

## **ETATS UNIS – Etiquetage condamnée**

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ETIQUETAGE - La Food and Drug Administration (FDA) non seulement rejette l'étiquetage des OGM mais a écrit à 6 groupes agroalimentaires qui mentionnaient "sans OGM" sur leur produit pour dénoncer la confusion que ce label pouvait engendrer. En l'absence de réelle réglementation aux Etats-Unis, ces lettres servent surtout à intimider ces entreprises.

CSPI Press Release

August 14, 2001

**CSPI Urges FDA to Halt Misleading 'Non-genetically Engineered'  
Food-label Claims**

(Washington) The Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) today asked the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to take enforcement action against seven food manufacturers whose product labels deceive consumers with false or misleading claims about the absence of genetically engineered (GE) ingredients.

CSPI's complaint concerns Polaner's All Fruit Spreads, Earth's Best Baby Foods, Healthy Times Oatmeal with Banana Cereal, Van's Organic Waffles, Spectrum Canola Oil, Bearitos Tortilla Chips, and Erewhon Wheat Flakes. CSPI is not concerned about the quality or safety of the products, but charges that their labels violate the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act and FDA's guidance about labeling foods for GE content. Some examples include :

Earth's Best Apples and Apricots baby food implies that it is superior to competing, similar products by stating at least seven different times on the package that it contains "NO GMO's" (genetically modified organisms). Although technically accurate, that claim is misleading because no baby food contains "organisms," and no brand of apples and apricot baby foods, not just Earth's Best, contains GE ingredients.

Erewhon Wheat Flakes implies that it is superior to competing products by stating that it is "100% Natural" and does not contain "Genetically

Engineered Ingredients.” In fact, no GE wheat is present in any food.

Polaner’s All Fruit Strawberry states that it is “NOW GMO FREE,” yet this jam-like product made primarily with strawberries and fruit juices does not, and never did, contain “organisms.”

“Consumers want information about GE ingredients in their foods, but that information should be presented in an accurate and non-disparaging manner,” said Gregory Jaffe, co-director of CSPI’s Biotechnology Project. “These labels bear false or misleading statements such as ‘No GMO’s’ that take unfair advantage of consumer concerns and lack of knowledge about GE crops. The labels imply that the absence of GE ingredients makes the products superior, when that is not the case.” FDA, the American Medical Association, and many other health organizations have determined that GE crops are as safe to eat as traditionally bred crops. In fact, traditionally bred crops may be treated with more pesticides, or more dangerous pesticides than their bioengineered counterparts.

“Although CSPI favors labeling of GE ingredients, these seven products show that manufacturers are taking advantage of consumers with false and misleading label statements,” added Jaffe.

CSPI recently conducted a national opinion poll that found that labels stating “GE” or “non-GE” would influence many consumers’ perceptions and preferences. About 31% of consumers said that products labeled GE were not as safe as non-GE foods. A similar percentage said that foods labeled “does not contain genetically engineered ingredients” were better than unlabeled foods. Only about 10% said that the GE-labeled product was safer or better. (33% to 42% said that GE and non-GE foods were just as safe or good).

Given many consumers’ innate skepticism of any new technology, CSPI said that manufacturers must be careful not to mislead consumers. “FDA needs to send a clear message to manufacturers that label statements need to be both accurate and not imply superiority,” added Jaffe. Anticipating the day when biotechnology is used to provide consumer benefits, CSPI’s letter also urged the FDA to guard against deceptive claims about such benefits. “The FDA should nip this growing problem in the bud.”

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