

RAPPORT



National Institute
of Nutrition

GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOODS – OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

It is well recognized that Canada enjoys one of the safest food supplies in the world. Yet the impact of biotechnology on our food supply leaves confusion in its wake, and opinions are highly polarized. Genetic modification can alter the heritable traits of a plant, animal or microorganism. New varieties of canola, corn, potatoes and soy were developed using this technology. Currently, foods containing a genetically modified ingredient do not have to be labelled unless there is a health or safety concern such as potential allergens.

This issue of *RAPPORT* aims to help you understand the controversies and debate surrounding the technology. It also highlights the work being done to ensure that any such products are safe today and in future, and that Canadians have access to meaningful information.

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GMO LABELLING: WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

To label or not to label? The question elicits feverish debate in the context of the current Canadian discussion of labelling food that contains genetically modified organisms (GMOs) (see *Learn the Lingo*, p. 8). But the passion behind the discourse is not solely linked to science, say many of the strongest advocates for mandatory labelling. From their perspective on the issue, any casual discussion of whether we have “the right to know” what is in our food is bound to reach the same conclusion: an unqualified “yes.”

However, others believe that a knee-jerk reaction to consumer demands for mandatory labels would be too shallow to deal with the other issues this debate engenders. These include the consumer’s right for “meaningful” information, and the potential for food companies to take advantage of consumer fears about modern biotechnology. Factor in the potentially negative trade implications of a mandatory versus voluntary labelling system, and the discussion gets decidedly more complicated.



“On a very simplistic level, the demand for information on what’s in our food sounds very straightforward. So why can’t we do it?” asks **Phyllis Tanaka**, Executive Director of the Canadian Food Information Council (CFIC), an organization that works with the media, science and health communities to educate consumers about food issues. Her response is considered and concise: “This is technology that you don’t explain with a label.”

Tanaka’s comments were delivered in mid-October, just days after Parliament narrowly defeated Bill C-287, which called for mandatory labelling of food with GM ingredients (see *Regulation of GM Foods*, p. 5).

Information vs. Alarm

In a nation where the government mandates label information for food ingredients relevant to safety and nutrition, an IPSOS-Reid poll shows the potential marketplace implications of GMO content labels. According to that poll, 40% of Canadians would perceive a GMO content label as a warning, 55% would be less likely to buy food with GMO content and 27% would actively seek non-GMO products. Even more worrisome is the discernment that consumers “will not just walk away from the product, they will leave the food category,” says **Laurie Curry**, a registered dietitian and Vice-President, Public Policy and Scientific Affairs, Food and Consumer Products Manufacturers of Canada (FCPMC). That is a major concern to organizations like FCPMC.

However, the fundamental issue is not trade, nor resistance to the idea consumers should know what is in their food, insists Curry. It is – and should be – food safety. The current agri-food industry depends on a safe supply of quality food ingredients. New GMO labels would not change that. Who wins if mandatory labels decrease Canadian confidence in the safety of a food system considered by many as one of the world’s best?

“Our members buy 45% of the agricultural commodities that are generated in this country

and all of these products are approved by Health Canada as safe,” notes Curry. And therein lies the crux of her argument against mandatory labelling as proposed in the defeated Bill C-287. FCPMC estimates that 60% to 70% of food products on shelves already contain ingredients made from genetically engineered plants, principally GM corn, soybean or canola, components of which are widely used in food production. Corn alone can find its way into the food chain as high-intensity sweetener, starch or syrup.

Most of the Canadian agri-food industry stands united in the position that the ingredients they use are safe. Labelling is required for all foods where a safety concern, such as allergenicity, is identified. “As manufacturers of food, we are responsible to consumers,” adds Curry. That accountability is why FCPMC supported a move to ensure labels relative to allergens in food are present and make sense to consumers. For example, these labels deliberately use more meaningful terminology like “milk ingredients” rather than listing the specific milk protein “casein.”

