



SUPER
MARKET

STOPPING GENETICALLY ENGINEERED FOOD

ACTIVIST

KIT



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Section I: Introduction and Tips

Why Supermarket Activism is Important

Supermarket activism was extremely important and effective in forcing genetically engineered (GE) food off the shelves throughout Europe. In the U.S., we are starting to see some of those same results. Whole Foods and Wild Oats, two national supermarket chains, pledged to use only non-GE ingredients in their store brand products after consumers expressed their concerns about the use of these experimental foods. Trader Joe's, after more than a year of being the target of a consumer campaign by several grassroots groups and Greenpeace, pledged to source non-GE for all their store brands.

Now we have the opportunity and the obligation to demand safe, healthy, non-GE foods from all of our supermarkets across the country. The victory at Trader Joe's proves that supermarkets can make this change. Perhaps more importantly, this victory shows that, working together, we can make this change happen!

This kit should be only the beginning of an inspiring and empowering campaign to demand GE-free food, fight for a safe and sustainable food system, and take back the aisles!

Tips:

Regard Supermarket Campaigning as a market intervention and public engagement, not just a protest. You want to build power rather than solely expressing your lack of power. Supermarkets are strategically important for market intervention because:

- Supermarkets control a large amount of food production through their store brand products. In the U.S. store brands typically account for 25 – 40% of supermarket sales. Store brands are also the supermarkets' way of gaining customer loyalty.
- Supermarkets are the part of the food industry that has the most exposure and immediate accountability to the public. They also have the least to gain from GE foods.
- Supermarkets must answer to their customers and the public, and they must maintain a good public profile and trust. The supermarket industry is highly competitive and the profit margins are relatively slim, so any threat of losing customers, sales or image is a serious one.

Supermarkets are great places to engage people:

- Most people do the majority of their shopping on the weekends when they have a little more time. This allows you the time to talk with them about GE food.
- People are already thinking about food and making decisions about their purchases so what you say has immediate relevance.
- You are at the magical "point of sale". Food companies and advertisers pay a lot of money to be where you are – use it wisely.
- Supermarkets are public, high-volume, mainstream and accessible – even better than a street!

Your goal at the supermarket is to engage customers, wake them up as active consumers and give them the information, tools and inspiration necessary to make their consumer dollars count toward something they believe in.



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The golden rule of supermarket campaigning is focus on the customer.

- The public is our strongest ally and they have nothing to gain and everything to lose from GE food.
- In the end, they spend the money and they call the shots. Keep reminding them, and the supermarket, that "the customer is always right".
- Supermarkets don't just depend on a customer's money, they also depend on their loyalty and their trust - this is a powerful currency and sometimes even more valuable.
- At some point the supermarket is going to have to decide whether they support the consumer or the biotech industry. If this conflict is made public they will be forced to side with the consumer (who keeps them in business).
- Corporations do not have a conscience. People do. We have a moral case.

In practice this means:

- Put 80 – 90% of your time into winning public support and action, and only 10% into trying to directly influence the company yourself.
- Offer services, information and help to the customer – leaflets, petitions to sign, shopping lists, a supermarket tour, check their purchases for GE ingredients, alternative places to shop for GE-free foods, etc. Ideally, build up a relationship, these are your peers. This is exactly what the supermarket tries to do.
- Take notice of how the supermarket tries to attract their customers – specials, loyalty club cards, where / how they advertise, whose brands they mimic in their packaging. All of this may help you to understand their customers' shopping habits a little better.

Why Supermarket Campaigns are Effective:

- Supermarkets watch their bottom line and the movement of their sales very closely. Again, this is a highly competitive industry with narrow profit margins – every dent will be felt
- Supermarkets protect their brand – they can not afford to lose trust. If their store brands are thought of as lower in quality, so too will be their store.
- Supermarket managers pride themselves on responding to the needs of their immediate community of customers. Most store managers also receive bonuses based on their store sales. This is a great opportunity.
- Supermarkets strive to be seen as the consumers' friend and they want to build up a relationship with their customers (hence loyalty cards, special points, store coupons on receipts, etc)
- Supermarkets watch their competitors closely. If one moves on an issue and does well, they will follow suit.

What supermarkets have said about GE food:

1. "It is perfectly safe and we are following the law", or "it's not our problem, talk to the FDA"

Your response: There have been no long term studies showing that GE foods are safe in our diets or the environment, but., but there are warning signs that they may be dangerous. Many supermarkets, including Trader Joe's, Whole Foods and Wild Oats, have already taken steps to eliminate GE ingredients from their store brand products. These companies took the lead and responded to the needs of their customers when government regulations failed to do so.

2. "We realize some of our customers have concerns, but we can not change the food system. To those who prefer non-GE food choices, we are committed to offering organic products which do not allow the use of GE"

Your Response: it is possible to source non-GE foods. Other supermarkets in the U.S. and abroad are already sourcing non-GE. Because of the threats posed to organic farming from GE contamination, it is clear that GE agriculture and organic agriculture can not co-exist. If you are truly committed to offering organics to your customers,

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you must phase out the use of GE ingredients.

3. "Your concerns are our concerns, we are surveying our suppliers to assess the level of GE products in our store brand line and will make that information available to our customers as soon as it is feasible to do so"

Your Response: What is your timeline for responses from your suppliers? How will you make this information public – label products containing GE ingredients, list GE products, etc? Will you tell your suppliers that you will be searching for non-GE sources for your product line? (Basically, put them on the spot and get some commitment out of them).

And now the fun part...

A selection of tactics and activities used in supermarket campaigns. Use them, adapt them, let them inspire you to think up yet more creative tactics. It is common to start out with letter-writing and phone calls and escalate your tactics as the campaign progresses according to the level of response you get from the company



Tactics to Start the Campaign with:

- Write letters to the supermarket's CEO, call him or her, fax the headquarters, email their customer service department. All the time and energy they have to spend responding to you will wear them down
- Information tables outside with leaflets and petitions. Hand out GE-free shopping lists
- Give a supermarket tour – take customers and employees through the aisles and point out all the products with GE ingredients. Be sure to point out what those typical ingredients are
- Go "caroling" in the supermarket with familiar songs that you've made new words for about GE food. Maybe the store's jingle can be adapted.
- Filling up the customer comment boxes in the store with the demand that they remove all GE ingredients from their store brands
- Offer to check customers' bags for GE products on their way out, remind them they can return anything for any reason at most supermarkets
- Providing customers with a map of the nearest store they can buy organic and GE-free foods, offer them information on CSA's and the local Farmer's Market
- Collecting and signing store receipts and sending them off to the manager or CEO with a message such as "I'm worth this (circle the amount spent – and make it a good one) and I don't want GE food."
- Hold a meeting of your group or community members with the local store management – the store managers have more direct power over the company than you do, use their power as much as possible to influence the higher-ups

Tactics for later in the campaign:

- Print up and hand out "dis-loyalty" cards
- Hold a demonstration where people cut up and return their loyalty cards
- Quarantine a shopping cart full of GE food by wrapping caution or biohazard tape around it, or placing big signs in the cart
- Supermarket theater – mad scientists, mutant vegetables, blind-folded shoppers "being left in the dark"
- Send a video petition filmed outside the supermarket to the store manager and CEO
- Customer questionnaires to be sent to the manager or CEO, or maybe a major shareholder
- Know anyone who holds stock in the company? Get them to organize other stockholders to bring up the issue at the next shareholders meeting. Or better yet – get them all to drop the stock and make it very clear why.
- Many supermarkets sponsor local events. Depending on the nature of these events, make your presence and your disappointment in the company known. Make sure you have materials on-hand
- Since the supermarket won't remove these products from the shelves – you do it! Place all the removed products in a shopping cart and mark them with big signs.



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Replace the empty spots on the shelves with a sign explaining why these products were removed and what consumers can do to help. ""These products removed by (your group name) due to genetic contamination. www.....for more information. Or " We, your customers, have removed these genetically engineered products from the shelves. Now it's your turn." Be careful not to damage any of the store's products.

There are lots of creative ways to engage the public. Keep giving something new and interesting to the customers. Keep the supermarket surprised – keep forcing a response out of them. You have to frame the debate – not respond to them, sheer diversity of tactics is a good start. Be entertaining, be inspiring, be informative and have fun!



Section II: Planning Action in Your Community

Whether you're hosting a small meeting or organizing regular visits targeting a local store, you can get involved in your area in the National Supermarket Campaign.

