



The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-230, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Paul D. Ryan
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid
Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

December 4, 2015

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Reid, Speaker Ryan, and Minority Leader Pelosi:

On behalf of the Coalition for Safe and Affordable Food we urge your support for language in the year-end Omnibus Appropriations bill that addresses the patchwork of state GMO labeling laws that the food and agriculture industries are currently facing. The Coalition includes 47 national trade associations representing farmers, cooperatives, agribusiness, and food, seed, and biotechnology companies. We have been working with over 400 state and local food, agriculture, and retail groups to achieve a uniform national standard for voluntary GMO labeling.

Today interest groups across the country are pushing state-level labeling mandates that will exacerbate consumer confusion and drive up food prices. Instead of informing consumers, these state initiatives are filled with loopholes, exempting as much as two-thirds of foods. The result will be higher food prices for hard working American families – as much as \$500 a year for a family of four, according to a study conducted by Cornell University Professor William Lesser. There were approximately 80 bills introduced in 20 states this year, with laws in Connecticut, Vermont, and Maine already enacted. Vermont's Act 120, which would mandate the labeling of foods made with genetically modified organisms, will take effect in July 2016 and food companies will need to begin implementing labeling changes next month.

Just last month the Food and Drug Administration again affirmed the safety of foods derived from biotech, stating foods from seeds derived from genetic engineering "don't present greater safety concerns than foods developed by traditional plant breeding". GMOs have been an important part of our nation's food supply for the past 20 years, and 70-80 percent of the foods consumed in the United States contain ingredients that have been genetically engineered. In addition, the leading health and regulatory bodies in the world, from the World Health Organization to the American Medical Association, have all concluded GMOs are safe.

It is imperative that Congress take action now to prevent a costly and confusing patchwork of state labeling laws from taking effect next year and spreading across the country. Congress must include language in the Omnibus Appropriations bill to ensure that food companies, farmers, ranchers, and consumers won't face the significant increased costs of state GMO labeling laws.

Sincerely,



AACC International

Agricultural Retailers Association

American Agri-Women

American Bakers Association

American Beverage Association

American Farm Bureau Federation

American Feed Industry Association

American Frozen Food Institute

American Fruit and Vegetable Processors and Growers
Coalition

American Phytopathological Society

American Seed Trade Association

American Soybean Association

American Sugarbeet Growers Association

Biotechnology Industry Organization

Corn Refiners Association

Council for Responsible Nutrition

CropLife America

Flavor & Extract Manufacturers Association

Global Cold Chain Alliance

Grocery Manufacturers Association

Independent Bakers Association

Independent Professional Seed Association

Infant Nutrition Council of America

International Dairy Foods Association

International Franchise Association

National Alfalfa & Forage Alliance

National Association of Manufacturers

National Association of Wheat Growers

National Black Growers Council

National Confectioners Association

National Corn Growers Association

National Cotton Council

National Council of Farmer Cooperatives

National Fisheries Institute

National Grain & Feed Association

National Milk Producers Federation

National Oilseed Processors Association

National Potato Council

National Seasoning Manufacturers Association

National Turkey Federation

North American Millers Association

Pet Food Institute

Snack Food Association

U.S. Beet Sugar Association

U.S. Canola Association

U.S. Chamber of Commerce

U.S. Dry Bean Council