“We take the same premise and same approach with labelling related to GMOs,” explains Curry. “It would be irresponsible to just go ahead and put ‘contains GMO’ on the label.” FCPMC is not, ipso facto, against labelling but is convinced the information warrants context. “It is not just the right to know, but the right to understand.”

Labels with Meaning

Jeanne Cruikshank of the Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors (CCGD) agrees. She concedes consumers want to know more about the food they eat and have legitimate questions about new technology (including recombinant deoxyribonucleic acid technology, or the direct injection of genes from one organism into the cells of another).

In response to that recognized need for information, Cruikshank is proud of the CCGD’s link to the Food Biotechnology Communica-

tions Network (FBCN), an organization she now chairs. A national, not-for-profit coalition of food industry, government and non-government organizations, FBCN was formed in 1995 to offer consumers non-biased information about the food implications of biotechnology. In addition to publishing information and offering a website of 'biotech' information (www.foodbiotech.org), FBCN operates a toll-free call centre [1-877-FOODBIO] for consumers.

The ability for consumers to make informed food choices is central to the Canadian Biotechnology Advisory Committee's (CBAC) draft recommendations released in August 2001 (www.cbac-cccb.ca/documents/GMenglish.pdf). The report supports development of a set of clear labelling criteria regarding GM content in food that is widely promoted to consumers, and implemented voluntarily, at least initially. It also recommends a centralized food information service to provide consumers with accurate and comprehensive information on GM and other novel foods, the food regulatory system, and food standards and regulations.

Cruikshank's concern with mandatory labelling is that labels cannot, in and of themselves, reassure consumers that food sold in Canada (including food containing GM ingredients) is regulated through an already-safe system.

"People have suspicions when they don't have access to information," concedes Cruikshank. Still, a mandatory label is not the answer, especially if stakeholders like CCGD, which represents more than 80% of food distributors in Canada, are left out of the label development process. "On health and safety issues, there is no gray area" for CCGD, she assures. "For the 'like-to-know' issues like GMO content, we feel a voluntary standard is the way to go."

Voluntary, Not Weaker

That is why grocery retailers and food product manufacturers are among the 57 stakeholders who asked the Canadian General Standards

Board (CGSB), a standards-development, certification and registration organization within Public Works and Government Services Canada, to form the Standards Committee on Voluntary Labelling of Foods Obtained or Not Obtained through Genetic Modification (see *Toward a Voluntary Labelling Standard*, p. 6). Over the last 2 years, that Standards Committee explored the following areas:

1. Definition and scope of the standard;
2. Possible labelling statements; and
3. Compliance mechanisms.

According to information from the CGSB website (www.pwgsc.gc.ca/cgsb), a single, recognized standard will have many advantages. Designed to guide food companies and manufacturers, the standard will facilitate the easy identification of product ingredients through labelling. By giving the industry a common language, the new standard would also help build user confidence. Most importantly from an industry perspective, the CGSB process would build consensus while supporting a labelling standard based on health and safety issues.

The current Canadian regulatory system allows for voluntary labelling and some food products already carry GMO claims. Most of the existing statements are "negative" claims, as in "GMO-free." However, such statements lack the credibility of an industry-wide standard which operates with a set of rules to assess whether the claims are accurate, verifiable and meaningful to consumers. **Dr. Alan McHughen**, Senior Research Scientist at the University of Saskatchewan, is well aware of the challenges involved in labelling foods for reasons not connected with health and safety. At a joint forum hosted by CFIC and the National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) in November 2000, he led participants through a discussion of the challenges surrounding an appropriate definition of genetic modification, the limitations associated with current verification methods, and the need for appropriate tolerance and threshold levels. Without the checks and balances of a defined standard,

GM-free claims are difficult to verify and therefore, arguably meaningless. The need for consistency and clarity is driving the CGSB process.

FCPMC supports the CGSB process as a less onerous approach. A widely accepted voluntary standard is likely to be adopted by the industry. In addition, the CGSB process requires voluntary standards to be reviewed in 5 years. Adds Curry of FCPMC. "Our belief is that nobody should be in the marketplace trying to take advantage of consumer concern about food safety."