This section will give you an introduction into:

- Planning your campaign
- Recruiting volunteers and members into your group
- Organizing a group meeting

Again, please check the resources section for further information on these topics.

Campaign Planning

If there is an existing supermarket campaign that your group can be a part of, rather than starting something new, it is preferable to join with another campaign if you share similar goals. There is power in numbers and working together, and starting your own campaign when there is already one in place may split those numbers by forming two separate groups focused on two different targets. Even if your message is the same, our power lies in sheer numbers of people coordinating on one target. You can find many existing campaigns and local GE groups on the True Food Now! web site.

If there is no current campaign or local group in your area, you can start your own. You've obviously already chosen your issue and decided to focus on supermarket activism as a means of forcing change. Now you need to choose a supermarket target.

Choosing A Target

So, you want to work on a supermarket campaign, but there are 5 supermarkets in your community – How do you choose which chain to focus on?

1. Company communications.

To narrow the list of potential supermarket targets, start by communicating with all the chains to help narrow the list. Write them all a letter and ask them what their policy is on GE ingredients, include in the letter a short description of why you are concerned about GE food and ask them how they plan to address your concerns. Chances are, if they are mainstream supermarkets, you will get similar answers, though they will probably vary slightly in tone.

2. Research

Ideally, the supermarket you focus on has their own store brand, sells some organic and are publicly active in the community. You want them to have their own store brand because this is where they have control of what kind of ingredients are used (e.g. non-GE corn syrup, etc.) If they offer organic foods, this is a signal that they are somewhat a tune to consumer preferences for healthy food. And finally, if they are active in the community, they probably care about their image and vulnerable to public pressure.



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To find out this and other information, you will have to do some research on the companies. You can find out a lot about the company from their web site, especially if they have a section for shareholders or potential investors. There are also some good web sites for doing corporate research, check the Resources Section for more ideas. Here's a list of questions to help narrow the selection of your target:

1. Do they have their own store brand products?
2. What is their policy on GE ingredients?
3. Do they sell organic foods, if so, are any of these their own brands?
4. Are they members of your community, sponsor local events, etc?
5. Are they affiliated with stores that are being targeted by other groups?
6. Do they have a double-standard, that is, owned by a company that is GE free elsewhere, but not in the US?
7. Have they been responsive to consumer pressure on other issues?

By narrowing them down like this you will come out with a target that fits your criteria best and one that you end up knowing a lot about. If this still leaves you with a few, go to some simpler questions - What name do you think will rally the most support? Which chain has the easiest locations to get to? If all else fails, and they all seem alike, go with your gut.

Planning Your Campaign

Now that you have a target, you need to figure out how to build pressure to change them. In planning how to get the change you want from your target, you need not only a PLAN on how to get it, but a strategy on how to build enough power and momentum in your community to be able to force this change. You then need to decide what kinds of tactics are going to move your campaign into victory.

The Strategy Chart in the Appendix is an example of one way to move through the planning process. There are many types of charts you can use. This one is based on the Strategy Chart from the Midwest Academy's Organizing for Social Change (check the resources section for more information on the Midwest Academy). It is a great tool for campaign planning and moves you through the process with good questions. As you begin to plug things into one column, things will begin to change in the others. It's an excellent way to see the relationship between your goals and your actions. Following this chart is an example of a chart filled out with a fictional campaign, and a blank chart you can use in your own planning.

Recruiting Volunteers and Members

"If you want to move people, it has to be toward a vision that's positive for them, that taps important values, that gets them something they desire, and it has to be presented in a compelling way that they feel inspired to follow." – Martin Luther King, JR.

Recruitment is possibly the most important and overlooked part of organizing. People want to feel involved in something by nature, so you are missing a great opportunity to develop your group, and new leaders within your group, if you overlook recruiting volunteers and members. People join groups for several reasons, and usually, all you have to do is ask them to join. If you have shared values and vision, a strong campaign, and something they relate to in their community, you are sure to get volunteers. When you talk to people about joining your group, always appeal to why this issue might matter to them. Are they a parent? A teacher? A health care worker? What is it you can find out about them that would make this issue important to them? Recruiting, like so many other aspects of organizing, comes down to relationships. Don't spend so much time telling them why they should care about your issue, instead, spend that time finding out why it matters to them.

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People join groups for a number of reasons:

- if what that group is working on affects their community directly,
- for companionship in a like-minded community,
- for fun
- to develop new skills or find a job in the non-profit community
- their morals, ethics, values and vision

Some tips on how to recruit

Outreach should be built in to every aspect of your campaign. Your group should be doing activities that regularly raise the recognition of the group as well as giving people the opportunity to join. This is easily accomplished at tabling and petitioning events. Your group can also plan a teach-in on the issue or a larger public event just to get a bigger crowd and see who is interested in joining. You can also do this at related events planned by other groups – many will let you have a table with information at their event. You should ask every person if they want to volunteer. You should have simple things for them to do to get involved. Usually, if one person out of ten that you've asked shows up to volunteer, you are doing well.

- **Recruit to an activity or an event – not another meeting.** You want people involved who are active and want to be active – not chronic meeting-goers. If all the group offers new people is meetings, chances are you will lose them. There is nothing wrong with occasional meetings to bring everyone together and talk about how the campaign is going, but don't rely on these meetings as the bulk of your activities. Recruit people to run a table on weekends, start a petition drive in their community, speak at their children's PTA meeting, or make a presentation at their local church.
- **Delegate responsibilities.** No one person in the group should be responsible for recruiting and coordinating volunteers. One idea is to have new members or volunteers run the tables or petitioning activities they themselves were recruited at. They are familiar with the activity and know it can be done. They will know what is expected of them, and will be able to explain this activity well to those they recruit. This in turn develops a sense of involvement and leadership as they recruit new members who go through the same program they have gone through. As you get more and more volunteers, some of the more experienced can run phone trees to keep the other volunteers involved and on track.
- **Be inspired and inspiring.** If you are motivated and inspired by the group and campaign, you will be motivating or inspiring to others.
- **Listen to people.** The best leaders are ones that spend more time listening and asking questions as opposed to talking at people. Good recruiting is based on conversation – not a monologue of how wonderful the work you're doing is. You need to be able to draw people out. What are their interests, why do they care about this issue, where did they go to school – anything to establish a personal background and rapport. You have to really want to know these things and ask good questions. Listening is more than just not talking. Listening is active.
- **Get a commitment and follow it up.** Get people to commit to do a certain activity on a specified day – don't let them walk away thinking, "yes, I should really do that someday", they won't. Let them know you will follow-up with them between now and the scheduled time (tell them what day you will call, who will call, etc – be clear on what will happen next). Then call them when you said you would call. Follow up is very important. This lets the new volunteer know the group is organized, does what it says it's going to do, and that people really do want their involvement. When they show up at whatever event you've planned for them, introduce them around to the rest of the group, check in on them, keep them involved in conversations. In short –





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make them feel welcome and needed in the group.

- **Develop leaders from volunteers.** It's not enough to just recruit people – you have to keep them. To develop leaders, get to know people's strengths and weaknesses. What do they enjoy doing? Then think through what the group needs (maybe more people with media skills, event coordinators, writers, etc). Come up with a plan on how to develop new people to the next level (e.g from petitioning to petitioning coordinator, from attending the news conference to learning how to write the news release). Developing leaders takes time and training. Many volunteer groups are short on both. But taking the time to think about how to develop volunteers will save you time later. If the group doesn't have the time to do training, call around to local groups that might be willing to offer a training. Check out the resources section for organizations.

Recruiting and maintaining new members in your group is not only essential, but fun and exciting.

Organizing a Meeting:

Hosting a meeting of like-minded people could be your first step in your community outreach. Your action will be more effective with even a small group working together. Reach out to friends, neighbors, classmates, anyone who you think would be interested in learning more and getting active. Look for allies at natural food stores, restaurants, local nature centers, farmers' markets, alternative health centers---anywhere people are concerned about food, health or the environment.

Publicize the meeting with flyers, announcements in event calendars and emails. Written announcements should be followed up with phone calls to remind people of the meeting.

Plan the meeting. Have clear goals, an agenda with time schedule for each agenda item.. Have a facilitator to keep the group focused on the agenda and to encourage participation. Have a timekeeper to keep the meeting on schedule. Have a note taker to keep minutes.

Start and stop the meeting on time. If meetings perpetually start late, people will stop showing up on time or at all. Time is precious these days, so start and stop on time.

Have a sign-in sheet to collect contact information from everyone. Make it available so people can stay in touch.

