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GE ALFALFA

USDA to OK Genetically Modified Alfalfa; Good-Bye Organic Dairy, Honey, and Grass-Fed Beef?

Approval of GE alfalfa will likely lead to more spraying of pesticides, more genetically modified food, and contamination of organic crops.

BY LEAH ZERBE



Organic farmers worry that genetically altered alfalfa will contaminate their fields.

UPDATE Jan. 28 2011: Obama Believed to Be Behind GMO Alfalfa Push

UPDATE Jan. 27 2011: USDA Approves Gene-Altered Alfalfa, Fails to Protect Organic Farms

RODALE NEWS, EMMAUS, PA—Despite rough economic times, more and more people are buying organic, not just to protect the planet, but also to keep their families safe from

toxic pesticides linked to ADHD, autism, and certain cancers, among other things. Many also choose organic to keep genetically engineered (GE) ingredients off of their family's plates (certified-organic food cannot contain GE ingredients). Also called genetically modified organisms, or GMOs, GE food has been linked to infertility, allergies, and other serious health problems. But even as more consumers vote with their dollars for organic, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is poised to approve GE alfalfa, perhaps as early as next month.

Like GE corn and soy, which are already ubiquitous in the nonorganic food supply, GE alfalfa would involve farmers using alfalfa seeds that have been genetically manipulated to withstand dousings of the chemical Roundup (glyphosate)—so-called Roundup Ready seeds. Researchers from USDA and Purdue University have found glyphosate to be quite dangerous, leaving plants susceptible to disease and unable to take up from the soil trace minerals that humans need to survive. The overuse of Roundup has also led to the emergence of superweeds resistant to the chemical weed killer, and opponents of GE crop use say introducing another Roundup Ready crop will only worsen the superweed problem. There's also the issue of cross-contamination, meaning that the genetic material from GE alfalfa could cross-pollinate and contaminate organic alfalfa used in organic dairy and grass-fed beef operations. "Alfalfa is an incredibly important feed for animals," explains Patty Lovera, assistant director of the consumer watchdog group Food & Water Watch. "Maybe you don't eat alfalfa sprouts, but you might eat something that eats alfalfa."

Organic advocates say approval of GE alfalfa also opens the door to Americans' being exposed to even more GMOs in the food supply. For instance, aside from being fed to animals, GE alfalfa could also contaminate organic honey supplies,

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since bees forage in alfalfa and create nectar that in turn becomes honey for human food. And organic farms, which depend on organic alfalfa, will be vulnerable to contamination. "People who eat organic foods should care about this because alfalfa is a vital crop to organic farmers," explains Ken Roseboro, editor of [The Organic & Non-GMO Report](#). "It is an important feed for organic dairy cows, and organic farmers use alfalfa in their crop rotations to build soil fertility. GE alfalfa is a huge threat to that."

THE DETAILS: The USDA is set to make a decision regarding the approval of GE alfalfa anytime after the public comment period ends February 16, and experts following this closely believe it will get approval. "Yes, the USDA is going to approve GE alfalfa. The question is whether they will approve it without restrictions or with restrictions," says Roseboro. In fact, this is the first time the agency is considering placing restrictions on a GE crop. (For instance, GE corn, soy, cotton, and canola have no restrictions, and can be planted anywhere; they've been threatening organic and non-GE crops for years.) The restrictions under consideration, Roseboro says, would include limiting plantings of GE alfalfa to certain states, where farmers would be required to establish a five-mile isolation zone from conventional or organic alfalfa fields. This has advocates on both sides of the issue fuming. Creators of the GE seed and chemical pesticide system are reportedly [majorly ticked off over USDA's inclusion of restrictions to help protect organic farmers](#), even though organic advocates don't think the restrictions will fully protect organic crops. "Biotech groups are angry that this coexistence initiative launched by USDA could signal a change in regulatory policy toward GMOs by the agency," says Roseboro. "Right now, there is very little or no regulation on GE crops, and biotech companies and supporters don't want that to change."

1 2 NEXT >

Posted on January 22nd, 2011 by CarolinaLady
WHAT IS BECOMING OF THIS COUNTRY WHEN OUR GOVERNMENT (such as it is) IS TRYING TO KILL US ALL OFF WITH POISONS? Will they never stop? And how do we stop them? It seems to have little impact to "let our voice be heard". They go right ahead and do what 'big money' dictates to them to do. Are they so stupid that they believe that eventually THEY won't be affected by this?

Posted on January 20th, 2011 by ZephyrTX000001
More people need to write and voice their opinion on this topic. I sent my email today voicing my concerns over not only GMOs but also over the fact that the company pushing for this has a REALLY DIRTY TRACK RECORD!!

Here's the email for the Secretary of Agriculture for those who want to JUST SAY NO!!
AgSec@usda.gov

And for those of you who don't know much about Monsanto--the company pushing for GE alfalfa--(created by them) you might want to look at this website and see the history of this company and it's record with other 'wonderful' products it has produced to the benefit of all (EXTREME SARCASM) --ever head of PCBs?!?

http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Monsanto%27s_Global_Pollution...

Posted on January 20th, 2011 by Kathi Robinson
Several weeks ago there was quite a stir in the news, especially the internet, about the passage of the s510. bill in the House and Senate.

Many organizations (using the techniques of organic farming) were against this bill for the simple reason it would make it easier to get more GMO crops into our food supply.

Quite a few sites, I believe this one is included, were praising the attributes that this new bill would afford our country. I can even remember how it was suggested we the public let our legislators know we the consumer were behind them in getting this bill passed. It was supposed to be such a boon to our safety in the food supply.

Isn't it amazing how it is not even 30 days later that we are now having this conversation about getting one more food substance approved which is toxic to the human body?

What part of this equation is so difficult to figure out?

If the consumer actually had a choice in this equation, which one do you think we would pick - food laced with toxins, pesticides and herbicides or food which is actually grown as nature originally intended it to be?

For a little protection for your family, check at this website for some information:
<http://www.allergiesandalternativemedicine.com>

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