

## Washington Post editorial: Mandatory GMO labeling is unnecessary

Eighty-eight percent of scientists polled by the Pew Research Center in January [said genetically modified food is generally safe to eat](#). Only 37 percent of the public shared that view. The movement to require genetically modified food products to be labeled both reflects and exploits this divergence between informed opinion and popular anxiety.

Mandated labeling would deter the purchase of genetically modified (GM) food when the evidence calls for no such caution. Congress is right to be [moving toward a more sensible policy](#) that allows companies to label products as free of GM ingredients but preempts states from requiring such labels.

Lawmakers and voters in some states have considered requiring GM labeling, but only a few have chosen to label, and none have yet started. That's good: The GM-food debate is a classic example of activists overstating risk based on fear of what might be unknown and on a distrust of corporations.

Promoters of compulsory GM food labeling claim that consumers nevertheless deserve transparency about what they're eating. But given the facts, mandatory labeling would be extremely misleading to consumers — who, the Pew polling shows, exaggerate the worries about “[Frankenfood](#)” — implying a strong government safety concern where one does not exist. Instead of demanding that food companies add an unnecessary label, people who distrust the assurances that GM food is safe can buy food voluntarily labeled as organic or non-GM.

**Read full, original article:** [We don't need labels on genetically modified foods](#)