Similar concerns motivate the Consumers' Association of Canada's (CAC) decision to oppose, at least for now, mandatory labelling for GM content. That organization's June 2000 presentation to the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food argues that "any labelling scheme, voluntary or mandatory, must not only be verifiable with scientific and/or audit data but must be seen to be credible."

The trade policy implications of labelling genetically modified products were detailed in a presentation made at the joint CFIC-NIN forum (to order a related paper, see www.carleton.ca/ctpl/opapers.htm#labelling). **Dr. Ramesh Chaitoo**, Centre for Trade Policy and Law, Carleton University, asked "how does one prove the assertion GMO-free, since negatives cannot be proven?" He further stated that while consumers might prefer to be assured (for whatever reasons) that the food they are eating does not contain products of genetic modification, the "may contain" or "contains GMO" option would be preferable, but inadequate.

He also discussed the possible consequences of increased food product costs should mandatory labelling require strict product segregation, by virtue of having to verify what the label says. FCPMC estimates that those increased costs could add 10% to the grocery bill.

What makes the voluntary labelling code to be proposed by the CGSB so robust is that it is grounded in five guiding principles intended to provide consumers with information that is: 1) informative; 2) understandable; 3) verifiable; 4) not false; and 5) not misleading.

In fairness, the voluntary labelling standards initiative has its critics. **Holly Penfound**, Campaign Coordinator, Environmental Health, Greenpeace Canada, says Greenpeace support of mandatory labelling arises from "a concern about the environmental release of GM organisms." The environmental watchdog also questions whether the system to assess health and safety risks associated with these foods is adequate and objects to a voluntary system that puts the onus of proof for non-GM content claims on the supplier. Greenpeace is firm in its position that Canada should work toward a food system that disallows all genetically engineered foods. From that perspective, Greenpeace supports a mandatory label on the basis of the consumers' right to know this information and the right to use it to make decisions that may be based on more than an assessment of scientific risk (e.g. moral or environmental judgements).

Outside our Borders

To date, about 30 other countries have already implemented, or are in the process of implementing legislation for mandatory labelling of food with GM ingredients. These include members of the European Union, as well as Japan, Australia and Korea. But whereas Greenpeace argues that it is possible to go GM-free and label products as such, others disagree on whether that is really what is happening in countries enacting mandatory labelling.

CAC, for example, views the UK system as confusing and misleading. There, the labelling scheme "excludes products that are derived from but contain no genetically modified protein material, such as corn syrup or canola oil." From that perspective, the June 2000 CAC position supports that of the grocery retailers: favouring government regulation of negative claims, thus avoiding the potential "to charge a premium price and the opportunity for economic fraud based on 'GM free' claims that cannot be substantiated."

Food for Thought

Food and health professionals are charged with giving sound advice to consumers. So what can they do to help their clients manoeuvre the current maze of information related to labelling of foods that do or do not contain genetically modified organisms? Tanaka of CFIC sees value in acknowledging different positions. However, in the end a primary, shared goal should include support for a labelling system that gives useful information, is not deceptive and does not misinform.

Julie Lacasse, a registered dietitian who helped launch the FBCN call centre, goes one step further. She believes it is time to acknowledge that consumers have been inundated with confusing messages about what is, or is not, in their food. She also finds merit in talking about the “good news” story of a Canadian food system that prioritizes health and safety issues.

The Royal Society of Canada report released in February 2001 (www.rsc.ca/foodbio/technology/GMreportEN.pdf) concedes the need for added due diligence in the registration of new food technologies. But that is just more good news, insists Lacasse, who sees it as an example of Canada’s willingness to strive to do a better job. This is likely to become even more important when the second generation of GM plants hit the registration process in years to come. While today’s genetically engineered plants typically benefit agricultural production, tomorrow’s could deliver their advantages directly to consumers.

