

TASK CARD #1

CONTEMPORARY AGRICULTURE

Myth: "Frankenfoods" made with GE ingredients are harmful to eat.

There is no reliable evidence that ingredients made from current GE crops pose any health risk whatsoever. Numerous governmental and scientific agencies, including the FDA, have conducted reviews that did not identify any health concerns. This shouldn't be a surprise. The DNA inserted into GE seeds, and the protein in produces are largely digested in the gastrointestinal track. And the proteins are sometimes molecules that humans have already been exposed to in our diets. For example, GE crops that fend off viruses contain components of plant viruses that we've long eaten without any harm.

Current GE crops enter our food supply primarily as highly processed ingredients that are essentially free of the engineered DNA.

From the Atlantic 2/2013

TASK CARD #2

CONTEMPORARY AGRICULTURE

Myth: "FDA approves GE foods before we eat them:

The FDA does not formally approve the foods or ingredients made from GE crops. In 1992, FDA decided that inserting a gene into a crop does not make it a food additive. The FDA adopted a voluntary process whereby seed developers submit data showing that the GE crop is "substantially equivalent" to its traditional counterparts and does not pose novel health risks.

From the Atlantic 2/2013

TASK CARD #3

CONTEMPORARY AGRICULTURE

Myth: "Monsanto and other seed developers are the main beneficiaries of GE Crops"

Seed developers have benefited from engineered crops. They spend millions developing them and then charge hefty premiums to recoup their costs, however others also obtain significant benefits. Many farmers in and outside the U.S. have greatly reduced the use of highly poisonous insecticides. It has also increased their yields and provided a higher income.

From the Atlantic 2/2013

TASK CARD #4

CONTEMPORARY AGRICULTURE

Myth: "GE crops are environmentally sustainable"

While some GE seeds provide environmental benefits, sustainability claims are exaggerated. GE crops with built in resistance to weeds or pests can lead to resistant weeds and insects, creating the same problems for farmers as before GE seeds. GE crops still use large amounts of fertilizer and often grow in monoculture fields where crops are not rotated adequately.

From the Atlantic 2/2013

TASK CARD #5

CONTEMPORARY AGRICULTURE

Myth: "Mandatory GE labeling would increase consumer choice"

If the government mandated labels for products containing GE foods or ingredients from GE crops you might expect to see labeled and unlabeled cereal boxes side-by-side in the supermarket. Yet in the countries that require labeling, the reality is different. The EU has mandatory labeling and food manufacturers have to use expensive, non-engineered ingredients to avoid labeling GMO on their labels. They fear losing even a small % of consumers who are scared by that phrase. In many EU countries local farmers are not allowed to grow GMO crops, so domestic produced foods are GE-free. Imported foods arrive without labels, so GMO labeling hasn't given consumers a choice.

TASK CARD #6

CONTEMPORARY AGRICULTURE

Myth: "GE is the best way to increase farm productivity and reduce world hunger"

Under proper conditions, GE crops could help farmers in developing countries increase production. However, farmers need suitable GE varieties of the crops they grow, education on how to use them and credit to purchase what they need to maximize productivity. Many GE companies invest in developing seeds for industrialized farming, not subsistence. Other technologies like irrigation equipment, and roads could increase the incomes of farmers in developing countries more than GE crops

From the Atlantic 2/2013

TASK CARD #7

CONTEMPORARY AGRICULTURE

Myth: "Organic food is safer because it doesn't touch pesticides"

For food manufacturers to label their items as organic, the products must meet the standards set by organizations and government. The USDA certifies foods as organic if they are shown to be protecting natural resources, conserving biodiversity, and using only approved substances. In the US organic foods must also be devoid of GMOs. But just because a crop fits the definition of organic, doesn't mean it's free of fertilizer residue. USDA organic certification allows for natural substances such as vaccines for animals and a limited number of natural pesticides as well. A 2011 survey done by the USDA showed that 39% of 571 organic samples were found to have pesticide residues.

Exposure to pesticides is the reason most people buy organic. But the use of pesticides by non-organic farmers is much different than even a decade ago. Farmers use fewer pesticides than ever and those that are used are required to have low to no impact on human health. From a consumer standpoint, exposure to pesticides in non-organic food is very, very low.

TASK CARD #8

CONTEMPORARY AGRICULTURE

Myth: "Organic food is healthier"

When comparing organic apples to conventional apples, the evidence simply doesn't suggest that organic makes people healthier. After analyzing 240 studies about the nutritional value of organic food, the authors of a 2012 review study in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* concluded that they lack strong evidence that organic foods are more nutritious than conventional foods.

From futurism.com 2/8/18

TASK CARD #9

CONTEMPORARY AGRICULTURE

Myth: "Big Farming is Bad Farming"

Tony Thompson's farm in Minnesota uses plants that prevent water runoff and block nutrients from his soil spilling into and polluting the Mississippi River. Thompson grows 3,000 acres of GMO corn and soybeans making him an industrial farmer which often equals bad in the minds of today's consumers. Yet, many small farmers use much more pesticides and less sustainable practices than Tony. He uses tilling practices that keep carbon dioxide in and allow less fertilizer. He has created buffer fields of flowers and grasses to keep water and soil from washing away into the river. Tony does all of this even though it doesn't increase his bottom line. It just takes care of the landscape.

From: Washington Post 8/7/2013

TASK CARD #10

CONTEMPORARY AGRICULTURE

Myth: "Industrial Food is Evil"



<http://nyti.ms/2HQb3a9>

