

Opinion: GMO opponents in ‘frenzied heat’ trying to discredit Food Evolution movie

It's been terribly amusing to watch the anti-GMO activists sputter over the release of a credible new documentary, "[Food Evolution](#)," which holds that science is on the side of agricultural biotechnology.

From Marion Nestle and Michael Pollan to US Right to Know and Center for Food Safety, the outcry has been the same: "unfair, unbalanced, deceptive, skewed science, industry propaganda."

[Read GLP profiles on [Michael Pollan](#), [US Right to Know](#), and the [Center for Food Safety](#).]

Yes, those were some of the phrases delivered without a touch of irony by folks who either routinely produce and peddle an anti-GMO narrative that is itself unfair, unbalanced and deceptive, or have never said a peep about the reams of organic industry-funded propaganda and skewed science produced by the anti movement.



Center 4 Food Safety @CFSTrueFood · Jun 21

Industry efforts so heavy-handed they highlight PR tactics more than message they're trying to convey @StacyMalkan ecowatch.com/food-evolution...

Which got me wondering once again why the anti-GMO movement is so utterly devoid of introspection, and so quick to engage in the psychological defense mechanism known as [projection](#), "in which unwanted feelings are displaced onto another person, where they then appear as a threat from the external world."

I guess that's their way of dealing with the cognitive dissonance described by a [New York Times movie reviewer](#):

With a soft tone, respectful to opponents but insistent on the data, "Food Evolution" posits an inconvenient truth for organic boosters to swallow: In a world desperate for safe, sustainable food, G.M.O.s may well be a force for good.

Of course, antis quickly denounced the review as a "puff piece" because smearing and tainting is one of their favorite tactics. Nestle, after claiming she was quoted "out of context" (though not inaccurately) when she admitted GMOs are safe, engaged in it herself in her bitter denouncement of the film on her [Food Politics blog](#):

I can't help but think Monsanto or the Biotechnology Innovation Organization must have given IFT [Institute for Food Technologists] a grant for this purpose, but IFT takes complete responsibility for commissioning the film (if you have any information about this, please let me know). I view it as a slick piece of GMO industry propaganda.

Gosh, wouldn't you think an esteemed professor at New York University would actually gather some facts

before making such a bold accusation? Especially since she's wrong: neither Monsanto nor BIO kicked in any dough.



Food Evolution @foodevomovie · 21h

We all have a right to our own opinion but what about our own facts?

#FeastOnFacts w. @foodevomovie @CityCinemasNYC buff.ly/2sKxsPb



This allegation led to demands by the antis that the filmmakers disclose all their funding sources. Again, this was hugely ironic and hilarious, considering the anti movement likes to keep its own funding and expenses shrouded in secrecy. Disclosure and transparency are always for others, and never for them.

Michael Pollan @michaelpollan

My experience and take much the same. twitter.com/marionnestle/s...

Just as setting the record straight is always for others, and never for them. After seeing Nestle demand the removal of her 10-second clip from “Food Evolution,” Kevin Folta, chair of horticultural sciences at the University of Florida, wrote about his own experience with Nestle after she reprinted a scandalous story about him that was later retracted, but never corrected on her blog:

“...it is important to point out amazing hypocrisy. Someone that claims to have been wronged is the exact same person that celebrated the harm of others, and promoted false information to hurt someone professionally and personally, and refused to discuss it or make corrections when kindly approached about it.”

Nestle went on to block comments on her critical review of “Food Evolution” saying the “trolls had defeated her” — not that she’d erred and should rightly be chastised and corrected.

Stacy Malkin of US Right to Know (funded largely by the Organic Consumers Association) fumed that fans of Neil deGrasse Tyson “deserve better than the twisted tale dished out by Food Evolution, the new documentary film about genetically modified foods (GMOs) that is driving its promotion on the coattails of

Tyson's narration and kicking up controversy for its biased approach."

