

Members Out Loud

Initiative to Label GMOs Spurs Local Action

Experts around the world agree that mandatory labeling of GMOs can provide a critical method for tracking the potential health effects of eating these foods.

The Northern Humboldt Label GMOs group is part of The Committee for the Right to Know, a grassroots coalition of consumer, public health, environmental organizations, and food companies in California that is seeking the labeling of genetically engineered foods. The California Right to Know Genetically Engineered Food Act' has now been filed and we are expecting to start gathering signatures in January 2012. We have 150 days to collect 800,000 signatures and we need your help!

It is our right to know if we are eating GMO foods. A Genetically Engineered food or Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) is a plant or meat product that has had its DNA artificially altered in a laboratory by genes from other plants, animals, viruses, or bacteria, in order to produce

foreign compounds in that food. For example, Genetically Modified corn has been engineered in a laboratory to produce pesticides in its own tissue. In fact, GMO corn is regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency as an insecticide. This type of genetic alteration is not found in nature, and is experimental. On top of this, GMOs have not been proven safe.

Currently there is no health testing required despite warnings from the FDA's own scientists. Recent studies show that genetically engineering food can create new, unintended toxic substances and increase allergies, cancer risks, and other health problems, especially for children.

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Polls consistently show that more than 90 percent of the public want labels on genetically engineered foods. And yet an estimated 80 percent of our packaged foods contain unlabeled GMOs. Many of these come in the form of hidden ingredients such as sweeteners, lecithin, glycerin, vitamin C and cellulose, and that is just to name a few.

The 'California Right to Know Genetically Engineered Food Act' simply requires food producers to label food that contains genetically engineered ingredients. Fifty countries with over 40 percent of the world's population already label genetically engineered foods, including the entire European Union. Even China requires labeling. It is time for us to have that same right. We didn't always label foods with calorie or nutritional



Kate Thurston with daughter, Avalon

Photo by Amy Waldrip

Members **Out Loud**
got something to say? Write Us.

This forum is intended to connect Co-op members with open, educational information and opinions. Submissions should be between 200 and 500 words.

Grammar and AP Style mistakes will be corrected. Subject matter should pertain directly to cooperatives and their core principles, food, health and/or food policy. Libelous, vulgar or inappropriate language will be edited.

The Co-op News is a device to facilitate the democratic process for our members in order to best represent their concerns, interests and ideals.

To submit articles or inquire about Members Out Loud, email: co-opnews@northcoastco-op.com

**Deadline for the February Issue:
Jan. 15**

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value information, but we do now, and most consumers use this information every day.

The Northern Humboldt Label GMOs group needs your help in collecting the 800,000 petition signatures to get the 'The California Right to Know Genetically Engineered Food Act' on 2012 California Ballot. Signature gathering training workshops will be ongoing throughout the petition drive. These one-hour workshops are essential to ensure that we collect valid signatures. Help get this important, historic initiative on the ballot. Pledge to gather signatures today. It's our right to know!

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