

Frances M. Costelloe
1482 Red Mill Road
Rensselaer, NY 12144

0096 '01

MAR 22 2001
March 6, 2001

Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, rm 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

RE: Docket No. 00D-1598

Dear FDA,

I am writing about your "Draft Guidance for Industry: Voluntary Labeling Indicating Whether Foods Have or Have Not Been Developed Using Bioengineering." I am deeply concerned about this situation and disappointed that the FDA continues to ignore the will of the public and refuses to make labeling of genetically engineered foods mandatory.

The FDA has a responsibility and an obligation to fulfil its primary purpose of protecting the public from harm. The public has responded, regarding genetically engineered foods, to the fact that "we the people" have a right to choose to purchase and consume food products on the basis of whether or not our foods contain genetically engineered ingredients. Therefore mandating the disclosure of this information is essential to the consumers of this great country.

To lack this information as a requirement mandated by the FDA displays a disregard for American consumer and their right to purchase safe foods and make individual choices based on information about the content of the foods that are available to them in terms of the content of genetically engineered ingredients.

The FDA has been accused of being a pawn of biotech industry. It is documents such as your Draft Guidance for Industry that leads many to feel this belief holds some truth. In your Draft Guidance you question whether manufacturers who choose not to use genetically engineered ingredients should be able to label their products as GMO Free. It is bad enough that the FDA does not require the mandatory labeling of genetically engineered foods. Now your agency even seems to be exploring the idea of restricting the ability of a manufacturer to let consumers

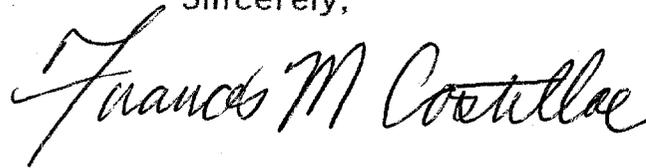
00D-1598

C 2303

know the products are not genetically engineered. Such regulatory restrictions would be an outrageous act of censorship by the FDA.

Genetically engineered foods are required to be labeled in the European Union nations, in Japan, Australia, New Zealand and other countries. Recently, both the E.U.-U.S. Biotechnology Consultative Forum and the Consumer Federation of America recommended mandatory labeling of genetically engineered foods. The FDA should stop working on behalf of the manufacturers of genetically engineered foods and begin to work for the safety and rights of the American public. I insist that genetically engineered foods be labeled!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Frances M Costelloe". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Frances M. Costelloe



Docket Management Branch (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, rm 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

20857/0001