Break the ice: plan a fun, relaxing start to the meeting. Begin the meeting with introductions, have everyone say something about themselves or why they are interested in the issue.

The facilitator should check with the group on "common understandings" for meeting process. For example, decide if people should raise hands or if they can just jump in to talk.

The agenda. After introductions and common understandings, you'll get to the "business" of the meeting. "Brainstorming" can be a useful tool: this means exploring ideas from everyone in the group, without allowing any discussion or judgement of whether the ideas are possible or worthwhile. Keep brainstorming to a set time, but allow flexibility if lots of ideas are coming out. Then take time to choose ideas that the group wants to pursue, and prioritize these. There may be sub-groups, some people may want to pursue one approach while others prefer another. It's also a good idea to have some action people can take at the meeting – for example, write a letter to the store manager of your targeted store, write a letter to the editor. This makes people feel part of an active com-

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munity.

Get commitments. By the end of the meeting have an action plan with clear agreement from people who agree to take on certain tasks and a clear time for reporting on progress.

Suggested Goals for a Meeting:

Any one or more of these would be a good start to your organizing:

- Plan a meeting with managers from a local supermarket.
- Plan educational events in the community; link with schools, fairs, other community organizations.
- Organize outreach to local media: set up groups to write letters to the editor and make calls to talk radio stations.
- Plan a Supermarket Tour
- Plan a tabling or petitioning event

Be sure to follow up with all the people who attended your meeting. Call them and thank them for coming, send out reminders for any action people agreed to take, remind people about any upcoming events your group planned and keep them involved. It is also a good idea to call the people you invited who didn't attend. Let them know what happened at the meeting and invite them to the next activity. This will help them begin to feel involved in the group.

On the following pages are tips for:

- Tabling and petitioning
- Meeting with your local store manager, elected officials or potential allies
- Give a "Supermarket Tour"

Plan a tabling or petitioning event:

Setting up a table with the group's information is a great way to accomplish campaign goals and engage the public. While tabling you can get petitions signed, letters written and volunteers signed up. Here are some tips to great tabling:)

- If you don't have an easily transportable table, an ironing board works great. Be sure and have a sign-up sheet for those interested in volunteering or coming to the next meeting or event. A good activity at a table is having people write letters to the company you're targeting. Have a short sample letter on hand and paper for people to write their letter. Keeping these letters and mailing them for people ensures that they actually get sent – never assume because someone has taken the time to write a letter at your table that they will actually remember to mail it, this is rarely the case. Once people see how easy it is to "work" a table, they will be more inclined to volunteer a few hours to do one themselves. After all – they wrote a letter!
- Petitions are also an easy way to get people interested in your campaign and make their voices heard. A sample petition is included in this kit. You can use it as is or cut and paste in the name of your target and your group contact information as you see fit. It's best to have a short description of the problem, the target of your campaign, and the demand against that target. You want to make it as easy for people as possible. Petitions are also an important tool to use in your campaign because they reflect the opinions of their customers, especially if you collect signatures in front of your target store. These can then be saved until you get the number of signatures you've set out in your campaign goals, or sent to the store manager or CEO as they come in at strategic moments in the campaign. You should set some number goals for how many signatures you want to have before you send them in, and work out how many hours a week your group will need to spend collecting signatures to reach that goal.





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Both of these activities can be planned to coincide with the times most people shop. According to the national average, people typically do most of their grocery shopping on Wednesday evenings and weekend afternoons.

Checklist:

- If you plan to set up the table in front of a store, ask the manager first for permission. You may be told you can not be on their property, however in many cases there is a public sidewalk or shopping center thoroughfare where you can legally set up your table. If you are unsure, check with your local police department or an attorney to find out what your rights are in that particular space and whether or not you need a permit. If you are asked to leave and are unsure of your rights, you should leave (check the Resources section for more information on getting to know your rights).
- Try to have at least 2 people to run the table. This makes it more fun than standing there by yourself. It is also easier to engage people if you have one person standing behind the table and one nearby with a clipboard of petitions and flyers.
- Set up your table in a spot where you will not block the flow of customer traffic – be it foot traffic or automobile.
- Make sure you have materials:
 1. Flyers
 2. Petitions, postcards, sample letters – whichever you choose
 3. Volunteer sign-up sheets
 4. A sign or banner with the name of your group
 5. Pens...lots of pens
 6. Clipboards to help anyone walking around with petitions have an easier time, as well as keeping anything on the table from blowing away
 7. A donation can

Again – follow up is key. Call anyone who signed up to volunteer quickly and get them involved in the next event. As you get more volunteers, you may want to set up a phone-tree to remind everyone to come out as scheduled and include more people in the recruitment process.

Planning a Meeting with store management, elected officials or potential allies:

Once you have decided to meet with store management, potential allies, or elected officials, you should plan your meeting. Go into the meeting with a specific request in mind:

- Ask supermarkets to assure you that their store brands are made without GE ingredients. Ask them to request policies from their suppliers ensuring they will source only non-GE ingredients for the products they make for the supermarket.
- Ask elected officials to support a specific bill, regulation, or policy. Ask them to put pressure on FDA, USDA, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- Ask allies to help spread the word, to display literature, print an article on your campaign in their group newsletter, host a meeting in their community or help plan and attend your group's events.

Each member of your group should have something to say in the meeting. Keep it brief, but give each person a chance to speak. Bring background material: assume the person you are meeting with knows nothing about the issue. Bring fact sheets and articles that make your main points. Be polite. A meeting is the start of a relationship. The person you meet with may not agree or do what you want. Your follow-up (whether it's organizing a demonstration or another meeting with more people) is just as important and can lead to further communication down the road. If you are asked a question you can't answer, be honest. Offer to get back to the person at a later date. Phone the people you met with a week or so after the meeting, to see if there is any progress on commitments they made. Keep your group informed of any developments, and be ready to act if agreements are not upheld.

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How To Conduct Supermarket Tours

Supermarket tours can be done wherever you live to raise the consciousness of markets and consumers alike. Tours are not a demonstration or protest but a way to engage shoppers and store personnel in learning about Genetically Engineered (GE) ingredients in our food and GE crops in our environment. The goal of the tour is to increase awareness of GE foods and begin a process of engagement with the targeted store. You and/or your group can help empower others to raise consumer concerns about GE foods in your area stores.

Supermarket Tours: Step by Step

Advance Planning

Choose a major chain, preferably one that sells its own store-brand products (for example, Safeway Select and Lucerne are two store brands of Safeway, Dominick's, and other affiliated stores).

If it's not your neighborhood store, visit the target market often enough to give you a good feel for its layout, inside and out.

Advertise the supermarket tour, widely and well in advance. Invite local church and civic leaders, politicians, chefs and restaurant owners, teachers and students, vegetarian groups, senior citizen groups, environmental groups, gardeners and farmers, especially organic food producers and food coop organizers.

Contact the supermarket manager, a few days before you plan to conduct the tour. Explain what you intend to do, and why. Invite store personnel to take part in the tour. You should be prepared for the store management not to allow your tour. In that case, you can proceed with your plans, but be ready if store management confronts you. Be clear that you and your group are shoppers and want to discuss issues while you shop; reassure the store management that you will not block aisles, speak loudly, or otherwise impair other shoppers. If they still refuse you, set-up your information table outside and ask your group to pass out flyers and gather signatures on petitions. Contact your city government beforehand to find out where you can table on public ground near the store (usually sidewalks along storefronts are public ground, check to see if you need a permit). You should also ask how to contact the store's regional or national management to complain about being barred from that store.

Plan your route through the store and prepare your script. (You'll find a sample script and FAQs in the appendix)

The Tour Day

Outside the supermarket

Set up your information table outside the market (as close to the market entrance as possible, you may have to investigate your legal rights to public space, as noted above).

Have your table stocked with printed handouts (make copies of Greenpeace fact sheets and other information, or request copies from us) and a clipboard for collecting signatures on petitions and the names and addresses of participants and interested passers-by.

Have a friendly, courteous volunteer or two ready to talk about GE foods.



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At tour time, assemble your participants. Introduce yourself. Thank them for coming and brief them on what to expect inside the store. Encourage tour members to ask questions, of you and of store personnel. Make sure everyone has copies of fact sheets and other material. The tour leader should carry additional leaflets to give people who join the tour or seem interested.

Inside the Supermarket

Ideally you should have two people to conduct a tour: the tour guide and a traffic manager. The guide leads the tour and speaks at each station. The traffic manager follows the group, keeping it together, and invites other shoppers to join the tour.

