

## **Hershey's GMO Sugar Secret**

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I love chocolate! And I know I am not alone--who doesn't love chocolate? But I have learned a little secret about Hershey and what they don't want you to know about GMO and non-GMO sugar.

#### **What is the problem?**

In the past, Hershey has used sugar from both sugar beets and sugar cane. But now the company is not buying sugar from sugar beet farmers. Why? Because the vast majority of sugar beets grown in the U.S. use a technology called Genetic Modified Organism (GMO). But what they don't want you to know is GMOs are safe and were developed so farmers could use less pesticides.

#### **So why do farmers use GMO technology?**

The GMO technology allows a small genetic change which results in the sugar beet tolerance of glyphosate or RoundUp. Prior to growing GMO sugar beets, farmers sprayed more toxic pesticides many times through out the growing season to keep weeds at bay. Using the RoundUp pesticide, sugar beet farmers now use much less pesticides because they can spray fewer times. Not only using less pesticides but glyphosate is less toxic than what they were using prior. *Great for the farmers and great for the environment.*

#### **Why Hershey made the change.**

According to Hershey, they claim that consumers want non-GMO sugar. There is a perception that GMO technology is bad for us. Unfortunately, there is a flood of misinformation about GMOs--[things that are simply not true](#). So how does Hershey know that consumers do not want GMO sugar? It's coming from activist groups such as GMO Inside and Green America. These groups (and many more) asked their members to contact Hershey and demand they eliminate the use of GMO sugar beets.

And Hershey ignored science and caved . . .

#### **What Hershey Doesn't Want You to Know About GMO Sugar**

They don't want you to know the difference between sugar from GMO and non-GMO sugar beets. Why?

*Because there is NO difference. None.*

After sugar beets are processed for the sugar, there is NO DNA present. What does that mean? Sugar is sugar is sugar. The sugar that comes from a GMO sugar beet and a non-GMO sugar beet are *identical*. No lab can detect any differences between sugar that comes from a GMO sugar beet and a non GMO sugar beet. The following chart is from the [GeneticLiteracy Project](#).

### **So what do sugar beet farmers do?**

Well, unfortunately, there is very little non-GMO sugar beet seed available and honestly, why would a farmer want to take a step backwards in regards to their health, the soils and the environment? It is so difficult being a farmer where you rely on science and research to make the best decision in growing the best food possible, but then in a "flash" because of some activist organization(s) who have never been on a farm, make a claim and demand changes where you literally erase all the progress made to the environment and the soils.

Have we lost brain cells? Do we not think beyond our own self-centered ways? Why are we not using our critical thinking skills? Why don't we trust science? What is happening to our society?

I am truly scared.

### **So what can agriculture do?**

As I have researched this story and calmed down my anger, it has become apparent that we need to bring ALL of agriculture together. Yes, all the commodity groups have their own organizations but we aren't speaking together as one. We need to form a coalition group that encompasses *all* ag groups. And yes I can hear it already--every reason this will not work. Well, if we don't speak together as one, we will continue having to deal with these *dumb* decisions.

In the meantime, farmers need to continue *reaching out to consumers*. And it needs to happen *now*.

## **Minnesota Farm Living**

A guide for navigating where your food comes from  
<http://www.mnfarmliving.com>

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For more information please refer to:

[Hershey Dumps Sugar Beets Because of GM Concerns by Minneapolis Star Tribune](#)

[Myth Busting: There is no such thing as GMO Sugar](#)

[Dr. Kevin Folta - Sweet Irony: The Environmental Impacts of GMO Sugar Science Denial](#)