

Would the GMO labeling measure block labeling foods as ‘natural’?

The use of the phrase “natural” on everything from peanut butter to orange juice could be imperiled by a statewide proposal to label genetically modified food, even if the food in question has never seen the bottom of a test tube.

That claim is being made by opponents of Proposition 37, who include biotech representatives, grocers’ groups, farmers and Fortune 500 companies, arguing the proposal’s language could ban even frozen fruits and vegetables from being labeled “natural,” no matter how they are grown.

“It will limit how we market ourselves,” said Jamie Johansson, owner of Oroville-based olive oil producer Lodestar Farms, saying those labels help small family farms distinguish themselves from large operations. “This would affect our ability to do that.”

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