



# FAQs about GMO Foods and Genetically Engineered Crops

## What is the definition of a GMO?

According to the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO), genetically modified organisms (GMOs) are organisms (i.e. plants, animals or microorganisms) in which DNA has been altered in a way that does not occur by mating and/or natural recombination. United States Department of Agriculture, the Food and Drug Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency all play a part in the [regulation of GMOs](#).

## What GMO crops are commercially sold in the U.S.?

Currently [only nine GMO crops](#) are commercially sold in the United States: alfalfa, canola, corn (field and sweet), cotton, papaya, potatoes, soybeans, squash and sugar beets. [GMO apples](#) have also been approved, but [are not yet sold in the United States](#).

## Why are GMOs used?

There are a variety of reasons the industry may choose genetically engineered seeds. [According to the WHO](#), genetically modified seeds are aimed mainly at increased crop protection through resistance against plant disease, drought and herbicides. This is meant to translate into a product with a lower price for consumers though increased efficiencies on the farm.

## Does the NDA support labeling of GMOs?

The [Nevada Department of Agriculture](#) (NDA) supports a universal food labeling system for all food and agriculture products to ensure consistency and ease of interstate and international trade.

### Genetically Modified Crops Sold in the US:

- ▶ alfalfa
- ▶ canola
- ▶ corn (field and sweet)
- ▶ cotton
- ▶ papaya
- ▶ potatoes
- ▶ soybeans
- ▶ squash
- ▶ sugar beets

## Are GMOs safe?

In a [nonpartisan 2015 Pew Research Study](#), 88 percent of scientists of American Association for the Advancement of Science said that GMOs were generally safe. [According to Genetic Literacy Project](#) (an independent 501c3 funded by non-partisan foundations and charities), more than 2,000 global studies affirm the food and environmental safety of genetic modification.

Genetic modification is supported and declared safe by many organizations based on independent research and scientific consensus, including the organizations listed below. For a more comprehensive list, visit a database compiled by the [International Life Sciences Institute](#).

- [American Association for the Advancement of Science](#)
- [American Medical Association](#)
- [British Royal Society](#)
- [European Commission](#)

*“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.”*

- [Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations](#)
- [International Council for Science](#)

*“Currently available genetically modified foods are safe to eat. Food safety assessments by national regulatory agencies in several countries have deemed currently available GM foods to be as safe to eat as their conventional counterparts and suitable for human consumption.”*

- [The National Academies](#)

*“To date, no adverse health effects attributed to genetic engineering have been documented in the human population.”*

- [World Health Organization](#)

*“No allergic effects have been found relative to GM foods currently on the market.”*

*“GM foods currently available on the international market have passed safety assessments and are not likely to present risks for human health. In addition, no effects on human health have been shown as a result of the consumption of such foods by the general population in the countries where they have been approved.”*