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The Negotiation of GMO Labeling By America's Public

Introduction

In the following paragraphs there will be many accusations and reasoning stated for the need of GMO labeling within the United States. According to Rebecca Bratspies’ publication, approximately eighty percentage of the foods in supermarket shelves across America contain GMOs (925). However, there is no mandating by the Federal Government for the labeling of any of these products as having been genetically modified. My intention is not to brainwash you into thinking a certain a way, but for you *consider* the viewpoints of millions seeking a sort of fundamental human right from its government.

We Are Being Exploited

Not allowing for consumers to choose what they are really putting into their body has a psychological effect as well as any other physical effect which may accommodate GMOs. When information is deliberately hidden from a party, there can only be one solution which comes to mind regarding the reason for doing so. The consumer’s mind thinks that there is something to hide.

As Colson and Huffman point out in their publication, “information injected into the public domain will continue to play an important role in determining consumer acceptance.” (362) Although the American population has not yet spoken out loudly about the non-labeling of genetically modified foods within the United States, there is always the understanding in the back of our minds that there is more to the constant resistance against providing the public with information regarding scientific testing of our foods.

Because corporations have moved on from the purpose of wanting to provide quality foods to profiting largely from mass production of foods around the world, it is no wonder that there are physical repercussions to genetic engineering. Monsanto’s genetically engineered corn has been proven to develop more tumors in research rats according to Butler’s article (158). On a large scale, it is not a far reach to assume that Monsanto’s genetically engineered corn will produce the same results in humans. The rats were closely observed for a period of two years in a scientific environment. When and if a human being were to be diagnosed with cancer from Monsanto’s genetic engineered foods, who is to be blamed? The study was ignored by the EFSA and BfR, Europe’s equivalence of the FDA in America. There is no justice for the common man from big corporations such as Monsanto.

As the use of herbicides and pest-resistant plants rise, so does the dangers to our environment. Due to the high usage of pesticides in common foods such as cotton, soybeans, and corn, weeds resistant to herbicides are known to grow in twenty states of America so far (Bratspies 924). The growing of weeds in our ecological system is not the issue which is bothersome. The fearsome aspect of genetically engineered foods is the *disregard* which corporations possess towards the environment. As toxic waste is dumped in nearby lakes by companies taking part in the making of herbicides and other chemicals used towards the food we consume, the environment all around us is taking the toll.

The Opposing Party in the Labeling of GMOs

What could large scientific organizations gain from siding with large GMO producing corporations? Funding. It is one of the most important aspects of all major organizations in today’s world. Without funding, they would not be able to partake in and conduct experiments. Without the collaboration of large scientific organizations, money hungry GMO producing corporations would not be able to gain credibility in what they put in the shelves of our supermarkets.

As Butler emphasizes his article, the European Food Safety Authority is not completely public about all of the data regarding their approval of Monsanto’s genetically modified corn, which is consumed by humans and animals alike all over the world (158). Monsanto is the “Agribusiness Giant” corporation with control over GM herbicides, pest-resistant plants, and most of the world’s corn and dairy consumption (Martin 358).

The common reasoning for being pro-GMO is that world hunger will be diminished. As far as is noticeable, the countries in starvation are the ones being used by corporations to grow GMO crops to be distributed in supermarkets around the world. As Cyrus Martin points out in his article, Mexico is a country where genetically engineered corn is being farmed while it has been illegal to do so since 1998 (359).

There is always an alternative

What truly keeps us from rising against the non-labeling of GMO products in America, unlike how strongly most countries in Europe have reacted? Our culture has been molded into a more comfort-needing one over decades of skillful marketing and ease and efficiency presented to us in a silver platter by corporations. The average American does not think twice before stuffing their face with genetically engineered tomatoes, among other things in a burger from McDonalds, as Robert Kenner from the famous documentary called Food Inc. brings to light.

Ignorance is bliss. Pretending that nothing can be done about the current state of GMOs in our country is something which is far too easy to deal with rather than imagining a situation of trying and failing to bring a change in this falling culture. There is a level of uncertainty and helplessness which has formed in America’s minds about what the public is truly empowered to do. Such can be seen in the lack of uproar when the ballot initiative for requiring labeling of GMO foods was turned down by the government on 5th November, 2013 (Label Loss 170).

While Cyrus Martin does emphasize that the counterargument for GMO labeling is the decline of our economy through fear and government spending in the economy, we must keep in mind that the people are in power of the social system of an economy, the system is not in control of the people (356).

Bringing on any type of a positive change in life requires time and effort. As will be the case in trying to lead a life in which the food you consume is your decision to make. A sudden change is impossible. Every corporation and government agency has their own agendas which must be dealt with before the labeling of GMOs may ever be a reality. Therefore, the only logical solution is to take matters into our own hands and grow our own food.

Yes, world hunger is a huge problem which needs to be dealt with. But why leave it up to large corporations to take the credit for diminishing world hunger in any way possible while also indirectly being the cause of it in many ways? With compassion and a little bit of effort, there is more than enough healthy food to go around on planet Earth.

Community gardens is a new way of thinking which many of us aren’t used to. Not only will you have complete knowledge of what foods and chemicals are a part of your dinner every night, there will be an abundance of food and duties to be shared within a community.

Conclusion

While some nations around the world *are* taking action against the non-labeling of genetically engineered foods, America still has a long way to go in seeking justice. There is no need to emulate what another nation has done for itself because each nation has its own cultural and economic mindset. The American public, however, *does* have to rise to the responsibility of thinking on its own instead of leaving our entire livelihoods in the hands of money-hungry corporations which by default will think for itself.

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