

Why GMO labeling is confusing, misleading, and ultimately pointless

By ACSH Staff — July 27, 2015



On Thursday, the US House of Representatives passed the Safe and

Accurate Food Labeling Act of 2015 a bill that would ban states from requiring labels for all genetically modified foods. The bill passed by a vote of 275 to 150.

Anti-GMO activists have coined their own name for the bill The DARK Act, which stands for Denying Americans the Right to Know.

However, Dr. James Hamblin, MD, writing in *The Atlantic*, brings that argument to a screeching halt in his [article](#) [1], No One Is Denying a Right to Know What s in My Food.

Dr. Hamblin writes: *The central and debilitating fallacy of the right to know argument is the meaninglessness and misleading nature of what is being known. Humans have been practicing bioengineering for centuries with selective breeding and cultivation. The Non-GMO Project defines genetically modified organisms as those artificially manipulated in a laboratory as opposed to 'traditional cross-breeding methods,' wherein a laboratory is the nidus of transgression. It was only as recently as 1979 that Gallatin Valley Seed won the All American Selection Award for creating a variety of pea known as sugar snap, which is now ubiquitous, but carries no Franken-crop warning label. Indeed, most any act of agriculture could be considered an imposition of unnatural human activity into malleable, unassuming ecosystems. The domain of bioengineering is too vast and complex to know what exactly to make of blanket GMO labels; the hopeful premise that this is a binary indicator of good or evil is false. Should I have the right to know if my food contains ghosts?*

Dr. Hamblin also makes the points that we at ACSH have been making for some time now: manufacturers who avoid GMOs can label their products as such. Additionally, the implication that GMO free implies anything at all relevant to a food s health or safety is without merit The World Health Organization, the Food and Drug Administration, the American Medical Association, The National Academy of Sciences, and American Association for the Advancement of Science, among others, have all reached a consensus that genetically modified food is just as safe as its

conventional counterparts and poses no risk to health.

The article concludes by pointing out that although anti-GMO activists will hold up signs that say I AM NOT AN EXPERIMENT, the real, unprecedented experiment is having 6 billion people on earth to feed and soon, [9 billion](#) [2]. GMOs offer a solution to sustainably feed our rapidly growing population with healthful food.

The American Council on Science and Health's Senior Director of Medicine and Public Health, Dr. Gil Ross, added this: Those whose mindless or corrupt opposition to GMO agriculture have no concern for health, public or private. In fact, while they rant against genetic engineering, products that might provide lifesaving nutrients in improved foods including Golden Rice and many others, are kept away from the millions whose lives might be bettered or saved by enhanced nutrition.

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[1] <http://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2015/07/no-one-is-denying-a-right-to-know-whats-in-my-food/399536/>

[2] <http://acsh.org/2014/10/gmos-need-feed-9-billion/>