



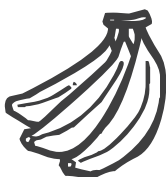
This is a condensed print version of our weekly newsletter. For links to action alerts as well as in-depth information about each story, please visit the online version: organicconsumers.org/bytes/ob371.htm

The Truth About Whole Foods Labeling Policy

Whole Foods made a huge splash in the media last week when the company announced that its US and Canadian stores will be required to label all GE foods in its stores, by 2018. But five years? Surely the largest national organic grocer in the country can do better than that. After all, Whole Foods is already labeling in its European stores. Don't get us wrong. This is great news. It's a clear victory for consumers and the GMO labeling movement. And a serious blow to Monsanto. And it's proof that marketplace pressure works, that consumers have the power to change food policy. So let's take it a step further. Whole Foods makes billions of dollars a year selling products that carry the misleading "natural" label. Not only do most of these products contain genetically modified organisms (GMOs), but they're also full of pesticides, synthetic chemicals and a host of very unnatural additives. It's time for Whole Foods to clean up its whole act, by creating a policy that says no product in its stores can be called "natural" if it contains GMOs. Or any of that other unnatural stuff. orgcns.org/14wKPlZ

Take a Stand Against Chiquita's Union Busting

Workers' rights violations at a Rainforest Alliance-certified banana plantation? Sadly, yes. Since 2009, workers at Tres Hermanas, a Chiquita banana plantation in Honduras, have complained about a pattern of labor rights violations, including failure to pay the minimum wage, unpaid overtime, and the illegal firing of workers attempting to exercise their right to organize. To protect their rights, the workers formed the union SITRAINBA, which was officially recognized by the Honduran Ministry of Labor on August 15, 2012. But instead of recognizing and bargaining with SITRAINBA as required by Honduras' labor law, Tres Hermanas' management has launched a campaign of anti-union harassment, including firing four women who were prominent union supporters. And it's all happening on a Rainforest Alliance-certified plantation. orgcns.org/14wLaol



Gov. Shumlin: Get on the Train

In case the Governor of Vermont, Peter Shumlin, hasn't noticed, consumers are winning. Monsanto is losing. Isn't it time he came over to the winning side? Last year, Gov. Shumlin said he couldn't support a GMO labeling law after Monsanto threatened to sue the state if the law passed. Vermont just couldn't afford a lawsuit, he said. This year, the law has been written specifically to stand up against Monsanto's threats, yet the governor is again dragging his heels. What's up? Face it, Gov. Shumlin. Consumers are winning this battle. Washington is likely to pass 1-522, a citizen's initiative to label GMOs, in November. Big Food companies have abandoned biotech, and are now talking, behind the scenes, about a national GMO labeling law. The country's largest organic retail chain, Whole Foods, is going to start voluntarily labeling. We're winning. But we need a win in Vermont to help seal the deal. It's time for Gov. Shumlin to get on board. orgcns.org/14wLl3

Stop the Monsanto Protection Act

It's back. Monsanto's lobbyists have managed to slip the Monsanto Protection Act, also known as the Monsanto Rider (Sec. 735), into the Senate Continuing Resolution spending bill. Fortunately, Senator Tester has introduced an amendment (#74), co-sponsored by Senators Boxer, Gillibrand and Leahy, to strike the rider from the bill. But we have to act fast, as the Senate is voting on this bill today. The so-called "Monsanto Rider" would require the Secretary of Agriculture to grant a temporary permit for planting or cultivating a genetically engineered crop, even if a federal court has ordered the planting be halted until an Environmental Impact Statement is completed. That's right, even the federal courts won't be able to stop Monsanto from planting unproven, potentially dangerous crops if this bill passes today. Don't let Monsanto get away with it. Take Action: orgcns.org/SzM4s7

C'mon Ben & Jerry

How about Throwing Some Dough into the WA and VT GMO Labeling Campaigns?

Ben & Jerry's sat silently by last year while its parent company, Unilever, dumped almost half a million dollars into the campaign to defeat Proposition 37, the California Right to Know GMO labeling campaign. Now the GMO labeling movement is working feverishly in Washington and several dozen other states, including Ben & Jerry's own Vermont backyard, to get a statewide GMO labeling law passed. But the so-called socially responsible ice cream maker claims it can't help out with a donation in Washington or Vermont because it wants to get the "dough out of politics." Seriously?

C'mon guys, you can do better than that. Sure, you've got a statement on your website that says you support the consumer's right to know. And great that you've promised to get GMOs out of your own products by the end of this year, we'll hold you to it. But Washington and Vermont consumers – you know, those consumers who put you on the map when you were just a couple of struggling nobodies – need your help. And your dollars. And a promise from you, not a suggestion, that Unilever will keep its money out of all future anti-labeling campaigns. Take Action: orgcns.org/ZzszFc

Guerilla Gardening

For Defiance. For Beauty. For Food.

More people were dying from drive-thrus than from drive-bys in South Central LA And dialysis centers were popping up like Starbucks. So Ron Finley planted vegetable gardens. He planted them in abandoned lots, in traffic medians, along the curbs. Why? For fun, for defiance, for beauty, for education, for community. youtu.be/EzZzZ_qpZ4w