

Globethics Repository



Genetically Modified Food

This page was generated automatically upon download from the Globethics Repository. More information on Globethics see <https://www.globethics.net>. Data and content policy of Globethics Repository see <https://repository.globethics.net/pages/policy>.

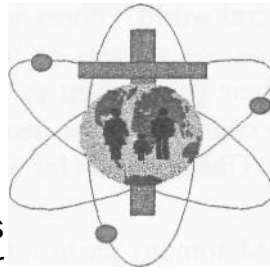
Item Type	Preprint
Authors	Church of Scotland
Rights	With permission of the license/copyright holder
Download date	2026-07-14 17:27:17
Link to Item	http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/219482

SOCIETY, RELIGION AND TECHNOLOGY PROJECT

Church of Scotland

GENETICALLY

Some see genetic modified crops agriculture, food & medicine. For about ourselves and the natural world - harmful, unnecessary, and benefiting big business at others' expense. But for many people, there are so many competing claims it's hard to know what to think. So what are the main issues?



MODIFIED FOOD

opening up opportunities in some it's a threat to something basic

The Objections

Should we be modifying genes at all?

- It's 'playing God' or unnatural to mix genes from radically different organisms
- We don't know enough about what we're doing to switch genes around in food

It's too risky

- We have not done enough to evaluate the risks to health or the environment
- GM varieties can reduce biodiversity
- GM genes will spread to non-GM varieties
- GM contamination threatens organic farmers

We don't need genetically modified food

- It is just going to provide luxuries for rich, and won't feed the Third World
- Agriculture is already too technological. This will only make it worse.
- There better ways to improve pest resistance and reduce chemicals on the land.

It's bad for economics

- GM is no advantage to farmers if consumers don't want GM food
- We should be researching alternatives to GM

It's bad for democracy

- We don't have enough say in what's going on
- Big business is imposing on our freedom under the guise of free trade.
- We must not allow the WTO or EC to force unwanted GM products on UK citizens.

The Case in Favour

We shouldn't be afraid of biotechnology

- We have been altering genetics for centuries through selective breeding
- Adding two different genes does not violate a whole organism.
- Why draw the line at GM, not elsewhere?

Risks are no worse than existing foods

- We have many safeguards in place.
- Health risks have been badly exaggerated
- GM can improve environment by using less chemicals and less soil tillage.
- With due care, GM and organic can co-exist

Look at the opportunities for good

- Better resistance to weeds, pests, disease.
- Better texture, flavour, nutritional value.
- Longer shelf life, easier shipment.
- Better yield, more efficient use of land.
- GM is a tool we will need to help feed a growing world population

It can bring key economic Benefits

- GM can offer farmers reduced costs to compete on a global market
- GM helps UK innovation, jobs and wealth

The democratic Case

- With labelling, adequate protection can be given for those who object.
- People have a right to choose either way - to buy a particular GM product or refuse it