Speak confidently and clearly. Be friendly and determined. This is easiest if you're well prepared, script in hand.

Point out the 1-800 numbers on product packaging. Urge tour members to call these numbers frequently, asking questions and expressing opinions about genetically engineered ingredients.

If you know company policies, be ready to point out which brands use or avoid GMOs, without overly praising or blaming specific companies. If you don't know a company's policy or if other tough questions come up, urge tour members to ask the store manager and/or call the company's 800 number.

The Tour

Outside the Store

Assemble at the information table. Explain the tour: an introduction to GMO food and farming compared to sustainable alternatives. It is not a protest but an educational opportunity and a chance to engage store management in the start of a continuing dialogue on the kind of food you want to see in the store. Again, check the Appendix for a sample script.

Section III: Working with the Media

Using the media is a great way to apply pressure to the target of your campaign as well as build name recognition and strength for your group. Planning strategic moments in your campaign timeline for a media event is always a good idea. When to call the press is largely dependent on your campaign goals, but there are some frequently used media tactics:

- Use the media when you announce your campaign or program. This is news if you plan a good event for them
- You may want to use them at key times such as local elections or regulatory comment periods. Or a time when you can link your campaign to current local news
- To release a report or new information about the campaign or the campaign target
- Call them when you have a big event – such as a large public rally, community meeting, or confrontational "action"

Keep in mind that it seldom works to call the media solely to talk about your campaign. You have to have an event to bring them out. Remember that reporters are concerned about getting a good story that their readers can relate to, and something that sells the paper. Even print reporters are relying more and more on the visual aspects of an event, so be sure you have something good for them to see – even if they don't run a photo they will often describe the scene in their story. Think about what you want the "picture" to look like in advance. What message are you conveying? Is the name of your group in a prominent place? Even if you don't plan on it, you may attract the press by your action against genetic engineering. So be prepared!

Who to contact:

It pays to do some research into local media before your event. Keep track of who writes the consumer stories, the environmental stories, progressive business stories. Study what each reporter's or newspaper's writing style is like. When you have an event, call the assignment desk and see who the best person is to cover your particular story. After a while, you will learn who is best to contact for which stories or angles on your campaign. In this way you will begin to compile a good media list to keep on hand for events. As you gain more experience through working with your local media, you may want to set up a database of your media list to make faxing and emailing easier. You can also put any personal notes in the database that may help you identify this person later.

Working with the media, like many other things in organizing, often comes down to relationships. When you find someone who covered your event, follow-up with that person. Don't harass them, but you want to build up a rapport with reporters to keep them interested in your campaign. It is also helpful to occasionally send friendly reporters news clips or press releases on issues related to your campaign – don't overwhelm them, but give them the background they need to write a well-thought story. This may also lead them to call you when the issue comes up again. They will begin to see you as an expert and come to you with questions.

The Press Advisory

If you want to invite the press to cover your local event, you will need to let reporters



SECTION III – WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

know ahead of time. You need to write a press advisory. This alerts reporters to the basics, the "who, where, and when" of your event. The press advisory should go to reporters a few days before the event. You should fax or email it, then call to make sure reporters received it and to get an idea if they are planning to attend.

Press Advisory Tips:

- The advisory is intended as a notice to the media that your event is upcoming. It is meant to entice the media without giving away the whole story.
- The headline and first lines of the advisory are critical. Busy reporters will only read the headline and maybe the first sentence of the advisory in deciding if they are going to cover the event.
- If you are going to engage in direct action, it may not be appropriate to do a news advisory because the media will undoubtedly contact the supermarket. This is a judgement call. You may want to focus on a public demonstration or other event to get them interested without giving away specific details.
- News advisories should be short – no more than a half page.
- Advisories should be sent out 1-2 days before the event.
- Never assume the media has seen your advisories after you've faxed them. Call to follow up.
- Press calls should be made the day the advisories are sent out and again the day of the event.
- If a print reporter commits to attending the event, unless you have new information, don't call them again. This is a judgement call, but you do not want to ruin relationships with the media by calling too much.

S A M P L E N E W S A D V I S O R Y

WOMEN, PARENT GROUPS TAKE ACTION AT FOOD RETAILER CALL FOR END OF GMOS IN SUPERMARKET'S PRODUCTS

WHAT: A coalition of women's groups and parent organizations, joined by San Jose Resistance Against GMOs, will demonstrate in front of Safeway, the food retailer. The coalition is calling on the company to end its use of genetically engineered ingredients in its store brand products.

WHEN: Wednesday, May 15th
11:00 AM

WHERE: Safeway
555 Main Street (cross street Jones), San Jose

WHO: Women for Safe Food, Mothers for Labeling, San Jose Parent Club
and San Jose Resistance Against GMOs

EXCELLENT VISUALS

CONTACTS: Jane Smith of San Jose Resistance Against GMOs, (408) 555-1212; Dan Smith of San Jose Parent Club, (408) 555-1311

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The Press Release

On the day of the event, send the same reporters a press release. This should include the information in your advisory (time, place, etc), but go into more detail and explanation about how the event will proceed and why you are doing it. It should include some explanation of the issue and the background of your event.

Press Release Tips:

- The press release should read like a newspaper article with quotes from your spokespeople.
- Just as with the advisory, the headline and first lines of the release are critical. Busy reporters will only read the headline and maybe the first sentence.
- Keep to no more than one main message with two subordinate messages in the news release. What do you think is the main message of the news release below?
- A news release should never be longer than a page.
- Have copies of the release along with other relevant materials (e.g. factsheets) with you at the event as part of your press kit to be given to reporters.
- For the media that does not go to the event: after the event fax them the news release and call to pitch the story.
- Below is a sample release from a fictitious event. Feel free to use this as a guide for your own release.

S A M P L E N E W S R E L E A S E

WOMEN, PARENT GROUPS TAKE ACTION AT FOOD RETAILER CALL FOR END OF GMOS IN SAFEWAY'S PRODUCTS

San Jose, May 15th- A coalition of women's groups and parent organizations, joined by San Jose Resistance Against GMOs, symbolically dumped Safeway's store brand products in a garbage can marked with Biohazard tape. The coalition of groups is calling on the food retailer to end its use of genetically engineered ingredients in its store brand products.

"We don't want to eat genetic experiments," said Sally Smith of the San Jose Parent Club. "We want Safeway to protect our health and environment by removing genetically engineered ingredients from their store brand products."

The coalition also presented the local manager with 1,000 petition signatures collected from San Jose Safeway customers. A letter from the coalition accompanied the petitions. The coalition includes San Jose Parent Club, etc. The San Jose coalition is part of a national coalition of grassroots community groups calling on the retailer to change its practices.

"Safeway tells its customers they provide safe, healthy food, " said John Jones of San Jose Community Group. "But there is nothing safe or healthy about genetically engineered food. It's untested, unregulated, risky food. They are doing business the Un-Safeway."

Genetic engineering creates for the first time living pollution, bringing known and unknown risks to the environment and public health. Unlike traditional crop breeding, genetic engineering enables scientists to cross genes from bacteria, viruses and animals into plants. The risks include the creation of new food allergies, superweeds and increased toxic herbicide use. Additionally, the gene-altered corn found in the Safeway product contains an antibiotic resistant marker gene which science and medical organizations, including the British Medical Association, warn could make some common



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antibiotics useless.

"Safeway customer have clearly spoken," said Smith. "When we were petitioning Safeway customers they were surprised to hear that the company uses genetically engineered ingredients. People just don't want to eat GE foods."

At the same time of today's action, the Los Angeles group, GE-Free LA held a food dump in front of a Los Angeles Von's store, a subsidiary of Safeway.

Contacts: Sally Smith, San Jose Parent Club, (408) 555-1212, John Jones, San Jose Community group, (408) 555-1311

Interviews

If you get reporters to come to your event, they will want to hear your story. You should have a media spokesperson or two from your group chosen before the event. Everyone attending your event should know who these spokespeople are and be able to point them out to the reporters. Everyone should have one or two lines (soundbites) that you go over in advance so everyone knows the message that you want to get across to the press. This is important because the press will likely want to talk to as many people as they can who attend. Spokespeople should be prepared ahead of time with short, clear answers to common questions. For television or radio in particular, short "soundbites" are likely to be all the reporter can use, so keep each point to 10-15 seconds. Some reporters will let you talk for a long time then just use one 5 second segment, so be careful what you say: be prepared with your arguments and stick to them! For example, if a reporter says, "Isn't it true that there's no evidence that GE food hasn't harmed anyone," you might say, "GE food hasn't harmed anyone but we don't know what the long-term threat is." The next day you might be quoted like this: "Jim Green of CAGE agreed that 'GE foods haven't harmed anyone.' So, a better answer is, "There is no evidence that GE foods are safe in the long run, yet they are not labeled so we can't avoid eating them."

