

Moving past GMO debate: Monsanto executive, organic farmer and anti-industrialist activist agree on future for agriculture

In the days leading up to a panel discussion on GMOs put on by Climate One, I started getting nervous. I was slated to appear with Rob Fraley, head of technology for Monsanto; organic rice farmer Jessica Lundberg; and Andy Kimbrell, head of the Center for Food Safety.

This was likely to be trench warfare, I thought, and I'd be in stuck in the middle, crawling through the barbed wire, with live fire rattling overhead.

But that's not how it turned out. If anything the panelists were cordial to a fault, talking past each other and avoiding points of disagreement. Well, let me avoid false equivalence here: Kimbrell got his licks in (though more delicately than usual), and Lundberg was straightforward and clear (but she didn't get much time to talk); Monsanto's Fraley stayed on message rather than taking up the debate.

All of us agreed that Jonathan Foley's five-point plan for feeding the world (most recently published in National Geographic) was spot on: Freeze agriculture's footprint, grow more food on existing farms, increase efficiency, shift diets away from meat, and reduce waste.

Think about that for a second: A Monsanto executive, an organic farmer, an anti-industrial farming activist, and a journalist all concur on the path forward. That represents a damn broad coalition. And maybe that means that all those facts I was so keen to flesh out really don't matter. If we're all in agreement about where we should be headed, maybe it's time to move past the GMO debate and get on with the journey.

Read the full, original article: [What happens when GMO antagonists get together for a friendly chat](#)