



Genetically Engineered Food

The controversy about genetically engineered (aka GE, GM, or GMO) food is complicated, to say the least. Current research is inconclusive and stances of authorities are varied. Weeding out fiction from fact is challenging, especially when the jury is still out about the long-term health and environmental impacts. When it comes to making educated food decisions, there are a few things to consider about GE foods.

ARE GE FOODS SAFE?

GE foods are "generally regarded as safe" in the US. This is based on studies and expert claims reporting no harmful health impacts from the consumption of GE foods. To be fair, GE technology has greatly advanced agricultural yields in the US and around the world, which increases food security and decreases food cost. Considering those financial and production benefits, GE crops have been viewed as "safe until proven harmful".

Most processed foods contain GE ingredients in the form of high-fructose corn syrup, sugar, and refined oils (corn, soybean, canola/vegetable, cottonseed).

US APPROVED GE FOODS

- corn
- soybeans
- canola
- cotton
- sugar beets
- apples
- alfalfa
- papayas
- pink pineapples
- summer squash
- potatoes
- salmon
- pigs

Only certain varieties of these foods are GE. For example, not all apples on the market are GE.



LABELING GE FOODS

- USDA ORGANIC
highly regulated, always non-GE & pesticide-free



- NON-GMO PROJECT
indicates non-GE product, often added for marketing



- BIOENGINEERED
USDA label indicates products that DO contain detectable amounts of GE ingredients



Opponents argue that this is the wrong approach because we do not completely understand the long-term effects of GE on human, animal, microbial, and environmental health. Despite research supporting the safety of GE foods, many of those studies have been funded by corporations that produce GE seeds and accompanying pesticides. Suspected health consequences from GE foods (and pesticides) include immune dysfunction, gut dysbiosis, infertility, and neurological issues, but more research is needed. This is why many scientists, consumers, and health experts argue that GE crops should be treated as "harmful until proven safe".