Use positive language as much as possible. Don't just say, "We oppose GE food," but use a positive approach: "We support the consumer's right to know what's in our food and to choose food made without GE ingredients." If a question comes up that you can't answer, it's okay to tell the reporter you don't know. You can always look into the matter and get back to them. This is always preferable to making something up which could come back to haunt you.

Media Follow-Up

Be sure to collect contact information from any reporters who attend your event or who interview you by phone. You may want to have an assigned role of media sign-in person at your event to ensure that all reporters and camera people who show up are greeted, given a press kit and signed in on a media contact sheet.

The success of media coverage usually comes down to how well your campaign conveys a problem faced by many people in the community, so that people become engaged as participants in the debate on that problem. It has been said many times that "Any press is good press", so don't get discouraged by a few bad quotes or low media attendance. If people are talking about the issue, if it's being debated in the press, in schools, in supermarkets and elsewhere, your media work is a success!

SECTION III – WORKING WITH THE MEDIA



Checklist for your media event:

- Will you need a microphone, podium or other public address system?
- Have you recruited a good number of volunteers to be at the event?
- Who is sending out the press advisory?
- Who is making follow-up phone calls?
- Do you have good visuals arranged for your event?
- Do you have good soundbytes (quotes) memorized?
- Does everyone know who the media spokesperson is?
- Do you need a translator?
- Do you have answers ready for questions you expect to get from the press?
(Why are you here today? What do you want this supermarket to do? Isn't GE food okay by the FDA?, Etc)
- Who is preparing materials for the press kit?
 1. Background information on the issue and your campaign, fact sheet
 2. Information on any speakers and their backgrounds, organizations, etc
 3. Copies of statements made at the event, any report released
 4. A copy of the press release
 5. People to contact with further questions
- Who is sending the press release?
- Who is doing follow-up calls?



Section IV: Resources

Grassroots tools:

Organizing Skills and Training:

GEAN (Genetic Engineering Action network)

National network of grassroots groups, offers grassroots skills and issues trainings on GE issues. Small grant program available to grassroots group working on GE issues.

www.geaction.org

(617) 661-6626

MidWest Academy

Offers training sessions for leaders and staff of community groups.

www.midwestacademy.com

Green Corps

National field school for environmental grassroots organizing. Offers a one-year program for recent college graduates.

www.greencorps.org

Books:

Organizing for Social Change. MidWest Academy. 2001. Seven Locks Press. Santa Ana, CA

1-800-354-5348 or www.mindspring/~midwestacademy/Book/page3.html

Rules for Radicals: A Pragmatic Primer for Realistic Radicals. Saul D. Alinsky. 1971. Vintage Books (Random House). New York

The Activist's Handbook: a Primer for the 1990s and Beyond. Randy Shaw. 1996. University of California Press. Berkeley.

Media:

Spin Project (The Strategic Press Information Network)

Provides media technical assistance to nonprofit public-interest organizations.

www.spingproject.org

Media Alliance

A nonprofit training center for media workers, community organizations and political activists, based in San Francisco.

www.media-alliance.org

415-546-6491

FAIR (Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting)

They offer a media guide for activists.

www.fair.org/activism/activismkit.html

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Indy Media

An alternative news source. Allows activists to post short news stories on their web page.

www.indymedia.org



Fundraising:

Books:

Environmental Grantmaking Foundations, Corrine R. Szymko, editor, Resources for Global Sustainability, (800) 724-1857.

Fundraising for Social Change, Kim Klein, \$20.00, Chardon Press, P.O. Box 101, Inverness, CA 94937.

Grantseeker's Guide, James McGrath Morris and Laura Adler, editors, \$39.95, Moyer Bell, Colonial Hill/RFD 1, Mt. Kisco, NY 10549.

Grassroots Grants: An Activists' Guide to Proposal Writing, Andy Robinson, \$25.00, Chardon Press, P.O. Box 101, Inverness, CA 94937.

The Grassroots Fundraising Book, Joan Flanagan, \$8.95, The Youth Project, 2335 18th St. NW, Washington, DC 20009.

The Whole Nonprofit Catalog, the Grantsmanship Center. PO Box 17220, Los Angeles, CA 90017. This catalog is free.

Web Sites

The Foundation Center (www.foundationcenter.org)

National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy (www.ncrp.org)

The Environmental Support Center (www.envsc.org/es01003.htm)

Information Resources:

Ag Biotech InfoNet

Offers scientific papers debunking myths of GE agriculture.

www.biotech-info.net

Alliance for Bio-Integrity

Documents from lawsuit against the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

www.bio-integrity.org/list.html

Center for Food Safety

Public interest law firm challenging the lack of government regulation of genetic engineering.

www.centeroffoodsafety.org

Consumers International

General information on GE food.

www.consumersinternational.org/campaigns/food/index.html#biotechnology

CropChoice

An alternative news service for farmers on GE agriculture and agricultural politics.

www.cropchoice.com

Greenpeace

International organization with consumer campaigns against GE food

www.greenpeace.org

ETC Group (formerly RAFI)

Exposés on genetic engineering.



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www.etcgroup.org

National Family Farm Coalition
Farmer advocacy group, campaigning to protect farmers from corporatization of agriculture and biotechnology.
www.nffc.net

Organic Consumers' Association
National grassroots group with information on markets campaigns on GE food.
www.organicconsumers.org

Pesticide Action Network North American
International organizational offers web tutorial on the risks of GE agriculture.
www.igc.org/panna/resources/getutorial.html

Union of Concerned Scientists
Information about Bt crops and other GE agriculture issues offered on web page.
www.ucsusa.org/agriculture

Corporate Research and Industry Web Sites:

Hoovers
Online corporate research site
www.hoovers.com

Lexis-Nexis
Corporate research site – subscription needed
www.lexis-nexis.com

Just-Food
Food industry news
Sign up for email alerts
www.just-food.com

Supermarket News
On line magazine for supermarket news
www.supermarketnews.com

Supermarket World
On line magazine for industry news
www.supermarketworld.com

Soy and Oilseed headlines
Online news and email alert service on non-GE sources, non-GE movements within the industry, etc. A good information source. Publishers of the Soya Bluebook
www.soyatech.com

Non-GMO Source
Online or emailed newsletter of companies offering non-GE ingredients, company and industry news, international companies and news. Subscription needed
www.non-gmosource.com

Food Marketing Institute
The web site of the Food Marketing Institute, association representing many food retailers
www.fmi.org

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Grocery Manufacturers of America

Trade organization representing many food manufacturers and brands
www.gmabrands.org

Direct Action Resources

The Ruckus Society

Training camps for activists include excellent workshops in non-violent direct action as well as grassroots organizing, issue workshops, etc
www.ruckus.org



CAMPAIGN PLANNING STRATEGY CHART

Goals	Organizational Considerations	Constituents, Allies and Opponents	Targets	Tactics
<p>1. List the long-term goal of your campaign</p> <p>2. State the intermediate goals of your campaign – what constitutes victory?</p> <p>How will the Campaign:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Win concrete improvements? • Give members a sense of their own power? <p>3. What short-term or partial victories can you win as steps toward your long-term goal?</p>	<p>1. List the resources your group brings to the campaign. Include money, staff, number of volunteers, time, facilities, reputation, canvass, etc</p> <p>What is the budget, including in-kind donations, for your campaign?</p> <p>2. List the specific ways in which you want your organization to be strengthened by the campaign. Fill in realistic number goals for each:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand your leadership group • Increase experience of existing leadership • Build membership base • Expand into new constituencies • Raise more money 	<p>1. who cares enough about this issue to join or help your group?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whose problem is it? • What do they gain if they win? • What risks are they taking? • What power do they have over the target? • Into what groups are they organized? <p>2. Who are your opponents?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What will your victory cost them? • What will they do / spend to oppose you? • How strong are they? 	<p>1. primary target A target is always a person. It is never an institution or a government. Your target may be the supermarket CEO.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are you asking to make the change you are demanding? • Who has the power to give you what you want? • What power do you have over them? <p>2. Secondary targets – like a local store manager</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who has the power over the people with the power to give you what you want? • What power do you have over them? 	<p>For each target, list the tactics that each constituent group can best use to affect them.</p> <p>Tactics must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In context • Flexible and creative • Directed at a specific target • Make sense to the membership • Be backed up by a specific form of power <p>Tactics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media events • Direct actions for information and demands • Public hearings • Strikes • Voter registration and voter education • Lawsuits • Elections • negotiations

