

Will Jeff Bezos Force Whole Foods to Stop Lying? Apparently Not



By Alex Berezow — January 30, 2019



Whole Foods

Whole Foods lies. A lot.*

The company's entire business model is premised upon a foundation of lies. Several years ago, I documented them in an [article](#) [1] for RealClearScience. Among the many falsehoods perpetuated by the company, the most egregious include the claims that "organic certification" is a stringent standard and that organic food reduces health risks. Both are demonstrably false.

In 2017, Amazon bought Whole Foods. Amazon's CEO, Jeff Bezos, built his multibillion-dollar empire on technology. Therefore, you might expect that Whole Foods would become a little friendlier to biotech. But you would be wrong. The company even has a [page instructing people how to avoid GMOs](#) [2].

Whole Foods Never Stops Lying

Last week, *Whole Foods Magazine* (which is not actually affiliated with Whole Foods*) published an [article](#) [3] written by a lawyer, Scott C. Tips, about an evil plan to sneak more GMOs into our food supply by changing the definition of biofortification at some obscure international food meeting. As you might expect, in an article in which GMOs are called a "disease," the lies and distortions come early and often.

For example, Tips can't even define basic terms properly:

"Biofortification is a method of increasing certain vitamin and mineral content of

basic food crops by the time-honored, conventional way of cross-breeding, and not through genetic engineering."

False. Biofortification is agnostic about methodology. In fact, the World Health Organization [says](#) ^[4], "Biofortification is the process by which the nutritional quality of food crops is improved through agronomic practices, conventional plant breeding, **or modern biotechnology**." [Emphasis added] "Golden rice," which has been fortified with vitamin A precursors using genetic modification techniques, is a classic example.

Tips continues:

"[Biofortification] is a very admirable goal, although I have argued at these meetings that perhaps it's an unnecessary one if farmers would simply employ the proper farming techniques to prevent soil depletion..."

Funny. GMOs and other modern pesticides make it easier to practice [no-till farming](#) ^[5], which helps prevent soil erosion. But Tips is opposed to GMOs and modern pesticides.

The rest of the article is sort of a pathetic conspiratorial rant about GMOs. Tips is convinced that nations all over the world, even nice ones like Australia and New Zealand, are pro-GMO simply because they are "egged on by their corporate masters." Of course, several African countries also love GMOs because they can help feed hungry people and develop their economies. No corporate overlords required.

Of the person running the food meeting, Dr. Anja Brönstrup, Tips said she "ran the meeting with cool but soulless German efficiency." (Would he have made the same comment had a man run the meeting?) Afterward, he boasted:

"I was the only one to storm to the front table and condemn the Chairwoman face-to-face... It was not a pretty exchange. But I did make my point."

What a hero!

Jeff Bezos, Please Fix Whole Foods

I've been to Whole Foods a few times. The food is pretty tasty, though grossly overpriced. Unfortunately, their unscientific, holier-than-thou attitude, in which farmers are treated as villains and scientists as evil manipulators, will keep me away. Mr. Bezos, the ball is in your court.

**Update (January 31, 2019 @ 2:30 pm PT): It has been brought to our attention that Whole Foods Magazine is not published by Whole Foods. The article has been updated throughout.*

Source URL: <https://www.acsh.org/news/2019/01/30/will-jeff-bezos-force-whole-foods-stop-lying-apparently-not-13771>

Links

[1] https://www.realclearscience.com/blog/2014/06/the_lies_that_whole_foods_tells_108701.html

[2] <https://www.wholefoodsmarket.com/gmo-shopping-tips>

[3] <https://wholefoodsmagazine.com/columns/legal-tips/gmo-foods-will-soon-be-mislabeled-as-biofortified/>

[4] <https://www.who.int/elena/titles/biofortification/en/>

[5] <https://geneticliteracyproject.org/2017/05/05/gmo-sustainability-advantage-glyphosate-sparks-no-till-farming-preserving-soil-carbon/>