

Is Thinking Critically and Holding Civil Food Conversations Too Much To Ask For?

BLOCKED

Have you ever looked at your newsfeed on Facebook and notice the "comment" button is no longer there? It's the sure sign of "we have blocked you from commenting on our page because we don't want you to sabotage our propaganda."



I am officially blocked from the HSUS (Humane Society of the United States) and United against Factory Farming, and The Right to Know Minnesota is the GMO labeling initiative in the state of Minnesota. But it's obvious from the content of their posts it's not just about labeling GMO's. It's also anti-GMO. On each of these blocked sites, I have been respectful in my comments. I have not bombarded their facebook page with posts or links, but I do occasionally disagree with the misinformation they post and I will refute their statements. Because I have been blocked, I am no longer allowed to correct any misinformation on their site, or discuss the issues with them. So, how do we have a conversation?

But I think that is the point, they do **not** want a conversation.

I understand this "Right to Know Minnesota" group is pushing for GMO labeling, which allows consumers to know if there are GMOs in their food. But their "Right to Know" is the "right to know" only one side of the issue. What is wrong with having a healthy discussion, with opposing views, on biotech?

I feel confident that biotech crops are safe.

Core Critical Thinking Skills



So how can I say biotech crops are safe? I am not a scientist nor do I have a science background except for the BIO100 class I took in college. Just because I don't have a science degree doesn't mean I can't use my critical thinking skills and make a determination if a study is credible or not.

How do I use my [critical thinking skills](#) on science-based research? Ask questions such as:

- When was the study conducted?
- Who did the study?
- Who funded the study?
- Who stands to benefit from the results and
- Is there a conflict of interest?

And if there is something I don't understand, I look for resources or people that can answer my questions. And I also read and I learn.

And then after that, I read and learn some more.

Yes, no doubt there has been research done that has been funded by Biotech companies. But there also have been many research studies done from unbiased sources, over 165 such studies. And guess what? The results are all the same, biotech crops are safe. But the anti-GMO groups do not want to hear this, they don't want others to hear this and they don't want to talk about it. Instead, they continually refer to flawed research and use that as a basis for their claims that GMO's are causing thousands of people to be sick and dying because of biotech.



The latest example of this is a study where the anti-GMO people have publicized a study which shows pigs who ate GMO corn had a higher level of stomach inflammation than pigs that were fed non-GMO corn. But the study was flawed. In this article, [Lack of care when choosing grains invalidates pig feed study](#), the study showed a lack of care. But this study was posted numerous places - even health websites such as Prevention.com.

And in another example, that anti-GMO people like to quote, was a study performed by the [French scientist, Seralini. It showed rats had a higher level of tumor growth when fed GMO feed](#). Again, the study was flawed. Even a junior high science class could tell you where the study was flawed. But people believe this. You can argue that people don't understand science, don't want to know about science and don't trust science. In the end, the results could be catastrophic if we don't acknowledge and accept science.

After observing these examples, I began to wonder why people believe studies that are flawed and deny study after study after study that proves biotech safety? According to an article on Forbes website, ["A Tour of the Brain of an Anti-Crop Biotech Activist"](#) there are factors that contribute to this phenomenon.

- Generally people are attracted to conspiracies. The conspiracy here is that Monsanto is out to have total control over the entire world's food supply. They are the "evil, mad scientist" people that we see in some of the old Frankenstein-type movies.
- Certain anti-biotech leaders are trapped in their own mind. Think of the John Malcovich movie. Being "trapped in your mind" results in people not being able to use critical thinking skills. And this is from people who should know better.
- People like to follow groups. It is easy for others to say, "well if they think and believe so, then I probably should too." They don't have to use their own critical thinking skills because "someone else is doing it for them".
- And others like to look at European countries and say things like, "Europe has banned all GMO crops, so if they banned them, we should too." Well the truth is, Europe does not have a total ban on GMO crops. In fact, their livestock is fed GMO corn. And now the Britians are having second

thoughts about their position on biotech crops. Read the article - [David Cameron, "It's time to look again at GM food"](#).

And it's not just biotech crops studies that people are not using critical thinking skills. Agricultural animal well-being is also affected. For example, groups like HSUS that have pushed their way into food retail companies' CEO offices and presented only a one-sided view on how livestock should be raised. And these mega food corporation's CEOs actually fall for their rhetoric. It doesn't take a lot of research to learn of HSUS's vegan agenda and deceptive way of raising funds for their organization.

Again, what happened to critical thinking? Did they not think to contact animal agricultural groups and get their point-of-view on these animal welfare issues? You know, the people that take care of animals day in and day out. It's beyond my comprehension why these companies did not or would not talk to their supply chain. Really? You don't want to know how your decisions will impact your supply chain (farmers), which, in turn, will affect your business?

So where do you find studies and scientists' opinions on biotech? Go to the "Right to Know Minnesota - The Truth" page, where there are a number of anti-biotech rebuttals. Or do a quick google search - there are plenty of studies to read and learn from.

So now what? **We need to be using our God given brains.** Let's not get caught up in conspiracy theories or follow the leader mentalities. Let's use our brains by using our critical thinking skills, let's listen to each other, ask questions and most important - talk.

NOTE: Since this posting, I am now allowed back on to the Right To Know - Minnesota Label GMO's site.