

## Pro-GMO activists are getting the truth out

By ACSH Staff — May 19, 2015

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news these days, what with groups like EWG and NRDC, the organic lobby, and environmentalists of all stripes inveighing against them for a host of implausible reasons. Unfortunately, the general public is ignorant of the truth about this issue and seems to follow blindly where the fear-mongers lead.

Take, for example, responses to a recent [opinion piece](#) [1] by Michael Gerson in the *Washington Post* about the move by some food purveyors to declare they will not use any GMO foods. Mr. Gerson roundly criticized Chipotle and Whole Foods (and he might have included Trader Joe's) for ignoring the stances of the National Academy of Science, the American Medical Association, the WHO, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and promising that they would not sell any GMOs in their products. He accuses them of doing real social harm by legitimizing an approach to science that elevates Internet medical diagnosis, social media technological consensus and discredited studies in obscure journals.

Sadly, some of the responses by the public simply substantiate his points. One [commenter](#) [2], for example, declares that people don't want to consume glyphosates the active ingredients in most herbicides. Totally untrue yes glyphosate is the main ingredient in the RoundUp herbicide, but it certainly is not in most herbicides. Further, this person also cites [research](#) [3] that supposedly indicts glyphosate for harming humans, but apparently didn't read the part that stated Accidental ingestion of glyphosate formulations is generally associated with only mild, transient, gastrointestinal features. And that's if you drink the stuff not from any exposure to trace amounts.

Yet another comment says that the National Organic Program (NOP) not allowing synthetic pesticides must be for a reason ostensibly because they are dangerous. But the real reason is the push by the organic industry to have the definition of organic include exclusion of such pesticides.

Further, there are many pesticides that are allowed by the NOP because they are not synthetic. We don't know if or to what extent these might affect human health, since no one seems to test them.

In a comment sent to the Washington Post, ACSH's Dr. Gil Ross points out that American farmers know well the economic and environmental benefits conferred by GMO technologies !but this is not so in impoverished third-world regions, where the improved yields and weather/climactic conditions-tolerance traits of some GM products are desperately needed, yet barred by activist pressure, emanating from liberals who have never planted anything and have never gone hungry. Almost as bad is their encouragement of anti- and un-scientific positions.

There is some good news, however, A [group](#) <sup>[4]</sup>called *March Against Myths About Modification* is planning a march (May 23) in favor of a scientific approach to genetic modification an attempt to counter the so-called March Against Monsanto planned by anti-GMO activists.

ACSH's Dr. Ruth Kava agrees The ignorance of science and promulgation of anti-science views to pander to the public's unwarranted fears are real travesties. Hopefully the actions of such groups as the March Against Myths will help bring the public to their senses. For some truth about the science behind GMOs, see ACSH's publication *Food and You*, available [here](#) <sup>[5]</sup>.

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[1] [http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/corporate-irresponsibility-over-gmos/2015/05/14/902c95e6-fa5e-11e4-a13c-193b1241d51a\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/corporate-irresponsibility-over-gmos/2015/05/14/902c95e6-fa5e-11e4-a13c-193b1241d51a_story.html)

[2] [http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/good-reasons-not-to-eat-genetically-modified-foods/2015/05/17/21c86198-fb26-11e4-a47c-e56f4db884ed\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/good-reasons-not-to-eat-genetically-modified-foods/2015/05/17/21c86198-fb26-11e4-a47c-e56f4db884ed_story.html)

[3] <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15862083>

[4] <http://www.mamyths.org/>

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