

Read the Labels Campaign

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Presentation Outline

- Why the Campaign
- Discussion of health
- Product labeling
- Detection of GE/GMOs
- Organic Agriculture
- The labels and our health

Why the Campaign

- Raise awareness about what's *really* in our products
- Raise attention to healthy alternatives for cleaning, cosmetic, and food products
- Business and personal ethical obligation to aid in this discussion with others

Health

- What does it mean to be healthy?
- What is “dis-ease?”

Product Labeling

- Hidden Labels

- Company history
- Product history
 - Source of ingredients
 - GE/GMOs
- Package disclosures

- Visible Labels

- Nutrition
- Disclosed ingredients
- Safety information
- Company contact information
- Allergens

7th Generation Detergent

- Hidden information
 - Company history
 - Product history
 - Source of ingredients
 - Type of water
 - Pesticides?
 - GMOs
- Visible information
 - Ingredients disclosed (except trace and preservative)
 - Safety info present
 - Company info present

7th Generation Detergent cont'd

- Hidden information

- Package disclosures

- Post-consumer recycled plastic source
 - Additives in virgin plastic
 - Package leaching

- Visible information

- Allergens

- SLS not accounted for
 - Plant-based allergens not accounted for

Label definitions

- Biodegradable is a substance that is capable of being broken down into simpler compounds by the action of naturally occurring microorganisms such as bacteria, fungi, and algae.
- A compostable plastic is a plastic that undergoes biological degradation during composting to yield carbon dioxide, water, inorganic compounds, and biomass at a rate consistent with other known compostable materials and leaves no visually distinguishable or toxic residues. -- ASTM (American Standards for Testing and Measurement)

Source: *Green Plastics: An Introduction to the New Science of Biodegradable Plastics* by E.S. Stevens

Label definitions cont'd

- Hypoallergenic means having a decreased tendency to provoke an allergic reaction. [*American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* – Third Edition]
- Organic food is
 - Free from all GMOs
 - Produced without artificial pesticides and fertilizers
 - From an animal reared without the routine use of antibiotics, growth promoters, or other drugs

Source: “How do You Know if Your Food is Genetically Modified?” By Dr. Joseph Mercola with Rachael Droege

GE/GMOs Labeling

- Labeling is not required in the USA
- Company history
 - 2 main proponents of GE/GMOs have a long history of ecological health damage
 - Dupont and Monsanto
 - Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs), Dichlorodiphenyltrichloro-Ethane (DDT), Tetrachlorodibenzo-Para-Dioxin (Agent Orange), Aspartame (Nutra-Sweet), Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), recombinant Bovine Growth Hormone (rBGH or rBST), the atomic bombs, and the poison gas used in the concentration camps

GE/GMOs Labeling cont'd

- Product history
 - Hype and scientific bias by many regulatory agencies and universities
 - Known and unknown ecological consequences prior to release into global food supply
 - Forced on the populace with no mandatory labeling, as opposed to mandatory labeling of organic produce

GE/GMOs Detection

- Look at the PLU codes on fruit and vegetables
 - Conventional: 4 numbers (4032)
 - Organic: 5 numbers prefaced by the number 9 (94032)
 - GM: 5 numbers prefaced by the number 8 (84032)
- Non-organic canola, cotton, corn, papaya, soy, squash (US grown)

Source: “How do You Know if Your Food is Genetically Modified?” By Dr. Joseph Mercola with Rachael Droege

Organic agriculture

- Review previous definition
- Some useful organic methods
 - Biodiversity (macro- and micro-organisms)
 - Companion planting
 - Intercropping
 - Succession planting

Organic agriculture cont'd

- Useful tips
 - Talk to your plants
 - Add red wiggler or earthworm castings to compost and soil
 - Use warm water (75°F) between 4 AM and 8 AM and water the roots
 - Sow seeds, harvest plants, and tend to the garden in the morning hours

Organic agriculture cont'd

- Useful tips
 - Plant crops that require full Sun on the South side to acquire the morning Sun (more nourishing than afternoon Sun)
 - Read a local Farmer's Almanac
 - Do research
 - Save and share your seeds

Labels and Health

- We have a right to choose what we will allow into our bodies or our children's bodies
 - We know our health better than a scientist or engineer working for a company and/or a regulator
- Without proper labeling with full disclosures we can not know the exact cause(s) for our “diseases”
- All of us react differently to exposures

Resources

- *Twinkie, Deconstructed: My Journey to Discover How the Ingredients Found in Processed Foods Are Grown, Mined (Yes, Mined), and Manipulated into What America Eats* by Steve Ettlinger
- *A Consumer's Dictionary of Food Additives: Descriptions in Plain English of More Than 12,000 Ingredients Both Harmful and Desirable Found in Foods* by Ruth Winter, M.S.
- *Slow Food: The Case for Taste* by Carlo Petrini
- *Eating Mindfully: How to End Mindless Eating & Enjoy a Balanced Relationship With Food* by Susan Albers
- <http://www.ecoccs.com/resources.html> - EcoC²S Resources Page
- <http://www.organicconsumers.org> – Organic Consumers Association: Campaigning for Food Safety, Organic Agriculture, Fair Trade & Sustainability