

## Are The Russians Behind Some of the Anti-GMO Rhetoric?

Sometimes, people (or countries) just need to mind their own business. Unfortunately, the Russians have been caught with their hand in the cookie jar and it's time we slap their hands by waking up and being smart about who and what they are.

We all know from recent news reports the Russians meddled in our recent presidential elections. It was unusual because they meddled on both sides of the political equation. Not only were they pro-Trump, but they were also anti-Trump. Strange, yes. On the same day, [the Russians were behind an anti-Trump rally and a pro-Trump rally](#). Why?

### Russian Ulterior Motive

*They are trying to mess with us. They want to cause division.*

Putin and his Russian cronies know how strong the American democracy is and are willing to do what they can to cause division and controversy. They also want to discredit American agriculture in much of the same manner as attempted during the last election. So it shouldn't surprise us that they have had their fingers in the anti-GMO on-line conversations.

### How do we know the Russians are pushing the anti-GMO rhetoric?

Researchers from Iowa State University (Shawn Dorius and Carolyn Lawrence-Dill) wanted to better understand the controversy around genetically engineered food. The issue is with the overwhelming belief in the [science community is that GMOs are safe](#), consumers still question their safety. Dorius and Lawrence-Dill wanted to find out why.

What they found was surprising.

### Research Results

The ISU researchers looked at not only how U.S. publications portrayed GMOs but also looked at the American versions of RT and Sputnik, two Russian publications. They counted how many times the term "GMO" was used in different publications. Here is what they found:

RT - 34%

Sputnik - 19%

Huffington Post - 18%

Fox News - 15%

CNN - 8%

They went a step further and analyzed the tone of each article. What they found is the Russian publications were overwhelming anti-GMO. The articles talked negatively about environmental risks, nutrition concerns, and health risks of GMOs.

## **So why would the Russians want to interfere?**

Here are a couple of my thoughts:

- 1) To continue causing division in the U.S. as in the last election.
- 2) It is illegal to grow GMOs in Russia and Russia wants to grow their organic food export market. They are trying to portray their organic crops as "ecologically cleaner" so pushing an anti-GMO argument aligns well with their objective.

Hmmmm . . . that seems pretty obvious why they are interfering.

## **So now what?**

Now that we are aware of what the Russians are up to, we can take some action. First, it is another reason to emphasize [critical thinking](#). We all need to ask ourselves questions: Where and who is behind the anti-GMO research and coverage? Is the research peer-reviewed? Can the research be duplicated? Personally, the first thing I do when I read an article is look to see who wrote and published the article. I think about that continually as I read the article. To a certain extent, everyone has a bias. We just need to understand that bias.

I also think that companies like Facebook and Google are taking action. As much as I complained about the new algorithm changes to Facebook with Mark Zuckerberg wanting to make the Facebook more about friends and family, I can't help but think that he is trying to deal with the overwhelming amount of "fake news." Along those lines, Google is looking to add thousands of jobs. I also think some of that expansion is for the same reasons--to deal with the "fake news."

Again, this is just my opinion. And then if this is the plan, I am concerned that good, accurate information may come under the heading of fake news and be blocked. Hopefully, that is not what happens.

Hopefully, that is not what happens. *Times are a changin'.*

In the meantime, I wonder what other parts of American's lives the Russians are messing with? We can't be complacent any longer. There just are evil people who want to cause us harm. We need to

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be smarter, sharpen our critical thinking skills and don't let "them" succeed. America is a great nation--the best in the world..

I would love to know what you are thinking. Please feel free to comment!

Other articles on the Russian anti-GMO interference:

[Ag Relations Council \(there are about 3 links\)](#)