

Midwest asks for clarity with GE labels

Mar 7, 2013 by Paul Towers



Legislators in Minnesota introduced [a bill](#) last week to label genetically engineered (GE) food, joining similar efforts across the Midwest. States are taking matters into their own hands as the federal government has failed to provide people with information about what's in their food and how it's grown.

GE labeling bills in Minnesota, Iowa and Illinois represent the groundswell of Midwesterners frustrated with the lack of information and oversight of genetically engineered seeds, crops and food.

No doubt there will be pushback from industry on the Minnesota bill, especially from the [“Big 6”](#) pesticide corporations — companies intent on defeating labeling initiatives and keeping consumers in the dark. They fear that if we know how prevalent GE ingredients are in our food (up to 80% of non-organic products on grocery store shelves), they will lose marketshare for their GE seed lines and accompanying pesticide products. That's why government officials have to step up and insist on transparency and labeling.

And we, along with partners in each state, have no false expectations about the hard fight ahead against Monsanto & Co. Last year, pesticidmakers alone spent over \$21 million to narrowly defeat a [ballot initiative](#) in California.

Still, transparency and clear labeling is worth the fight. My grandfather, a city councilman and gas station owner from a Southern Minnesota town taught me the importance of being open and honest. In his passing, a state senator remarked, “What I liked about him is that he never was unclear.”

My grandfather taught me the importance of openness and integrity. And we all expect the same in our food system.

[Take action »](#) Pledge your support for labeling genetically engineered food. And if you're in Iowa, [join the call](#) for state legislators to support the GE labeling bill.

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