

## 10 Words That Drive Farmers Crazy

There are just some days that certain words and phrases drive us completely nuts. In fact, there are 10 words that drive farmers crazy. Let's take a look at the list.

### 1. Factory Farm

If I had to narrow this list from 10 to 1, this is the word I would choose. Drives me nuts. In agriculture, we know that people who use the word "factory farm" are using it in a negative way. The people who use "factory farm" don't want you to think there are people who care for animals on these farms. They want you to think there is minimal animal contact, conditions are dark and unfriendly. But the truth is people run and manage these farms and barns. They are friends, neighbors, and family. Remember, it's [family farms, not factory farms](#).

### 2. "All-Natural"

A popular word that literally means nothing. You see it everywhere. But what you may not know is there is no definition for "all-natural," so food-fear marketers take advantage of the lack of definition and plaster it on just about everything. Again, anything that can stir emotion in consumers is a marketers goal. And "all-natural" makes us all feel good.

### 3. Non-GMO Label

I hate how food fear marketers use this label. I know you have all seen this label, [Non-GMO Project Verified](#). The problem is they place this label on food items that have no GMO version. For example, DOLE places this label on their peaches. There are no GMO peaches. None. They might as well say "unicorn-free" on the package because it has the same meaning. I understand that consumers want to know what is in their food. But, seriously?

### 4. Is Your Husband Home?

The reality is there are many women farmers. Most of us are highly invested in our farms just like our husbands. So it is insensitive and irritating when a salesman knocks on the door or calls on the phone and asks, "is your husband home?" It's offensive and needs to stop. Treat women farmers with respect and for who they are.

### 5. Soil Health

One of the hot new terms I hear lately is soil health. Like it is a new concept or something. It makes it sound like farmers never cared about soil health until now. That can't be further from the truth. Farmers have always cared about their land. Many want to leave their land better than when they started farming. Farmers have always worked on soil health and will continue to do so. Yes, there are some new ways farming techniques that improve soil health, just like we have used new farming practices in the past to improve soil health. It's just what we do, always have.

## 6. Know Your Farmer

One of those phrases I hear a lot. I have no problem with farmers selling their products directly to the consumer. Direct sales allow consumers to "[know their farmer](#)," which is always used in the context that it's better. But the problem with using this phrase is it makes the rest of us, who sell our products differently, feel inferior because you don't know me directly. Just because you don't "know me" specifically doesn't mean our food is any less quality.

## 7. Sustainable

Another common word that people love to use. In fact, many companies and organizations have "sustainability officers" as part of their organizations. One challenge with the word "sustainable" is it means different things to different people. When I think about sustainable I think about doing more with less. Farmers have been doing more with less for a very long time. Sustainability has always been a priority, we just didn't call it that. We are and have been on a continual path of improvement. Always have, always will.

## 8. Antibiotic-Free

Thank you food-fear marketers. Here we go again. Let me reassure you that [all meat is antibiotic-free](#). There are safeguards put in place to ensure that your meat is free from antibiotics. So why is it necessary to tout antibiotic-free when we all know it is?

## 9. Monsanto

The public loves to lump all agriculture biotechnology companies under the name Monsanto, even though there are many companies that perform the same function as Monsanto. They love to blame this "giant evil-doer of the world" for everything. As a farmer, I appreciate [new biotechnology advancements](#). We use them and thanks to the advancements, we use fewer pesticides which is good for us and good for the environment.

## 10. Food, Inc.

If I could have a dollar every time I have heard people who watched Food, Inc. and then claim to

know it all because what they saw on the documentary must be true, I would be a very rich person. Yes, one of the most common claims I hear. At the point, I challenge them to watch a video on the other side of the food issue such as [Farmland](#). It's frustrating that people believe everything they see and hear.

So yes, these words drive me nuts, which is why my passion is to connect consumers with the people who raise and grow their food. Only with those connections, can I start eliminating some of these words from my list.