How do anti-GMO activists appeal to America’s mothers?

By ACSH Staff — March 31, 2014

Genetically modified foods have been omnipresent in the news recently. Those who use the media as a platform to scare people about GM foods are strategically using fear as their weapon of choice, according to Julie Gunlock. She is the director of the Independent Women Forum’s Culture of Alarmism Project and co-director of Safe Chemical Policy News, and her thesis is to be found in an article she wrote about GM food and nervous moms in the Capital Research Center newsletter. She says these fear-mongers are appealing to the general sense of anxiety specifically among today’s moms to promote their anti-GMO message.

She says, The news media hype findings from dubious, scientifically questionable studies, and in the process often make women feel confused, overwhelmed, and no better informed than before. Furthermore, the anti-GMO activists cultivate the impression that they are on a mission to protect women and children from the dangers of the world, which include the use of GMOs in the American food supply.

And a key point is that the anti-GMO activists ignore the fact that GMOs have been consumed for the past 20 years. In fact, says Gunlock, given their predominance in the American diet, if they were indeed harmful, any deleterious effects would almost certainly have been seen by now. No such effects have been seen. Gunlock points out that these activists claims are not backed by scientific studies or the medical community.

She encourages mothers to look at the broader picture when making decisions about GM food. Do moms really want to support policies that will raise the cost of food and decrease the supply, at a time when billions of people live in poverty? Moms should know about the worldwide impact of scientific progress in agriculture, and about the ways in which GM crops have improved the lives of the world’s poor and may further improve their lives in the future. Read her full article here.

Along those same lines, both California and New Jersey are now trying to pass bills that would require GM food to be labeled. As we have said many times in the past, and as Gunlock very effectively conveys in her article, these bills are completely unnecessary due to the safety of GM
foods, and the fact that if consumers wish to buy GM-free foods, they can buy organic. Furthermore, as referenced previously, these bills have the potential to be detrimental by raising food prices and decreasing the supply.

Even the FDA is not behind [4] labeling, as FDA commissioner Margaret Hamburg told lawmakers this week, stating that the agency remains comfortable with a 1992 policy decision concluding that food made with genetically modified organisms - or GMOs - is not materially different from other products.

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