CAMPAIGN PLANNING STRATEGY CHART – FICTIONAL CAMPAIGN

Goals	Organizational Considerations	Constituents, Allies and Opponents	Targets	Tactics
<p>1. Long-term: rid Modern Market's store brands of GE ingredients</p> <p>2. Intermediate: get local store managers to contact and pressure Henry Oaks, CEO of Modern Market</p> <p>3. Short-term: Get 1500 petition signatures to Jessica Smith, local store manager at the King Street store - Modern Market's highest selling store in the state</p>	<p>1. Resources to put in budget: \$500.00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$250.00 raised from People's Co-op summer newsletter plea • rest to be raised locally through events, tabling, fall People's Co-op newsletter plea and other donations • Kim and Jane can volunteer 2 days a week, Dave can volunteer 1 night a week, 20 volunteers to call on for events and weekly tabling • 1 computer with internet access, 2 phones, fax machine, printer and copier (low-volume copying only) <p>2. What we want to get out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve the groups in the King St neighborhood with our campaign • Greater affiliation with a broad-based constituency throughout the state • Recruit 20 new volunteers in key areas of Georgetown, Emeryville, Scottston, Valley View and Ridgeway • Raise more money - \$1000 to cover initial \$500, \$500 more to cover copying and phone for the year • Key store managers aware and worried about our campaign 	<p>Constituents and Allies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anniston PTA • Anniston Food Policy Council • Valley View Unified School District Food Policy Board • Local chapter of the Sierra Alliance • Mothers Against GE Food – Sacramento • Ridgeway Unified Church • People's Co-op natural food store • Local 246 – union picketing Modern Market for labor contract disputes • Students Against a Biotech Future <p>Opponents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local store managers • Biotech Responsibility Council at the University • CEO • Pro-biotech board members of the Food Policy Councils • Grocery Association of America • State Grocers Guild 	<p>Primary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Henry Oaks, CEO of Modern Market <p>Secondary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Store managers at top grossing locations • Store managers at locations near co-ops, natural food stores • Joseph Pickle – major stockholder in Modern Market • School district food boards – cut contracts with Modern Market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media hits: rallies in front of key store locations, focus on food safety, direct actions, divestment campaign, school district contract cuts, etc • Set up community meetings with local store managers • Give supermarket tours every weekend • Table with factsheets and petitions every weekend at local stores • Petition drives in front of local stores and food and environmental events • Meetings at local food policy boards with key members of our allied Anniston Food Policy Council • Students Against a Biotech Future launch campus campaign to cut all contracts with Modern Market, demand shareholder divestment from University professors • Rally at the shareholders meeting in Valley View – urge local shareholders to divest • Place ad in weeklies signed by Mothers Against GE Food in Sacramento talking about food safety, Modern Market and consumer demands – message and layout to be determined • Articles in key PTA and local group newsletters to alert Modern Market's key customers • Rally at CEO's office at Modern Market HQ in Ridgeway • Direct action with local 146 union chapter at Anniston distribution center – block shipments until CEO agrees to hear our concerns • Direct action at King Street store with Local community and Ridgeway Unified Church - remove GE store brand products until Modern Market will remove them themselves

CAMPAIGN PLANNING STRATEGY CHART

Goals	Organizational Considerations	Constituents, Allies and Opponents	Targets	Tactics

SECTION IV – RESOURCES

Supermarket Tour Script

Go over ground rules: don't block aisles or otherwise impede other shoppers; please ask questions!

Fresh Produce

Most GMO crops go into processed food, so most fresh produce is not GMO. Exception: look for Hawaiian papayas, they may be GMO - ask the produce buyer if the variety they carry is GMO (he or she may not know - ask her or him to check and set a date for when you'll be back for an answer). Explain the process of genetic engineering: genes are associated with certain traits. Example: people with blue eyes have inherited the gene associated with blue eyes from both parents.

- Similarly, genes are associated with traits in plants, for example white or yellow corn.
- Genetic engineering can move genes from one species to another, in ways that are never possible with traditional breeding.
- Corn breeders could move genes between white and yellow corn, creating mixed varieties. But they could not move genes from animals into plants, which is currently happening in GE field experiments. For example, fish genes have been inserted into strawberries and tomatoes, though these products are not yet in stores.

Genetic engineering can have unexpected consequences:

A lab study using GMO yeast showed levels of a toxic substance that were 30-200 times higher than found in yeast naturally. A GMO soybean with a gene from a Brazil nut triggered allergic reactions, even though the scientists thought that the gene they used from the nut would be harmless to people with nut allergies. The soybean was not marketed.

Snack Foods:

Look for corn and potato chips. About 20% of the U.S. corn crop is GMO. Most goes into processed food, like chips, or as corn syrup, oil and cornstarch. Much also goes for animal feed. There is a small amount of GMO corn grown for popcorn as well. Frito-Lay, the nation's largest snack food company, told their corn growers not to use GMO seed, and says they will source non-GE potatoes also. McCain Foods, which sells some french fries to Burger King, has announced they will not use GE potatoes. Over 95% of the GE crops grown in the US fall into one of two categories: crops engineered to withstand application of chemical weed killers (called "herbicide tolerant" plants); or "plant pesticides," crops in which the plant is considered a pesticide (also called "insect resistant" crops). Most of the GE corn and all GE potatoes are this second type, and are called "Bt" crops.

- Bt: this is a natural bacteria that was found to be useful as an insecticide. Farmers have used this "biological" pest control as a spray since the early 1960's.
- Bt sprays are the only emergency pest control that organic growers are allowed to use.
- But GE Bt crops may make Bt sprays obsolete. Scientists say that insects will soon develop resistance to Bt because of widespread planting of Bt crops.
- These "superbugs" created by Bt plants could put organic farmers out of business.

Salad Dressings:

Most salad dressings use soy or canola oil. Along with corn, these are the most widely grown GE crops in North America. Half of the US soy crop and over half of canola (mostly from Canada) is GE. Most soy and canola are herbicide tolerant varieties. About 70% of the acreage of GE crops are this kind of plant. The most widely grown herbicide tolerant variety is called "Roundup Ready" (RR), there is RR soy, canola, corn, cotton and sugar beet on the market. Monsanto makes the herbicide Roundup, and now they also make RR crops, which allow farmers to spray the chemical right on the crop.

Roundup kills virtually any plant, but RR crops are not harmed by the chemical. Biotech companies say that GMOs will reduce chemical use, but studies show that farmers who grow RR soy use 2-5 times more herbicide than conventional growers do.





SECTION IV – RESOURCES

Baby Food:

No one knows the long-term health effects of GE foods. The FDA allows GE foods on the market with no testing because they say GE foods are the same as their natural counterparts. But even scientists within the FDA said that GMO foods are different and could lead to different risks. Health concerns include unexpected allergies and unexpected toxins. Antibiotic resistance is also a concern. Many GMO crops use genes for antibiotic resistance. If these genes transfer in the environment to disease-causing bacteria, this could lead to diseases that cannot be controlled with common medications. Thousands of doctors have called on the biotech industry to stop using antibiotic resistance genes. Yet these crops are still grown and making their way into our food. Greenpeace tested a Gerber cereal mix and found GE soy and corn. Concerned about consumer pressure, Gerber, Heinz and other manufacturers declared they will not use GE ingredients in baby food. Consumer pressure works!

Cotton Products (Diapers, tampons, cotton balls, etc):

We think of cotton as a fiber crop, but most of the plant goes for animal feed, and some for human food (as cottonseed oil). GMOs are a threat to the environment, so even non-food uses support this ecological experiment. The spread of "exotic" plants and other species is the second-leading cause of extinction. Exotics are species that are released into an environment in which that species did not evolve. Ecologists warn that GMOs are "exotic" species by definition. Gene flow from GMOs could create uncontrollable weeds, or otherwise alter the natural landscape. Once released into the environment, GMOs cannot be recalled. The environmental damage is irreversible.

