

Why reporters should confront an indefensible position on GMOs with scientific consensus

I recently spoke at Cornell about the public GMO discourse—who has shaped it and how some commonly held perceptions have taken hold in the media.

Which brings me to a recent [post](#) by NYU journalism professor Jay Rosen, who wondered how reporters should characterize the positions of political candidates who deny that man-made global warming is occurring. After all, as Rosen says:

Claims that climate science is a hoax, or that human action is not a factor are not defensible positions in a political debate.

You should read Rosen's post to see the options he lays out for the reporter faced with a [Ted Cruz answer](#) on climate change. (Cruz, in case you didn't know, denies global warming.) Rosen argues in favor of options #3 (calling out the denialism, citing the scientific consensus) and option #4 (confronting the denialism head-on).

That got me thinking: What if reporters applied this same standard in their GMO coverage, particularly when faced with advocacy groups that deny a scientific consensus on the safety of genetically engineered foods? Remember, the same highly regarded scientific societies and bodies that declare global warming to be real also [declare GMO foods to be safe](#).

With Congress now [joining the fight](#) over GMO labeling, reporters are going to have ample opportunity to clarify where the science stands on genetically modified foods. Pro-GMO labeling advocates argue this issue is all about transparency, but if they didn't feel that GMOs were inherently unsafe, they wouldn't be asking them to be labeled. That suggestion of health risk is implicit in every article about GMO labeling. Thus, it behooves reporters to cite the [body of scientific evidence](#) that speaks to this implied safety issue.

Read full, original article: [GMO Labeling Articles Should Reference Scientific Consensus](#)