

## Monsanto chief scientist Rob Fraley backs national GMO-free law, defends patenting

Radio host John Hockenberry interviews Monsanto chief technology officer Rob Fraley on GMO labeling, feeding the world, neocotinoids and honeybees, the controversy over patenting plants.

**JH:** But don't you contribute to the controversy by spending tens of millions lobbying against transparency and labeling bills in Congress?

**RF:** Well we're not against transparency. That is the point I was trying to make. We support the voluntary labeling systems that are already out there. Let's reel back to maybe the situation you are talking about in California or some of the labeling bills that are being proposed today. Those labeling bills I would characterize as being very poorly written, they will be very costly to implement, everyone who has studied those has talked about their cost of enforcement to being hundreds of thousands of dollars to a family with no benefit above and beyond what is already available with the choices from organic and voluntary labeling.

And so we've opposed those as have so many other food companies because they're expensive, they're poorly written. And in the end, labeling is a national priority and we would certainly support the FDA looking at a broad-based labeling approach, but to do it state-by-state and interfere with the transportation, with the ability of farmers to produce their crops and market them at a state-by-state level I think would create a nightmare situation. So, you know, we've opposed kind of poorly written, you know state-by-state initiatives

**JH:** But are you saying an FDA GMO-free law would be something you'd support?

**RF:** Yeah, and in fact the FDA and USDA have already defined a number of the GMO-free type products. Doing that at a national level I think is the right solution versus state-by-state initiatives that are often originated by groups who have a different motive.

**Read the full, original transcript:** [A Monsanto exec takes on the GMO debate](#)