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

RE: Docket No. 00D-1598

Dear people,

Regarding your "Draft Guidance for Industry: Voluntary Labeling Indicating Whether Foods Have or Have Not Been Developed Using Bioengineering:" genetically-engineered foods should be required to be labeled as such!

I am deeply disappointed that the FDA continues to ignore the will of the public and refuses to make labeling of genetically engineered foods mandatory.

Your agency admits to receiving more than 50,000 comments last year regarding genetically engineered foods. You concede: "Most of the comments that addressed labeling requested mandatory disclosure of the fact that the food or its ingredients was bioengineered or was produced from bioengineered food." Yet you ignore the will of the public saying the comments "did not provide data or other information regarding consequences to consumers from eating the food." The truth is there has been ample evidence submitted to the FDA revealing that these foods are NOT "substantially equivalent" to non-genetically engineered foods. Yet your agency continues to ignore this evidence.

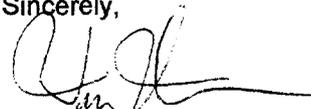
Studies have shown that biotech soybeans contain altered levels of nutrients such as isoflavones. They have been shown to have higher levels of Kunitz trypsin inhibitor, a known antinutrient and allergen. Genetically engineered foods contain antibiotic marker genes and many contain built-in pesticides. These are not found in non-genetically engineered foods. I do not want to eat these biotech foods, but without mandatory labeling I have no way of making an informed choice.

Last year, Monsanto admitted to finding "unexpected gene fragments" in their genetically engineered soybeans. What other "unexpected gene fragments" are contained in other genetically engineered foods? The truth is that the FDA does not know, because these experimental foods have not been adequately tested. New proteins never before consumed by humans are being created and brought to market without any extensive tests being done to show that they are not causing allergies, cancer or other diseases.

In the case of genetically engineered foods, the FDA has done a poor job of protecting the safety of consumers. Please remember that the potential allergies created by the ingestion of StarLink corn completely escaped the FDA regulatory guidelines. It was the EPA that discovered the digestive problems associated with StarLink corn.

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 work for the safety and rights of the American public. I insist that genetically engineered foods be labeled!

Sincerely,



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