

US District Court dismisses lawsuit claiming GMO foods shouldn't carry 'natural' label

On October 25, the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts dismissed a consumer class action under Massachusetts law, contending that Wesson vegetable oil is falsely labeled "100% natural" because it allegedly is extracted from genetically modified corn, soybean and rapeseed. *Lee v. Conagra Brands, Inc.*, 1:17-cv-11042 (D. Mass Oct. 25, 2017). This was an unusually clean case in that there was no other ground challenging the "100% natural" claim and no counts for other legal violations. The court thus had squarely to decide whether the presence of genetically modified ingredients renders a product not "natural" under the law.

The court's decision that GMOs are not necessarily not natural relied on the FDA's longstanding approach to the use of the term. The FDA has no formal definition of "natural" as applied to foods, but its policy, as expressed in the Background section of FDA's November 12, 2015, request for comments on the subject, is that "we have not attempted to restrict use of the term "natural" except for added color, synthetic substances, and flavors" and "we have considered "natural" to mean that nothing artificial or synthetic (including colors regardless of source) is included in, or has been added to, the product that would not normally be expected to be there."

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [Genetically Modified – Naturally!](#)