

Viewpoint: 'Consumer activist' concerns over Florida proposal to use gene drives to extirpate Zika-carrying mosquitoes is thinly veiled anti-biotech attack

Now that their nemesis Monsanto is no longer a thing, [the Organic Consumers Association and the Center for Food Safety] must be falling on hard times. Their most recent targets? Biotech mosquitoes.

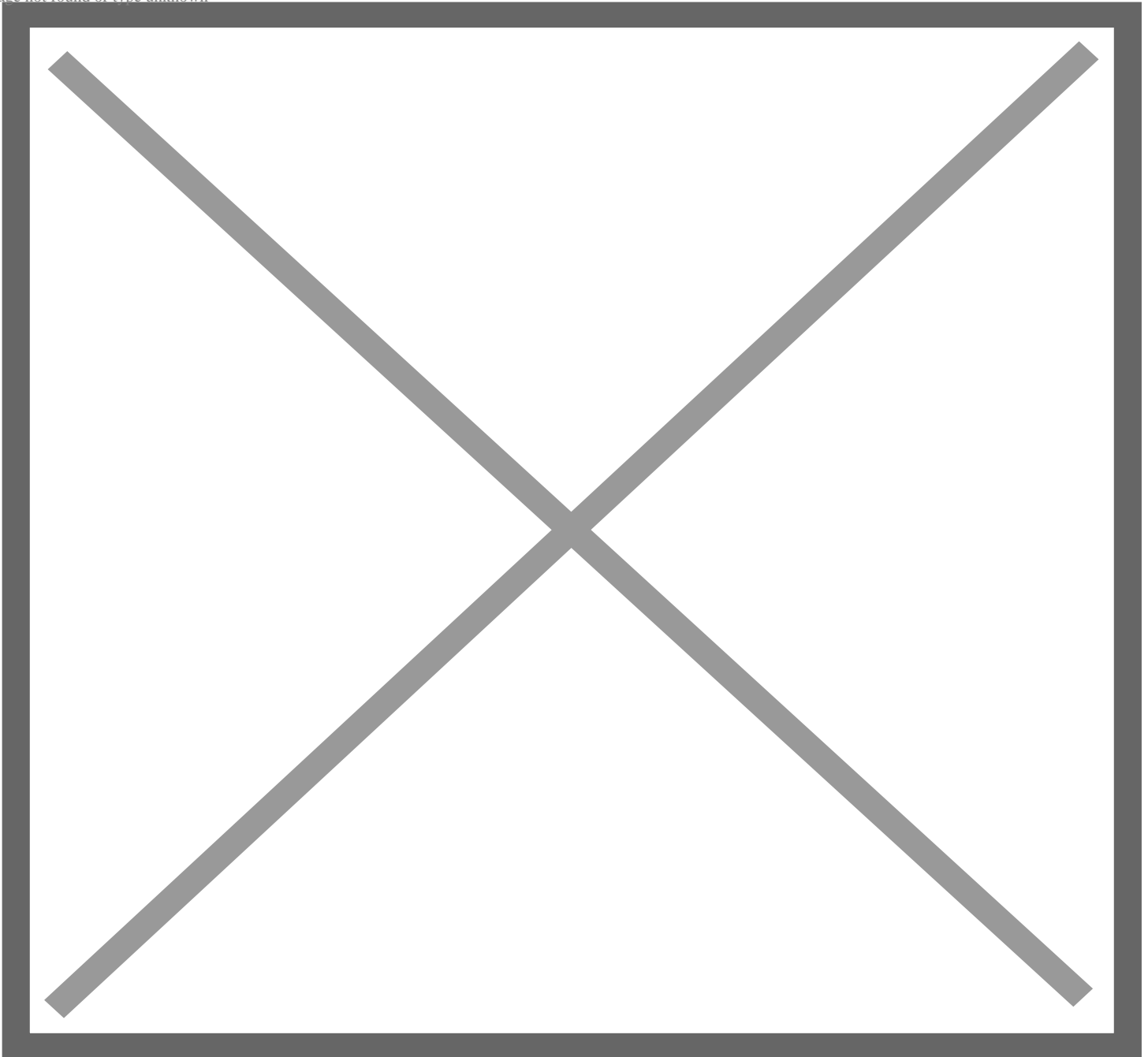
The genetically engineered mosquitoes by [Oxitec](#) are a modern version of [sterile insect technique](#)... The males mate with local female pests, and the next generation of larvae are inviable. Mosquito populations crash. The target is a non-native invasive mosquito so it poses no threat to natural ecosystems.