[Read the GLP's profile on the [Organic Consumers Association](#).]

Uh, excuse me, but aren't the antis the ones who are kicking up controversy by claiming the film is biased? And I don't remember Stacy crying about how fans of Pierce "007" Brosnan deserve far more than the outright lies of "Poisoning Paradise," the anti-GMO fear flick produced by Brosnan's wife and a Kauai personal injury attorney that is cruising the coattails (and coffers) of his celebrity.

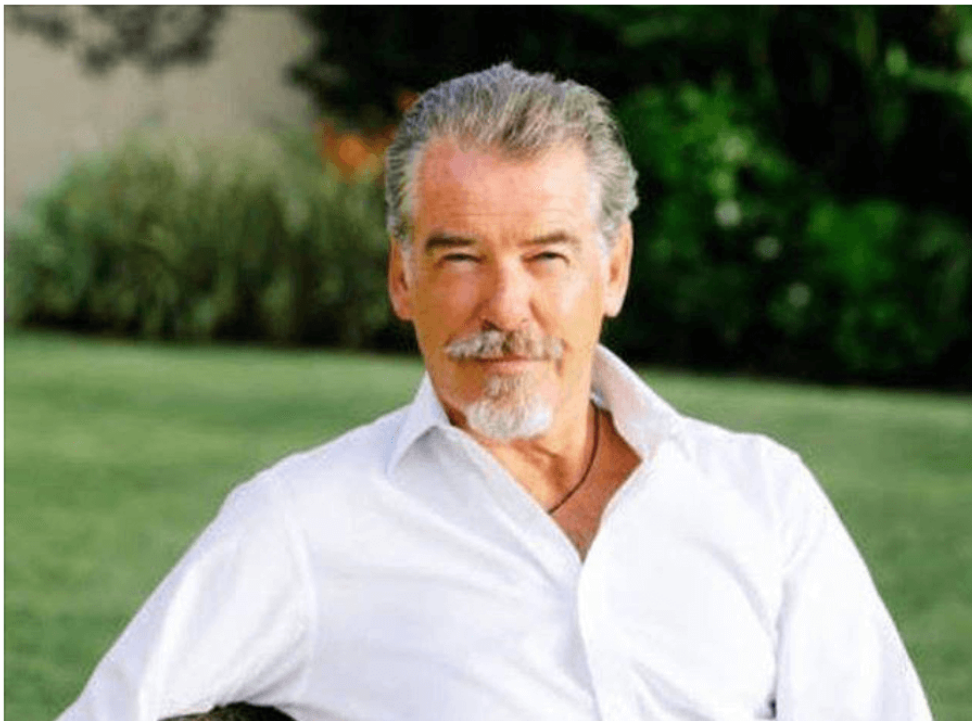


Pierce Brosnan

19 hrs · 🌐



Thank you Maui film festival for the honor of the Path Finder award ...
aloha



Nestle, Pollan, Malkin and others sniff that "Food Evolution" fails because it addresses only the issue of safety.

Well, safety is the issue that has driven much of the anti-GMO narrative in the West, and it's the issue that is continuing to drive the anti messaging in Africa and Asia, where men are told GMOs will make them impotent or sterile.

It's also an issue that has resonated with many esteemed scientists, including the National Academy of Sciences and a roster of Nobel laureates, all of whom agree that GMO crops are safe for human and animal consumption.

Still, there's plenty more to talk about in the GMO debate, and with the Q&A discussions that have followed many screenings, those behind "Food Evolution" have shown they're willing to engage.

What will it take for the anti forces to come to the table, rather than lodge spurious cyber attacks — especially when their complaints and accusations apply so aptly to themselves?

A version of this article appeared at Joan Conrow's website as "[Project and deflect](#)" and has been republished here with permission from the author.

Joan Conrow is a longtime Hawaii journalist and blogger who has written extensively about agricultural, environmental and political issues. Follow her on Twitter [@joanconrow](#)