

Golden Gate University School of Law GGU Law Digital Commons

GGU Law Review Blog

Student Scholarship

10-4-2012

Modifying Labels

Andy Brunner-Brown

Golden Gate University School of Law, lawreview@ggu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.law.ggu.edu/ggu_law_review_blog



Part of the [Environmental Law Commons](#), and the [Food and Drug Law Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Brunner-Brown, Andy, "Modifying Labels" (2012). *GGU Law Review Blog*. Paper 2.
http://digitalcommons.law.ggu.edu/ggu_law_review_blog/2

This Blog Post is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Scholarship at GGU Law Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in GGU Law Review Blog by an authorized administrator of GGU Law Digital Commons. For more information, please contact jfischer@ggu.edu.



Modifying Labels

OCTOBER 4, 2012 BY [ANDY BRUNNER-BROWN](#) 0 COMMENTS

The California ballot in November includes [Proposition 37](#), which will require food products to include labeling for genetically modified foods. There are many good and bad aspects of requiring such labeling: it provides consumers with more knowledge (and therefore better informed choices) while adding costs to the food industry and to the state (for labeling and enforcement, respectively). Although Prop. 37 would make California the first state to require genetic modification labeling, [the idea is not new](#). For instance, the European Union—all of the member states—has required genetic modification labeling since 2004, with some of the member states requiring it even before that. While providing informed decisions for consumers is a good thing, these labels do not actually benefit consumers.

Simply put, “[genetic modification] is the process of altering the genes of a plant, animal or micro-organism, or inserting a gene from another organism (living thing).” On the one hand, modifying food for human consumption is not new: plants and animals have been bred for millennia into modern form, selectively producing desired traits. On the other hand, what is new is the ability of modern scientists to (relatively easily) alter specific DNA of plants, animals, and microorganisms, as well as the ability to add DNA of one organism to another. The novelty of the genetic modifications rightfully alarms some consumers.

However, the focus should be on the nutrition, not the process. Foods receive genetic modifications for various reasons in order to create a better crop, such as enhanced taste, increased nutrition and yields, and improved resistance to disease. Some modifications might indeed be detrimental, but many might be beneficial to the agricultural industry without sacrificing nutritional safety.

Opposite genetic modification, organically-grown produce has less synthetic pesticide than traditionally grown produce. Organically grown products even label themselves organic, providing consumers with information for purchasing options. In recent years, the demand and availability for organically-produced food has grown exponentially despite the higher cost for the organic products. Some of the purported advantages of the organic products include the increase in nutritional quality. However, a recent study by Stanford University showed that organic produce has actually no nutritional advantage over non-organic produce.

Given the influence that the “organic” label has played on consumers’ choices, labeling genetically modified food will likely be influential as well. But, unlike organic products’ very small minority share of consumer options, genetically modified foods are in many products. Because they are so pervasive, it might turn out in a few years that—if Prop 37 passes—all foods will have a label: organic or genetically modified. In then end, then, consumers will be more informed about grocery purchases but not truly be offered more nutritious options.

Share this:



Related

Trust in Beer

In "GGU Law Review"

Friends in Low Places

In "GGU Law Review"

Proposition 8 Oral Arguments

In "GGU Law Review"

Search

Recent Posts

- [A CC-Pain: Abuse of C.C.P. § 170.6 Peremptory Challenges](#)
- [Employee Rights: If Nobody Knows, Who Cares?](#)
- [Space Rock Mining: A Land Rush Without Title](#)
- [Remove Time Limits on Reunification; Choose Guardianship over Adoption](#)
- [It's Still Perilous to Catch a Lyft in San Francisco](#)

Archives

- [March 2014](#)
- [February 2014](#)
- [January 2014](#)
- [November 2013](#)
- [October 2013](#)
- [April 2013](#)
- [March 2013](#)
- [February 2013](#)
- [January 2013](#)
- [October 2012](#)

Categories

- [GGU Law Review](#)
- [Ninth Circuit](#)

Authors

About Andy Brunner-Brown

View all posts by Andy Brunner-Brown →

Injunction Junction: Microsoft v Motorola, Case No. 12-35352 (9th Cir. Sept. 28, 2012)

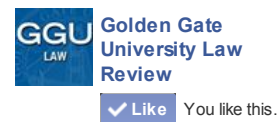
No comments yet... Be the first to leave a reply!

Leave a Reply

Enter your comment here...

- Andy Brunner-Brown
- cassieheuckroth
- erikfaussner
- Mark Wilson
- Executive Online Editor
- Joanne Badua
- jeffitye
- Kristina Maalouf
- Laura Patty
- Mark Heisey
- Richard Miyasaki
- Stephen Butts
- Lee Howery

Like us on Facebook



Golden Gate University Law Review
Like You like this.

Follow us on Twitter

Tweets Follow

 **GGU Law Review** 24 Mar
@GGULawReview
A CC-Pain: Abuse of C.C.P. § 170.6
Peremptory Challenges
wp.me/p2rEUu-6V via
[@GGULawReview](https://twitter.com/GGULawReview)