Cereal

Supermarkets carry many brands, often including their own store brand. If you don't want GMOs in their store brand corn flakes, you need to tell them - consumer pressure can work! In Britain, consumers asked supermarkets to stop using GMOs in their store brands; today, virtually every major chain there has eliminated GMOs. Many say they will also stop using GMOs as animal feed, so their meat and poultry products will be GE-free. Kellogg's has told Europeans they will stop using GMOs, but here they say their cereals contain GMO ingredients. Companies like Nestle, Kraft, McDonalds and others also have this double standard.

Back to Fresh Produce

With few GE-free brands and no mandatory labeling of GE ingredients, the best way to avoid GMOs is to buy fresh produce, other whole foods (nuts, grains, beans, rice, etc), and organic food as much as possible. The same companies that have sold pesticides for the past 50 years are now selling GMOs. These companies say that pesticides are safe and environmentally friendly. The evidence of the past 50 years shows that pesticides have been an environmental and public health menace. Recent studies show that herbicides and insecticides in the environment effect the immune system, hormone levels, and brain functioning, and that children are especially at risk. Now the companies that brought us toxic pesticides are trying to genetically alter all of our food. They say that GMOs are safe and environmentally friendly. They say GMOs can replace pesticides.

But they still sell pesticides, and now they link their toxic chemicals to GMO crops. The real solution to pesticide use is truly sustainable agriculture. For example, organic production, which by definition excludes the use of GMOs. Organic farms:

- Promote health of the entire farming system - soil, crops, animals, and people.
- Are not "old fashioned," but based on modern, scientific concepts of agroecology:
- Farm problems are not viewed as battles against nature, but resolved in harmony with natural cycles.
- Are certified by independent agencies; U.S. national standards will soon be finalized, so organic food will be grown under uniform standards.

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Organic food is popular:

It is the fastest growing segment of the food industry: at 20% per year, the organic industry is a \$6 billion a year business, growing faster than computers or telecommunications. When given a choice between GMOs, conventional food, or organic food, most Americans said they would prefer organic. Other than supermarkets, you can also get organics at farmer's markets or through community supported agriculture (CSA) projects, whereby farmers deliver fresh produce directly to a community or individuals. Check state or regional farm organizations for CSA farms in your area.

Organic food can be more expensive but:

The health and environmental costs of pesticides in the U.S. have been estimated at as much as \$4 billion a year. These are costs that we all pay through higher taxes, expensive health care, environmental clean-up, etc. Chemical companies and industrial farms get huge subsidies from our tax dollars. Over 99 percent of government research and development funding goes to biotech and chemical farming. There is no level playing field for organic farmers. If organics were supported like industrial farming, the price would go down and we would avoid the costs associated with industrial farming.

GMOs are potentially more dangerous than farm chemicals.

Pesticide pollution is long lasting, but attempts can be made to clean it up or contain it. GMOs, once they are released into the environment, cannot be recalled. Genes can't be traced or stopped. The only way to avoid genetic pollution is to stop the release of GMOs.





GENETIC ENGINEERING: THE SECRET INGREDIENT

What the Supermarkets Don't Want You to Know

Chances are you have already eaten Genetically Engineered (GE) ingredients. Without warning or notice you have been included in a dangerous experiment on our food.

Thousands of products on the shelves of your local supermarket contain GE ingredients – foods from crops that have not evolved in any natural environment, from crops that have never before been part of the human diet.

Look at the ingredient list on any of the packaged foods in the supermarket. You are almost certain to find ingredients made from corn, soy, canola or cottonseed oil. These ingredients commonly come from plants that have been genetically altered and are being grown on millions of acres in the United States. For example, soy ingredients like lecithin, soy oil, and soy protein are found in 60- to 70 percent of all processed foods.

Yet you won't find "genetically engineered" on the label of any products containing GE ingredients. The supermarkets don't want you to know that their products are an experiment unique in human history – an experiment that doctors and scientists around the world are warning may not be safe.

Most supermarket chains have their own store brands, which are made to their specifications. All of these brands are aimed at customer loyalty, and are the pride of their companies. Three national chains in the U.S., Trader Joe's, Whole Foods and Wild Oats have already committed to removing GE ingredients from their store brand products. If these national chains can do, your local supermarket can too!

Multiple Risks and Little Testing

Unlike traditional crop or animal breeding, genetic engineering enables scientists to cross genes from bacteria, viruses, and even humans into plants and animals. Never before have scientists been able to break the species barrier. Strawberries and flounder could never breed on their own, but with genetic engineering, fish genes have been spliced into strawberries. There have been no long-term studies on what impact these crops may have on the environment, but scientists are already finding signs of trouble:

- **Biological Pollution:** Unlike chemicals that are released into the environment, genetically engineered organisms are living things that will reproduce and spread uncontrollably and at will, with little possibility of containment or clean-up.

- **Increased Pesticide Use:** Most GE crops have been designed to withstand herbicides. Studies show that farmers who grow GE soybeans use 2-5 times more herbicides than farmers who grow natural soy varieties.
- **Superweeds:** Other studies have shown that GE crops can cross-pollinate with related weeds, resulting in "superweeds" that become difficult to control. Canadian canola growers have found weeds in their fields resistant to Round-Up and Liberty herbicides, forcing the growers to use more potent toxic herbicides.
- **Threatening organic farming:** GE insect resistant crops could create "superbugs" who will build up a tolerance to a fundamental pest control tool used by organic farmers; the loss of this tool would be devastating to the safest, most environmentally friendly food production we have.

The Health Risks:

The genetic engineering industry claims that no one has been harmed by eating GE foods. But without labeling of GE ingredients, there is no way to track any harm. Doctors and scientists warn that there is not enough evidence to insure that these foods are safe in the human diet. Medical experts, including over 2,000 doctors and health professionals in Germany and the British Medical Association, have questioned the safety of GE foods. In fact, there is ample evidence of risk:

- **Allergies:** By inserting foreign DNA into common foods, without adequate safety testing, the biotech industry is introducing possible new food allergens.
- **Antibiotic Resistance:** The rise of diseases that are resistant to treatment with common antibiotics is already a serious medical concern. Doctors warn that the current use of antibiotic resistance genes in GE crops may add to this risk.

In short, Genetic Engineering is an unpredictable technology that, for the sake of corporate profits, puts our environment and health at risk.

Take Action!

- Call, fax or write your local supermarket manager or CEO and demand that they rid their store brands of GE ingredients just as Trader Joe's, Whole Foods, Wild Oats, and European supermarkets have already done.
- Join the National Supermarket Campaign at: www.truefoodnow.org
- Start your own local group to flyer at your local supermarket. Download the Supermarket Activist Kit at www.truefoodnow.org for help on getting started and ideas on what you can do.

STOP GENETICALLY ENGINEERED FOODS

REMOVE THEM FROM YOUR STORE BRAND PRODUCTS!

Tell your supermarket to eliminate genetically engineered ingredients from your store brand products! Doctors and scientists warn that genetically engineered foods could trigger new allergies, increased food toxins, and other unintended threats to our health and safety. Genetically engineered crops

fundamentally alter nature, risking irreversible damage to our environment. In the U.S., Trader Joe's, Whole Foods and Wild Oats, three national supermarket chains, have pledged to eliminate GE ingredients from their store brand products. If these national chains can do it, so can your supermarket!

NAME ADDRESS

PHONE EMAIL

NAME ADDRESS

PHONE EMAIL

NAME ADDRESS

PHONE EMAIL

NAME ADDRESS

PHONE EMAIL

NAME ADDRESS

PHONE EMAIL

Send letter to Supermarket Management:

Store Name

Date



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SAMPLE LETTER TO SUPERMARKET MANAGEMENT:

Store Name
date
Name of manager
Store management

Dear _____,

I am a loyal shopper and I am writing today to ask that your supermarket eliminate the use of genetically engineered (GE) ingredients in you store brand products. Your customers shop in your stores because we expect high quality foods that are good for our families. The continued use of GE ingredients in your store brands undermines my confidence in the quality of your products.

I am concerned about GE foods because... in this paragraph describe in your own words why you are concerned. For instance: corporate control of the food supply, genetic contamination of organic crops, human health risks, lack of choice, etc.

In response to the threat of GE foods, I urge you to do the right thing and remove genetically engineered ingredients from your store brand products. By making this commitment your store would be protecting the health of your customers and the environment. Three national chains, Trader Joe's, Whole Foods and Wild Oats, have already made this commitment.

I am deeply disappointed that supermarket name has so far failed to take action to protect its customers from these unlabeled GE foods. Since I do not want to buy genetically engineered foods, I hope that you will eliminate GE ingredients in your store brand products so I can feel confident about shopping in your store.