Strawberries with added Vitamin C? Broccoli that allows the consumer to absorb more of the plant’s natural calcium? These are just two examples of what is really at stake, says Lacasse. For those who believe science always carries the day, she offers one word: *irradiation*. The fact that food irradiation was not introduced in Canada exemplifies the way an emotional debate can derail scientific enquiry. As Lacasse notes, “It is a significant loss because that technology could solve our problems with *E. coli* in ground beef and *salmonella* in chicken.” ■

Regulation of GM Foods... at a glance

Canada’s current regulatory system requires the mandatory labelling of all foods, including GM products, for health and safety. For instance, any significant nutritional or compositional changes or the presence of allergens must be labelled. It is optional whether or not to label a food item as being a product of biotechnology. The debate surrounds whether the current system is sufficient, whether it should be supplemented with a meaningful voluntary labelling standard, or whether a systematic but mandatory approach should be adopted.

Standing Committee on Health

In October 2001, the Standing Committee on Health announced that it had adopted the proposal from the Ministers of Health, Agriculture, Industry and International Trade, to study the issue of labelling of genetically modified food. The Committee will be examining a range of labelling issues, focusing on health and safety aspects, and will submit a report and recommendations on the best options for meeting consumers’ information needs. The study will begin in spring 2002.

Canadian General Standards Board

www.pwgsc.gc.ca/cgsb/032_025/index-e.html

To ensure that labelling is meaningful and not misleading, the CGSB Standards Committee on Voluntary Labelling of Foods Obtained or Not Obtained through Genetic Modification has been developing a voluntary labelling standard over the past 2 years. More than 60 groups, representing consumers, growers, researchers, food industry and government, are participating. (see *Toward a Voluntary Labelling Standard*, p. 6).

Canadian Biotechnology Advisory Committee

www.cbac-ccc.ca/documents/GMenglish.pdf

CBAC’s Steering Committee on the Regulation of Genetically Modified Foods released an interim report in August 2001: *Improving the Regulation of Genetically Modified Foods and other Novel Foods in Canada*. The report targets good governance, information and choice (including labelling) and social and ethical considerations. Input will be accepted until January 31, 2002.

Royal Society of Canada

www.rsc.ca/foodbiotechnology/GMreportEN.pdf

The Expert Panel on the Future of Food Biotechnology was charged with providing advice on the regulatory system and the scientific capacity required by government to ensure the safety of new foods product being developed through biotechnology. Part of the report released in February 2001: *Elements of Precaution: Recommendations for the Regulation of Food Biotechnology in Canada*, presented guidelines for mandatory and voluntary labelling on the basis of health risk.

The government’s Action Plan in response to the RSC report was issued on November 21, 2001 (www.hc-sc.gc.ca/english/protection/royalsociety/index.htm)

Bill C-287

www.parl.gc.ca/37/1/parbus/chambus/house/bills/private/C-287/C-287_1/C-287TOCE.html

This private member’s bill proposed a mandatory scheme for the labelling of genetically modified food, through amendments to the *Food and Drugs Act*. It was introduced into the House of Commons in April 2001 and narrowly defeated in October 2001.

TOWARD A VOLUNTARY LABELLING STANDARD FOR FOODS FROM GENE TECHNOLOGY

– Doryne Peace, Chair

CGSB Standards Committee

In November 1999, the Canadian General Standards Board (CGSB) assembled a stakeholder group to develop a voluntary Standard for the labelling and advertising of food produced using biotechnology. The sponsor was the Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors (CCGD). At that time, no one could foresee the complexity of the task at hand. Certainly, no one thought that the committee would still be sitting 2 years after the initial meeting. But on December 4, 2001, I am pleased to report that a Standard is just days away from being sent to each member for a vote.

The committee itself is a balance of three groups:

- users (e.g. consumer groups, professional societies, retailers);¹
- producers (e.g. Canadian Federation of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Products Manufacturers of Canada, The Wheat Board); and
- general interest groups (e.g. government, academics).

