

Safeway Inc. Shareholder Meeting
Opposition Statement to Proposal Seven
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I'm Justin Danhof, speaking as a representative of shareholder Amy Ridenour in opposition to Proposal Seven.

Proposal Seven seeks mandatory labeling of all company products and private label foods that may "contain genetically engineered ingredients."

This proposal is unscientific, unnecessary for Safeway's business purposes and would increase food prices, disproportionately harming lower-income customers.

Numerous scientific bodies have determined that GMO foods are safe, including:

- The National Academy of Sciences
- The American Association for the Advancement of Science – which has stated that the "science is quite clear: crop improvement by the modern molecular techniques of biotechnology is safe."ⁱ
- The American Medical Association – which has unequivocally stated that "Bioengineered foods have been consumed for ... 20 years and, and during that time, no overt consequences on human health have been reported and/or substantiated in the peer-reviewed literature."ⁱⁱ
- The Royal Society of Medicine
- The World Health Organization

In fact, the European Union spent ten years and hundreds of millions of Euros to exhaustively examine GMOs and determined that: "The main conclusion to be drawn from the efforts of more than 130 research projects, covering a period of more than 25 years of research, and involving more than 500 independent research groups, is that biotechnology, and in particular GMOs, are not *per se* more risky than *e.g.* conventional plant breeding technologies."ⁱⁱⁱ

The organic food industry has been funding calls for mandatory labeling because it believes such labels will scare people and cause them to buy more organic products.

In other words, they are in it for the money. They have the right to spend their money as they wish, but we have the right to care more about good policy than their pocketbooks.

GMO foods are a great gift to mankind. They lower food costs, allow farmers to produce food in a more sustainable way, and, as Bill Gates and the Gates Foundation have pointed out, show great promise for ending world hunger and malnutrition.^{iv}

Some people fear GMO foods because they can't tell the difference between them and the more traditionally-grown foods, but fear isn't always rational.

When it isn't, we shouldn't let it make our decisions for us.

I urge shareholders to vote against Proposal Seven.

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ⁱ http://archives.aaas.org/docs/resolutions.php?doc_id=464

ⁱⁱ <http://www.geneticliteracyproject.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/climateGMOconsensus.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ http://ec.europa.eu/research/biosociety/pdf/a_decade_of_eu-funded_gmo_research.pdf

^{iv} <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/What-We-Do/Global-Development/Agricultural-Development>