the new technology."

FDA's proposed guidelines for "voluntary labeling" would have the effect of putting the burden of labeling on food producers who simply wish to sell the same food they always have – food made without genetic engineering. Meanwhile, food producers who accept untested gene altered foods can continue to sell them to consumers without notice.

We urge the FDA to require labels on all food made from genetically engineering from seeds, to grain handlers, through to the finished products on our supermarket shelves. Such labeling is required or proposed already throughout Europe and in New Zealand, Japan, Mexico, South Korea, Russia, Taiwan and in other countries.

Furthermore, the agency's failure to require long term safety testing subjects Americans and our environment to a risky genetic experiment. Without long term safety testing the ability of genetically engineered foods to introduce new food allergies, novel food toxins and environmental damage will go unchecked.

We strongly urge the FDA to take precaution with genetically engineered foods by requiring safety testing and labeling. Americans deserve their right to know when it comes to the foods they buy.

Sincerely,

Joyce Rogers  
General Manager  
S&S Produce & Natural Foods

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