One of the first things accomplished was to adopt five guiding principles: any claims must be informative, understandable, verifiable, not false and not misleading.

Reaching Consensus on Complex Issues

The committee uses a consensual model: the vast majority of its members, evenly distributed among the three groups, must vote in favour of the Standard for it to pass. It soon became evident that members were not all of one mind about several important issues, and that consensus would be difficult to achieve. Despite

1. Key activist groups declined to participate because they want government-legislated labelling. However, Greenpeace and The Council of Canadians have remained aware of the committee's work and provided detailed comments on the draft Standard that went out for public review in July 2001.

the differences of opinion, the participation rate has been almost 70% for in-person meetings, web-based dialogues and conference calls. This demonstrates members' commitment and the high stakes involved in this important debate.

Here are some of the issues with which the committee has struggled.

'Contains' vs. 'Derived from'

Should the Standard cover such products as BT corn only, or include corn oil derived from BT corn? Corn oil does not contain measurable amounts of altered genetic material or the protein made from it. Can its origins be verified? To answer this question, the committee needed to feel comfortable with Identity Preservation techniques (IP), a paper trail method of validation, which traces products from farm to grocery store. Some members judged that these techniques were not as reliable as analytical methods, which can only be used to test for altered DNA or the resulting protein. In the end, it was agreed that the Standard should cover both products from gene technology and products derived from them.

Narrow, Moderate and Broad Groupings of Technologies

The committee has yet to fully agree on the technologies that trigger the Standard. Many members came to the first meeting believing that the Standard was concerned with the application of rDNA technology to food (the narrow definition). However, after considering Canada's Novel Food Regulations, and hearing more about the application of such technologies as accelerated mutagenesis to crops like wheat, the discussion became drawn out.

The issue of negative claims was particularly challenging. Is it misleading to say that wheat, containing a novel trait resulting from accelerated mutagenesis, is 'not a product of gene technology'? Responses to the July 2001 draft Standard indicated that the committee was split down the middle on whether or not to permit novel foods produced by technologies other than rDNA to claim to be 'not from gene technology'.

However, when it came to defining which foods should be called a 'product of gene technology' the committee did reach consensus. It has agreed to use the Codex definition of the technologies that would trigger that description, including rDNA and cell fusion (see *Learn the Lingo*, p. 8).

Naming the Technologies

This article has used the phrase 'product of gene technology' to describe the group of technologies that will be addressed by the Standard. During its first year, the committee vacillated among using three phrases: 'genetic modification', 'genetic engineering' and 'biotechnology'.

Despite it being the phrase that consumers use most, 'genetic modification' covers all form of human intervention in genes, including traditional breeding techniques. The *Food and Drugs Act's* Novel Food Regulation contains a definition of 'genetically modified' that implies a wide range of technologies. As well, the US FDA published guidelines that defined genetic modification in a broad way.

Problems exist with the other terms, as well. For example, the term 'genetic engineering' may cause concern with a professional body; and 'biotechnology' is used both in a narrow and broad sense by authoritative bodies.

The drafting committee chose the term 'gene technology' for use throughout the last draft version of the Standard, reflecting the term used by the Codex Alimentarius Commission to refer to the techniques (the latest Codex draft from July 2001 uses 'modern biotechnology').

Currently, the committee is exploring the use of such terms as 'modern biotechnology', 'bioengineering', and 'genetic engineering' as synonyms for 'gene technology'.

Adventitious Material

The public, including all signatories of the World Trade Organization, received an opportunity to review the draft Standard during summer 2001. For the most part, the Canadian public's comments concerned the level of food from gene technology permitted in a food that was claimed to be 'not from gene technology'. While the amount permitted in many international mandatory labelling schemes is 1%, the Standard called for a tolerance of 5%. In other words, in a bag of 100 potatoes that are claimed not to be a product of gene technology, up to five potatoes could derive from gene technology. Similarly, the Standard would permit 50 grams of corn oil from BT corn in a litre of oil labelled as not being a product of gene technology. Of course, the reverse is true. If soybean oil claims to be a product of gene technology, 95% of the oil must come from soybeans that are a product of gene technology.

