

## National Academy of Sciences convenes panel to re-evaluate GMOs

The National Academy of Sciences (NAS) is embarking on a [comprehensive study](#) of genetically engineered (GE) crops. [It will examine](#) the historic development of agricultural biotechnology, assess the “purported” benefits and negatives of GE crops, review food and environmental safety issues, and explore where the technology may be headed. What is prompting such a deep dive into a thorny thicket? [This](#):

Consumers in the United States and abroad get conflicting information about GE crops. Proponents tout the benefits while opponents emphasize the risks. There is a need for an independent, objective study that examines what has been learned about GE crops, assesses whether initial concerns and promises were realized since their introduction, and investigates new concerns and recent claims.

It so happens that the [first public meeting](#) for this study will be held Monday and Tuesday.

[Editor’s note: GLP’s Jon Entine will be speaking to the panel on Tuesday at 1:50 p.m. eastern time. [Here](#) is the schedule for the two days. The webcast of the two days of presentations can be accessed through the NAS [here](#).] [T]he NAS [study](#) now underway. Remember, the justification for it is that “the public gets conflicting information about GE crops.” Yet, as I showed above, there is nothing ambiguous about the safety of GMOs. This is not to say that agricultural biotechnology doesn’t warrant strict regulation, monitoring, and continued testing. But let’s be clear: Thus far, nothing in the global food supply derived from genetically modified crops has been found harmful to public health.

So where is “conflicting information” coming from? Unfortunately, much skewed information on GMOs comes from thought leaders, advocacy journalists, and public interest groups, as I discussed in [this 2012 Slate piece](#). And it will be on display at this week’s NAS public meeting. For a virtual *who’s who* of cranks, pseudoscientists and ideologues—the worker bees and stars on the anti-GMO circuit—will be [appearing before the committee](#) (Reputable scientists and science communicators will also be represented.) I don’t have time to run through them all, but two notorious individuals (who should be familiar to anyone vaguely familiar with the GMO discourse) are giving their presentations back to back on Tuesday: Jeffrey Smith and Gilles-Éric Séralini.

**Read full original study:** [A science panel dives deep into the GMO Thicket](#)