Experts on food biotechnology (GMO-containing food) tell it like it is

By ACSH Staff — January 14, 2014

The latest issue of the journal of the Institute of Food Technologists has an excellent, clearly-written, non-technical discussion of just about all the aspects of bioengineered food one would hope to get in a few hundred words. Co-written by ACSH advisor Bruce Chassy, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus of Food Science at the University of Illinois and President of AcademicsReview.org, and Wayne Parrott, Ph.D., Professor of Crop and Soil Sciences, University of Georgia, here’s the nugget:

Although controversial, genetically-modified crops are safe, efficacious, and necessary to meet future food needs and preferences.

So why all the fuss? (Which happens to be a header over one section of their essay). Here is why:

All too often, the concern that any particular brand will be viewed as less than 100% safe by consumers leads food companies to bow before public pressure just witness the current move to claim no high-fructose corn syrup prominently on some labels. While there are clear short-term benefits from this strategy, it allows public opinion to become the arbiter of what is healthy and what is not, rather than specialists in the field. The inevitable outcome of such science by plurality of opinion is to ensure that food ingredients and novel technologies available to the industry are continuously attacked until removed from food products.

At this moment many consumers trust the activists on the issue of GM safety more than they do the food industry. The food industry and members of IFT need to invest time, resources, and energy to explain GM technology, why the world needs GM crops, and the food industry's commitment to safety and sustainability.

ACSH's Dr. Gilbert Ross added this: In other words, do not cave to consumer concerns, usually provoked by special interest groups with agendas: science, especially food science in this age of ongoing malnutrition, is not a democracy. The anti-science voices raised up against GM food must not be allowed to stifle this important progress.

ACSH's publications on biotech-food will be released next week: Watch for them!