

Non-GMO Certification

“We’d like to think this issue will go away, because the science is clear that bioengineered ingredients are safe,” says Catherine Adams Hutt, Ph.D.

“We’ve been eating genetically modified, bioengineered foods for more than 20 years. We know they aren’t ‘Frankenfoods,’ but consumers aren’t there with us.” 52% of consumers say they know what GMOs are; 40% say they avoid GMOs in their daily diet; and 71% say it’s because of concern for their personal health and well-being, according to recent Hartman data.

The original certifier of non-GMO foods, launched in 2009, is “The Non-GMO Verification Project,” which has set detectable GMO limits to not exceed 0.9%, which is the European threshold. The Natural

Food Certifiers launched “GMO Guard” in 2013, to complement their other certifications; it has a threshold of 0.05% GMOs.

From a regulatory standpoint, however, Adams Hutt said, “The FDA is not going to regulate GMO foods more than today. They’ve put their stake in the ground, and they’ve said definitively that foods resulting from biotechnology do not differ from other foods in any meaningful or material way, or present any difference or greater safety concerns than foods developed by traditional plant-breeding methods.”

Yet, due to consumer concerns, various acts and bans have been passed or proposed in Vermont, Hawaii, Oregon and Colorado regarding GMO labeling. Also in response to consumers, several manufacturers have reformulated products with non-GMOs.