

LA City Council pushes a symbolic GMO ban

By ACSH Staff — October 24, 2014



We've heard of useless laws before, but one pushed by the Los

Angeles City Council ranks right up there in terms of political boot-licking. According to a recent [report](#) [1] in the *Los Angeles Times*, the Council has agreed to vote on whether or not to draft an ordinance banning the growth of genetically engineered (GMO) crops.

Why is this useless? Well, to start with, as one might expect there are no crops now grown in LA county GMO or otherwise unless you want to include the latest round of scary movies. So if drafted, this ordinance would ban essentially nothing. However, the proposed ban is receiving enthusiastic support from the usual anti-GMO activists. This, even though scientists knowledgeable about bioengineering point out that there have NEVER been any deleterious health or environmental effects from GMO crops. So who would such a ban protect?

Obviously, the organic foods industry probably has the most to gain from such a ban, since it would promote the idea that GMOs are somehow inferior to their own supposedly purer products. But their stance is based solely on self-interest, and that of their supporters. For years the organic industry has been pushing the supposed superiority of their products by touting the fact that they have fewer pesticide residues than do conventional crops. But that may be because only synthetic pesticides have been tested not those approved for organic crops and yes, there are many such. Of course the organic industry is not interested in informing consumers about their use of such products some of which may well be unhealthy for people and the environment.

ACSH's Dr. Ruth Kava commented This is one of the most egregiously political moves we've seen in a long time. First, it will affect no one in LA county, second, it will send an anti-science and counterproductive message about GMO crops and foods, and third, such a ban is clearly an instrument to support the organic industry. One can only hope, she continued, that wiser heads will prevail and this ban will die a quiet and well-deserved death.

For scientifically sound information about GMO agriculture see the ACSH publication [Food and You](#), [2] A Guide to Modern Agricultural Biotechnology.

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[1] <http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-council-gmo-discussion-20141020-story.html>

[2] <http://http://acsh.org/2014/03/food-guide-modern-agricultural-biotechnology/>