

GE Free Canada Campaign: Communities Take a Stand

Myths and Facts about Genetically Engineered Foods

MYTH	FACT
GE foods will help increase food production and address hunger in the developing world.	Hunger is due to poverty and lack of access to food, not shortages in production. The world produces enough food to feed everyone. We need political will to solve hunger, not GE foods.

MYTH	FACT
GE foods are rigorously tested for safety before they are put on the market.	Top Canadian scientists have heavily criticized Canada's GE safety assessment program. They have provided Ottawa with 53 recommendations calling for an overhaul of the current regulatory framework for the approval and release of GE foods (www.rsc.ca). These recommendations have not been implemented.

MYTH	FACT
Voluntary labelling is sufficient for providing consumers with the information they need when grocery shopping.	The current voluntary labelling standard allows a product to contain up to 5 % of accidental contamination yet still carry a "does not contain GE ingredients" label. Experts tell us that we are currently able to detect the presence of GE contamination to levels as low as 0.1 %. Most products' GE content will rarely rise above 2 %. In short, the current labelling system does nothing to help us distinguish which foods contain GE ingredients.

MYTH	FACT
Genetic engineering is no different than traditional plant breeding.	While plants have been crossbred for centuries, it is only recently that scientists have begun to cross the plant-animal barrier. It is the insertion of non-plant genes into plants in the laboratory that distinguishes genetic engineering from traditional practices. The science is new and the methods are far from precise.