After hearing presentations from the various Canadian commodity groups, reviewing opinions on analytical methods for complex foodstuffs, and examining the various international standards, the committee decided to maintain the 5% tolerance. This level will be reassessed when the Standard is reviewed again, which occurs automatically after a 5-year period or earlier if needed. At that time, both Canadian and international experience will be sufficient to determine if the level should be lowered.

The committee also deliberated how to label products that are mixtures or blends of products from and not from gene technology. These blends are typical of most of today's Canadian supplies of corn, canola and soybean. In contrast to some other international regulations, the committee judged that it was misleading to claim that a product is from gene

technology if in fact only a small percentage of it is from a genetically altered crop. Instead, it chose to permit a claim that the product contains a mixture or blend of sources.

Other Information

Early on, the committee recognized that some consumers want more information than can be included on a label. For example, they may want to know the source of external genetic material used to alter a crop. The Standard requires that all label claims, either positive or negative, must be accompanied by an external source to contact for further information (e.g. web page, toll-free number). The Standard lists what information must be held at the external source and suggests other information that also may be communicated to consumers.

Conclusion

The CGSB staff is now preparing the Standard for a vote by the committee's voting members. If this version of the Standard is not ratified, there is an additional opportunity for compromise. After the committee approves the Standard, the CGSB will shepherd it through its internal review culminating with review and approval by the Standards Council of Canada, at which time it becomes a national Standard. While the committee has no official role to play in implementing the Standard, it is looking forward to seeing its handiwork applied to products in the Canadian marketplace in the second half of 2002. ■

Learn the Lingo: A Biotech Primer

Some familiarity with the jargon of the industry and its regulators is essential to any informed discussion of genetically engineered foods. The trend is toward using "genetically engineered" rather than "genetically modified" which includes traditional breeding techniques. A lack of consistent definitions for many of the terms – including the fact that different countries include different items in their definitions – contributes to confusion over the issues. Here is a quick look at some of the most widely used terminology.

Novel foods¹

- products that have never been used as a food;
- foods which result from a process that has not been previously used for food; or
- foods produced from a plant, animal or micro-organism that has been genetically modified and has characteristics not previously observed in the organism.

This last category of foods has been described by scientific and lay persons as genetically modified foods (GM foods), genetically engineered foods or foods from modern biotechnology.

Modern biotechnology²

The application of:

- in vitro nucleic acid techniques, including recombinant deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) techniques and direct injection of nucleic acid into cells or organelles, or
- fusion of cells beyond the taxonomic family, that overcome natural physiological, reproductive or recombination barriers and that are not techniques used in traditional breeding and selection.

Food and food ingredients obtained through genetic modification/genetic engineering²

- food and food ingredients composed of or containing genetically modified/engineered organisms obtained through modern biotechnology, or
- food and food ingredients produced from, but not containing, genetically modified/engineered organisms obtained through modern biotechnology.

Organism²

- any biological entity capable of replication, reproduction or of transferring genetic material.

REFERENCES

1. Health Canada: The Novel Food Regulation, Food & Drugs Regulations (simplified definition), October 1999
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/english/protection/novel_foods.html
2. Codex Alimentarius Commission: *Draft Amendment to the General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods / Draft Recommendations for the Labelling of Foods Obtained through Certain Techniques of Genetic Modification/Genetic Engineering: Definitions (at Step 6)*. Rome: UN FAO and WHO, July 2001
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/food-aliment/english/codex/pdf/cl01_22e.pdf

FACING THE COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES

One caller struggled with the new-found information that there were genes in her soup. Another expressed shock, then outright disgust, after learning that the introduction of bacteria to food products, while news to her, was 'old hat' in the production of food products like cheese, yogurt and wine. A third was surprised to learn Vitamin D was added to milk, but was convinced it must be a bad idea. Another was certain her refrigerator had a "fishy smell," an odor she blamed on her store-bought tomatoes based on vague memories of a media story about the introduction of a fish gene to tomatoes. (That story, if there were one, would have been wrong.)