These disease-transmitting mosquitoes are clearly the most lethal animal on the planet. With Zika, Dengue, chikungunya, malaria and other mosquito-borne diseases on the rise, these tools could have great human health implications. They are to be released in the Florida Keys shortly.

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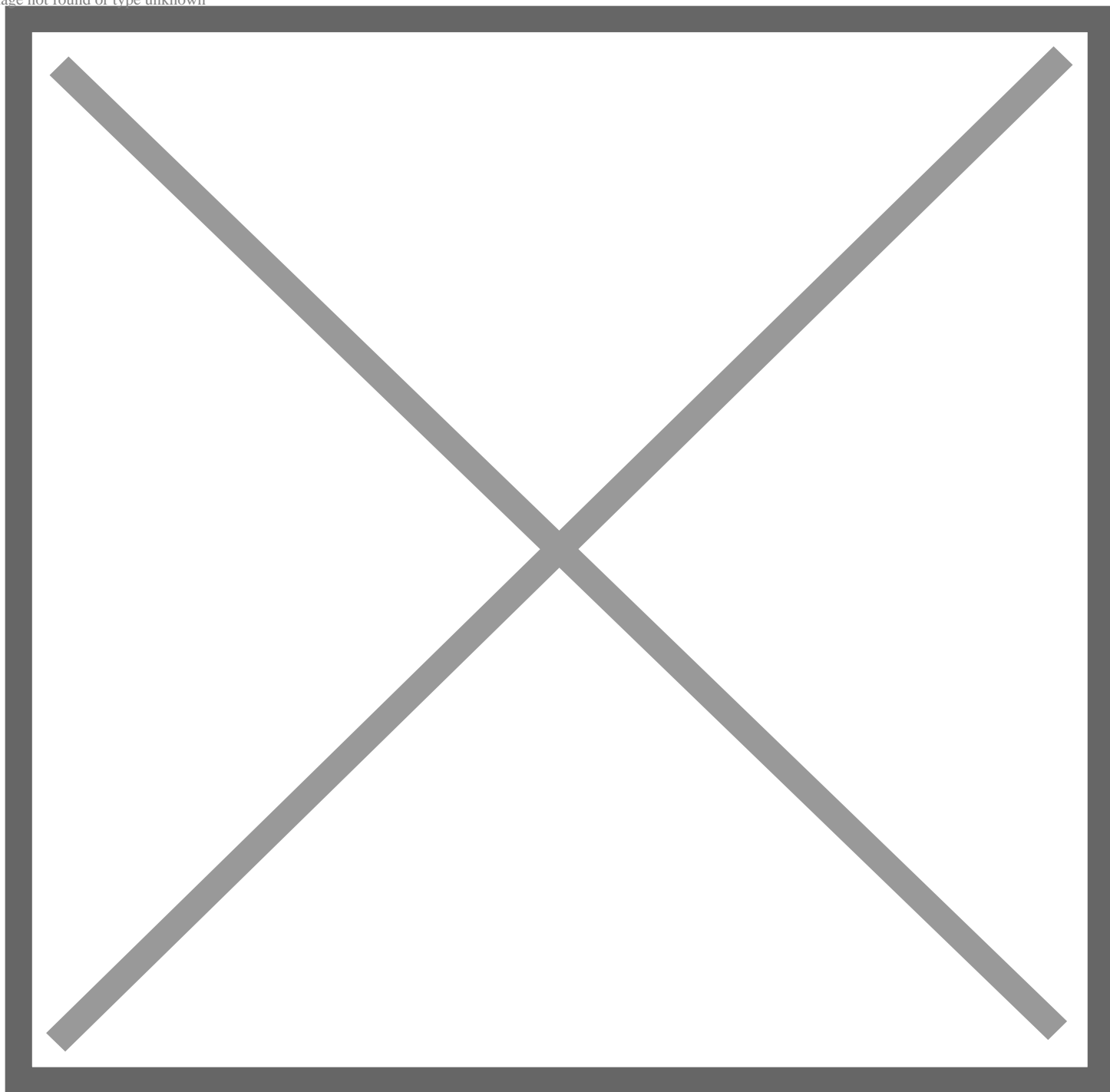
Yes, the Center for Food Safety spends their budget on expensive billboards that oppose human health initiatives.

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In social media, OCA has bots that spam the interwebs, blasting a common, repeated message over and over again. The goal? To make it look like there is widespread concern about a safe and effective strategy to limit numbers of disease-causing mosquitoes.

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Here we have organizations that present as food advocacy groups that really are anti-biotechnology groups. I can't wait for the day that these insect-limiting strategies are widely lauded for their success in curbing transmissible disease.

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