

Viewpoint: Indian anti-GMO activist Vandana Shiva ‘spreads misinformation and fear’ about conventional agriculture

I attended a presentation given by [Vandana Shiva](#), a well-known anti-GMO activist, at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. It was definitely an eye-opener to understanding why people are so disconnected with [American agriculture](#).

Shiva, like American farmers, is passionate about the environment, but the way she portrayed the image of farmers and [GMOs](#) to the public was concerning. Her opinion is that the world is being treated as a machine and that the Earth’s freedoms are being pressured by the population she refers to as “industrial ag.” Well, behind her label of “industrial ag” are real people and families that raise food for 100 percent of the population, while, in the U.S., they make up less than 2 percent.

In the U.S., 97 percent of farms are family owned, so why wouldn’t they want to protect the environment? Farming is a way of life, that for many, has been passed down from generation to generation. Yes, farmers want to make a living off the land, but they also realize that in order to be successful and profitable, they must care for the resources on which they depend.

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Shiva also believes that “industrial ag” provides 30 percent of food to the market and uses 70 percent of the resources. Do you believe this? According to the USDA [the proportion of the land base that agriculture uses](#) has declined from 63 percent in 1949 to 51 percent in 2007, a direct result of urban sprawl. With the number of acres available to grow and raise food products declining, farmers have implemented technology and conservation practices to help sustain resources such as land and water.

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While I am disappointed that UW-Oshkosh spent thousands of dollars on an event that spread misinformation and fear, my eyes were opened to the importance of farmers and agriculturists being present, engaged and willing to stand up for [American agriculture](#).

Read more: [How Vandana Shiva fuels misconceptions about American ag](#)