Are these the ridiculous musings of the ignorant few? Maybe. But these examples of real-life calls to the Food Biotechnology Communications Network (FBCN) call centre are an indication of two communication challenges of specific interest to health professionals:

- There is a growing gap between consumers and knowledge of where their food comes from.
- Biotechnology's impact on food production leaves confusion in its wake.

It is widely recognized that Canadian consumers enjoy access to one of the safest food systems in the world. Food and health professionals need to do more to educate themselves on what biotechnology is and how it relates to agri-food production. Then they should use that knowledge to explain the technology, not to promote it. And they need to restrict their comments to issues within their scope of expertise, such as food safety and nutrition, and refer clients to other science professionals if the concerns focus on topics like the cross-pollination of genetically modified crops growing in farmers' fields. ■

Check Out Some "Top Picks"

For food and health professionals seeking more information on food biotechnology

Canadian Government

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Food Bureau
www.agr.ca/food/industryinfo/data/data_e.html

Canadian Food Inspection Agency
www.inspection.gc.ca/english/toc/bioteche.shtml

Health Canada
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/

Food, Nutrition and Health Organizations – Canada

Canadian Food Information Council
www.cfic.ca/

Canadian Health Network
www.canadian-health-network.ca/

Dietitians of Canada
www.dietitians.ca/

Food Biotechnology Communications Network
www.foodbiotech.org/
1-877-FOODBIO (1-877-366-3246)

–US and International

American Council on Science and Health
www.acsh.org/

American Dietetic Association
www.eatright.org/

American Society for Nutritional Sciences
www.nutrition.org/

International Food Information Council
www.ific.org/

World Health Organization (WHO)
www.who.int/fsf/GMfood/index.htm

Another Point of View

For a closer look at the pro-mandatory labelling position for genetically modified foods

Greenpeace Canada
www.greenpeacecanada.org

The Council of Canadians
www.canadians.org

Mark Your Calendar!

NIN's 2002 Annual Event will be held on **Monday April 29** at the Toronto Airport Hilton Hotel.

Don't miss the results of the latest wave of Tracking Nutrition Trends – providing a much-anticipated update on Canadians' knowledge, awareness and attitudes toward nutrition.

NIN Board Member Honoured

The University of Toronto has received a five-year US\$500,000 Bristol-Myers Squibb/Mead Johnson Unrestricted Nutrition Research Grant. Under the supervision of **Dr. G. Harvey Anderson**, an NIN Board member, the grant will help to support work in major areas of nutrition research of the Faculty of Medicine's Department of Nutritional Sciences: how diet and dietary changes may affect growth and prevent chronic disease in children and young adults; and how dietary nutrients and genetics may cause or help prevent colon, breast and prostate cancer. The University previously received a five-year US\$250,000 unrestricted grant in 1985.

The grant recognizes the central role that Dr. Anderson has played during his career in giving nutrition and diet a significant place in medical science and education. As principal investigator, Dr. Anderson will head a team that combines the scientific, clinical and public health aspects of research, working with internationally recognized experts at The Hospital for Sick Children, St. Michael's Hospital and other medical institutions and health care centers in the Toronto area.

Coming Event

NIN is proud to be a supporting organization for **ISSFAL 2002: Dietary Fats and Health**. The Fifth Congress of the International Society for the Study of Fatty Acids and Lipids will be held from May 7 to 11, 2002, at the Delta Centre-Ville Hotel, Montreal. Information: ISSFAL 2002 Secretariat, c/o Golden Planners Inc., 301-126 York Street, Ottawa, ON K1N 5T5; (613) 241-9333; fax (613) 565-2173; email info@goldenplanners.com; www.issfal.org.uk.

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