Sincerely,

(your name and address)

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Governments world-wide require regulation and labeling of GE foods

Below is a partial review of legislative action being taken by governments to identify and halt genetically engineered (GE) food.

Algeria

On December 24, 2000, Algeria introduced a draft ministerial order “to prohibit the import, the distribution, the commercialization and the utilisation of genetically modified plant material.”ⁱ

Australia and New Zealand

The Australian New Zealand Food Authority (ANZFA) is responsible for scrutinising new genetically engineered (GE) foods intended for the market. Australia and New Zealand have adopted a mandatory labeling regime for all genetically modified foods which contain novel DNA and / or novel protein or have altered characteristics. It allows for the accidental presence of GE food of up to 1% per ingredient. The regime will come into force on 7 December 2001.ⁱⁱ

Citing environmental and marketing risks, the state government of Tasmania has banned all field trials of GE food crops and the release of GE animals and animal feed. The moratorium will remain in place until a policy review in July 2003.ⁱⁱⁱ

Bolivia

The Bolivian Ministry of Agriculture passed a Ministerial Resolution in January 2001, prohibiting the import and use of any genetically modified organisms (GMOs) or products derived from GMOs for a period of one year. This was found to be necessary to guarantee that national dispositions to regulate or prohibit the import of products, by-products and foods processed from GMOs can be put in place in accordance with the Biosafety Protocol.^{iv}

Brazil

In 1998 Greenpeace won an injunction saying that no GE Roundup Ready (RR) soya could enter the country before proper labeling rules were in place. In August 1999 a federal judge of the Court of Brasilia upheld this decision and decided in favour of another Greenpeace injunction against the planting of RR soya and demanded an environmental impact assessment as a prerequisite for any potential market approval. The need for labeling rules was reconfirmed by the Federal Court of Brasilia in June 2000.

Labeling requirements have not yet been implemented at this time, however, in July 2001, the Agriculture Minister announced a threshold of 4 per cent for the labeling of GE products should their sale ever be legalised on the Brazilian market.^v

China

On June 7, 2001, China announced a comprehensive labeling system for GMO seeds and food products. The new “Biosafety regulation of GMOs in Agriculture” is the legislative framework safeguarding biodiversity, the environment and human health against the potential adverse effects of GMOs. It covers GMO applications in the areas of research, field trials, production, food processing, management, as well as import and export.

According to the new regulation, GMOs will be classified into four categories in accordance with the seriousness of their potential impact on the environment and on living organisms. Their releases to the environment must be approved by relevant authorities. The regulation also outlines the mandatory labeling of all GMOs, including seeds, ani-



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mal feed and food products containing GMOs. Unless GMOs are labeled, their sale will be illegal.

Czech Republic

Labeling of GE foods will be required from 2002. Otherwise Czech law is being enacted to bring regulations in line with those of the EU covering GE food.vi

All 15 countries of the European Union

The EU Novel Food regulation regulates the marketing and labeling of products which are GE or derived from GE organisms. An additional labeling regulation applies to Roundup Ready soya and Syngenta Bt maize requiring labeling of food products in which the DNA or the new protein of GE crops is detectable. In April 2000 additives and aromas were included in the labeling regulation in the case of DNA being detectable in the end product.vii

In July 2001 the EU Commission proposed new regulations on traceability and labeling of GE food and animal feed. The tightened labeling regime would include products derived from GMOs such as oil and starch as well as animal feed. However, at the same time the Commission proposed to set a 1% tolerance threshold not only for authorised but also for unauthorised GMOs which have received a favourable risk assessment by the EU Scientific Committee, but no final market approval from the member states. This threshold would not apply to seeds and plants. Traceability of GMOs is included in the proposed regulation for the first time. This draft needs to be adopted by the EU Parliament and the member states before it can enter into force.viii

Although some GMOs such as Monsanto Roundup Ready Soya, Aventis rapeseed oil and Syngenta Bt maize have clearance for use in food products in the EU, there is currently a de-facto moratorium on any new GE product approvals while the EU tightens regulations. Portugal, Luxembourg, Austria and Germany have further banned Syngenta Bt maize while France and Greece have banned Aventis rapeseed.

Hong Kong

In January 2000 the Legislative Council of Hong Kong supported a motion demanding mandatory labeling of GE products with a 39 out of 47 majority. Now the Government has set up a task force to draft the details of a comprehensive labeling system. The proposal is expected to be reviewed by the Legislative Council later this year.ix Public consultations in this regard are now being undertaken.

India

Under Indian law, it is illegal to import, produce or sell any GE food without governmental approval. Until now no such approval has been granted.

Indonesia

GE food is regulated under the Food Act 1996 which lays down mandatory labeling of foods resulting from genetic engineering or containing GE ingredients.x

Israel

Israel's ministry of health is preparing regulations for the labeling of GMOs. They will require that food be labeled if it contains more than 1% of GMO components, and will otherwise be similar to the EU regulations concerning GMOs.xi

Japan

The Government of Japan previously operated a voluntary safety review for GE products. This review became mandatory on April 1, 2001. At the same time Japan adopted mandatory labeling for certain GE products where GE ingredients constitute more than 5% of the final product.xii Some GE ingredients remain banned including StarLink corn.

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Republic of Korea

The Korean government requires mandatory labeling of GE foods since 1st March 2001 with strict enforcement from 1st September 2001. Those selling food are expected to show certification documents as to the GE status of their products. Anyone found to be falsely labeling will face a 3-year jail sentence or 30 million won fine. Those who fail to label will face a 10 million won fine.xiii

Latvia

Since 1st of July 2001 GE food labeling is mandatory.xiv

Mexico

In March 2000 the upper house of Mexico's Senate unanimously approved a health bill that would require GE foodstuffs to be labeled. Foods containing GE ingredients would need to carry labels reading "Food made with genetically modified products." The law is awaiting approval by the Chamber of Deputies.xv

Norway

Norway is regarded as having some of the strictest GE rules world-wide. The government has banned the import of several GE crops and products, which contain antibiotic resistance genes. The government also requires labeling of GE foods.

Paraguay

The use of GMOs in Paraguay's agricultural sector was banned in 2000/2001 specifically soya beans.xvi

Philippines

There are a number of bills in the Philippine Senate and Congress concerning the labeling of GE crops. The new President and Secretary of Agriculture have made GE labeling a government priority and are soon expected to publish details of GE labeling requirements.

Poland

The Polish government announced in April 2000 that all genetically modified food products would have to be labeled. The Ministry of Environmental Protection decided that the information should be on the package in easy-to-read captions in contrasting colours.xvii

Russia

Russia instituted a GE consumer product labeling law on July 1st 2000. Food and medical products derived from GE sources that contain GE proteins must be labeled. Information on GE sources must also be included in shipping documents.xviii

Saudi Arabia

The government has banned animal products that are made from GE organisms and has also implemented very strict labeling requirements for GE foods to come into force in December 2001. GE foods must be marked with a triangle and a warning in both Arabic and English. GE foods entering the country must also be accompanied by a health certificate.xix

Sri Lanka

On May 1, 2001, the Sri Lankan government banned the import, manufacture, transport, storage, distribution and sale of any food item that has been produced using genetic engineering technology.xx Following a WTO request the ban was lifted for 60 days in June 2001 to give its trading partners time to prepare for the restrictions. However, the Health Ministry announced immediately that the ban would be reimposed by September.xxi





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Switzerland

Food products (including additives) and animal feed stuffs which are or contain genetically altered matter, must be labeled as 'genetically modified organism' or 'contain genetically modified organism'. As of January 2000, Switzerland is the first country where drugs containing GMOs must be labeled.xxii

Taiwan

The Taiwanese government presented an outline of new labeling regulations on November 29, 2000. Under the proposal mandatory labeling will be established for all GE food products. The regulation will initially apply to maize and soybeans and later on also to other agricultural products.xxiii

Thailand

Thailand is currently preparing a labeling regulation for GE food. An FDA committee will hold public hearings before finalising the draft and forwarding it to the cabinet for approval.xxiv

In April 2001, Thailand's Prime Minister extended the ban on the commercial production of GE crops to cover their testing in the field.xxv

Yugoslavia

In May 2001, the Yugoslav parliament adopted a law which regulates the limited use, production and retail of GMOs and products thereof.xxvi Until this law comes into effect, the Minister of Agriculture has issued an order which requires the permission of the Ministry for all imports of GMO products.

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