

## Genetically Modified Food Labeling Fact Sheet

In 2014, Vermont became the first state to require mandatory GMO labeling. Connecticut and Maine have also passed GMO labeling laws that will go into effect once neighboring states pass similar laws. In response to these state efforts, legislation developed by some food companies – dubbed the Denying Americans the Right to Know or DARK Act - has been introduced in the House of Representatives and similar legislation may soon be introduced in the Senate.

### The “Denying Americans the Right-to-Know” (DARK) Act would:

- Preempt states from requiring labeling of GMO food and prohibiting bogus “natural” claims.
- Codify the current, broken voluntary labeling system through new FDA non-GMO labeling rules and a new USDA non-GMO labeling program.
- Create new barriers to national mandatory GMO labeling system.
- Create a GMO “safety” review system based on industry science, impossible deadlines, and loopholes.

### Americans want the Right to Know:

- Polls show 90% of Americans support labeling of GMO food.
- Bogus “natural” claims have created enormous consumer confusion about GMOs.
- 64 nations require labeling including Russia, China, the EU, and important trading partners in Asia.
- More than 1.4 million Americans have joined a petition urging FDA to require labeling of GMO food.
- 200 companies recently urged President Obama to honor his pledge to require GMO labeling.<sup>1</sup>
- In 2013 and 2014, more than 70 GMO labeling bills or ballot initiatives were proposed across 30 states.

### Dispelling GMO Labeling Myths:

- **GMO labeling will not increase food prices.** Companies frequently change labels to highlight new innovations. The retail price of food is impacted by many factors, not simply the cost of making food.<sup>2</sup>
- **Voluntary labeling will not work.** Companies have been allowed to make voluntary GMO and non-GMO disclosures, but consumers are more confused than ever.
- **GMO crops do not feed the world.** Conventional and GMO corn and soybean yields have increased at the same rate. What’s more, U.S. farmers produce only 4% of rice, wheat, fruits, and vegetables, and most US corn and soybeans are used for animal feed and ethanol, not food.<sup>3</sup>
- **GMO crops have increased herbicide applications.** Expanding the use of GMO crops has increased applications of glyphosate – a probably human carcinogen -- by more than 500 million pounds.<sup>4</sup>
- **GMO crops have led to more toxic herbicides.** As weeds have become resistant to GMO herbicides, farmers have turned to more toxic weed killers linked to Parkinson’s disease and reproductive problems.
- **GMO crops have not reduced soil erosion.** Adoption of soil-conserving farm practices were made in response to “conservation compliance” provisions of the 1985 Farm Bill.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [http://static.ewg.org/pdf/2014-GE-Labeling-Letter-to-President-Obama.pdf?\\_ga=1.43874470.2058587466.1399901646](http://static.ewg.org/pdf/2014-GE-Labeling-Letter-to-President-Obama.pdf?_ga=1.43874470.2058587466.1399901646)

<sup>2</sup> <http://justlabelit.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Kai-Roberston-Food-Labeling-Study-2013.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ewg.org/agmag/2014/10/little-ground-truth-world-food-day>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.enveurope.com/content/24/1/24>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.ewg.org/research/debunking-myth-ge-crops-reduce-soil-loss>