

How GM labeling could bankrupt small Vermont dairy farm

As a farmer in Vermont, I'm worried that a senseless food label will ultimately put our family farm out of business; a family farm with a 70-year legacy we are continuing.

My state is about to become the first in the country to require cautionary labels on food with genetically modified ingredients. The regulation is scheduled to take effect in July of 2016.

My husband and I operate a 50-cow dairy farm in northeast Vermont. About a third of our animals started out as my 4-H project when I was 9 years old. We rent land from relatives, grow hay for our own use and to sell, and market jersey beef and composted manure locally.

In other words, we're doing everything we can to make ends meet on our small farm that's economically and environmentally sustainable.

Biotechnology is a tool that helps us provide good, safe food at a reasonable price. Our cows eat about 16 tons of grain per month and current GM feed costs are about \$500 per ton, leaving our total feed bill at \$5,000 per month. If we had to switch to non-GM sources, our monthly feed costs would almost double; depending upon whether there is enough "non-GMO" grain to purchase. Otherwise, our alternative would be organic grain which would more than double our feed costs. (Because we have chosen not to be organically certified, we would not receive an organic milk price.)

If that happened, mandatory GM labels would bankrupt us. We'd lose our farm.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: Commentary: Vermont mom thinks GMO labeling will ruin her business