

**TOWN OF FAIRFAX
STAFF REPORT**

Date: August 1, 2012
To: Mayor and Members of the Town Council
From: Larry Bragman, Council Member
Subject: Adoption of Resolution No. 12-50, A Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Fairfax In Support of Proposition 37 "The California Right To Know Genetically Engineered Food Act"– Bragman

RECOMMENDATION

Motion to adopt Resolution No. 12-50, A Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Fairfax In Support of Proposition 37 "The California Right To Know Genetically Engineered Food Act"

BACKGROUND

The Town of Fairfax and its Council have championed the cause of labeling genetically modified foods for many years, as you can see by the inclusion of Resolution No. 2111, adopted by a unanimous vote of the Town Council in January of 2000. The wording of the current resolution considered for adoption provides all the necessary information and background.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

None

ATTACHMENTS:

Resolution 12-50 for consideration
Resolution 2111

RESOLUTION NO. 12-50

A RESOLUTION OF THE FAIRFAX TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF FAIRFAX IN SUPPORT OF PROPOSITION 37-THE CALIFORNIA RIGHT TO KNOW GENETICALLY ENGINEERED FOOD ACT

WHEREAS, the process of genetic engineering of foods can result in material changes which impact its nutritional value and dietary safety; and,

WHEREAS, California consumers overwhelmingly support labeling of food products in order to be informed whether they contain genetically engineered material; and,

WHEREAS, there are a variety of consumer concerns associated with genetically engineered foods including the potential transfer of allergens to food, religiously and ethically based dietary restrictions; and other health and safety concerns; and,

WHEREAS, there are also well documented potential environmental risks associated with genetically engineered crops including increased herbicide use on herbicide resistant crops; deleterious effects on native fauna and soil biology; inadvertent creation of “super weeds” which require larger and more potent applications of herbicides; and,

WHEREAS, labels voluntarily placed on food products are insufficient to provide consumers with adequate information on whether or not the food they are purchasing contains or was produced with genetically engineered material; and,

WHEREAS, consumers have a legal right to know what they are eating under the 1992 U.S. Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act which states labeling is misleading if it fails to reveal “material” facts; and,

WHEREAS, 50 other countries have some form of mandatory labeling of Genetically Engineered food; and,

WHEREAS public health and consumer groups are concerned that genetically engineered crops have contaminated native and related species and that genetically engineered seeds can be spread by wind, insects or birds, contaminating conventional and organic food crops; and,

WHEREAS, it is a fundamental human right to know the content of one’s food and to make informed decisions based upon personal health and other factors.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfax Town Council declares support for the *California Right to Know Genetically Engineered Food Act of 2012* that requires labeling of genetically engineered food.

The foregoing Resolution was adopted at a regular meeting of the Town of Fairfax held in said Town on the 1st day of August 2012, by the following vote, to wit:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

PAM HARTWELL-HERRERO, MAYOR

Attest:

Judy Anderson, Town Clerk

RESOLUTION NO. 2111

**A RESOLUTION OF THE FAIRFAX TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF FAIRFAX,
MARIN COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, SUPPORTING FEDERAL LEGISLATION TO BAN
GENETICALLY ENGINEERED FOOD AND PRODUCTS UNTIL THEY HAVE BEEN
PROVEN SAFE FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

WHEREAS, the Town of Fairfax aims to promote and encourage the public health, safety and welfare of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, according to research reports from York Nutritional Laboratory and the New England Journal of Medicine (Vol. 334, No. 11, March 14, 1996), there are increased allergic reactions to genetically engineered foods, particularly for children and the elderly; and

WHEREAS, in 1999, 90 million acres of genetically engineered crops have been cultivated in the U.S. despite significant risk of genetically engineered crops contaminating organic seed from pollen drift/cross pollination; and

WHEREAS, In some cases, chemicals are needed to "trigger" genetically engineered characteristics in plants creating more farmer dependence on chemical inputs; and

WHEREAS, there is significant risk in the transfer of genes from genetically engineered herbicide-resistant crops to wild relatives producing herbicide-resistant "superweed", and

WHEREAS, there is significant risk that genetic engineering in agriculture will result in irreversible imbalances to ecosystems from genetically modified organisms migrating up the food chain; and

WHEREAS, there is insufficient knowledge, at this time, of the long term effects genetic engineering in agriculture will have on human health and the environment; and

WHEREAS, the Federal government does not currently require all genetically engineered foods and products to be labeled; and

WHEREAS, in October 1999, the European Union adopted a rule requiring companies to label food as genetically modified if more than one percent of the product contains genetically modified organisms.

WHEREAS, Fairfax residents, whether out of religious and ethical considerations or economic, environmental and health concerns, have a right to know whether the food they purchase and consume contains or is produced with genetically engineered material.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfax Town Council supports the establishment of Federal legislation to ban growing, disseminating and marketing products that contain genetically engineered organisms until they have been proven safe by independent peer-reviewed scientific testing for human consumption and the environment.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to: our Federal representatives requesting their support on the enactment of the proposed Federal legislation, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and our State representatives

The forgoing Resolution was duly passed and adopted by the Town Council of the Town of Fairfax at a Regular Meeting thereof held on the 18th day of January, 2000 by the following vote, to wit:

AYES: BRANDBORG, CALDARARO, GHIRINGHELLI, TREMAINE, EGGER

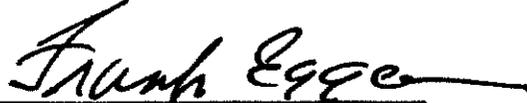
NOES:

ABSENT:

ATTEST:



TOWN CLERK PHIL GORNY



MAYOR FRANK EGGER