

# GE Ingredients & Labeling

Version 1.0: March 2021



## Reason for Standard

Genetically engineered (GE) foods and the production methods inherently associated with most GE foods raise environmental and health concerns.<sup>i,ii</sup> Ranging from the ecological and farmworker health impacts of exponential glyphosate use to concerns over consumption of unknown allergens and species, PCC has a long history of advocating for and advancing GE transparency so that consumers can make informed choices on the foods that they eat.<sup>iii</sup> Because many PCC members and shoppers express concerns about GE foods and production methods, PCC places a priority on organic and Non-GMO Project Verified certifications, in addition to GE transparency.<sup>iv</sup>

## Scope

This is a co-op wide, cross-departmental standard that applies to all high-risk, GE ingredients and all fresh eggs, meat, poultry, and milk.

## Standard

### 1. Products

- 1.1. No new food or health and body care products containing high-risk genetically engineered ingredients, crops and/or animals can be sold at PCC, unless certified organic, Non-GMO Project Verified, or non-GE/GMO verified through an approved certification.
- 1.2. All of PCC's fresh chicken, turkey, beef, pork, milk, and whole chicken eggs must be certified organic or Non-GMO Project Verified.
  - 1.2.1. For other fresh eggs, vendors are encouraged to pursue USDA organic certification or Non-GMO Project Verified certification, or at a minimum use feed that is organic or non-GMO.
- 1.3. Fresh produce that is at high risk of being genetically engineered must be certified organic or Non-GMO Project Verified unless in the event of supply shortages or industry barriers wherein independent testing and verification of non-GMO crop content must be provided and validated prior to distribution.

### 2. Labeling

- 2.1. All PCC products must comply with the labeling requirements established under the National Bioengineered Food Disclosure Standard (NBFDS) rule (7 CFR § 66 et seq.; [83 Fed. Reg. 65814](#)).
- 2.2. Any "bioengineered"/GE food products falling under PCC's NBFDS labeling requirements and authority must disclose GE content using ONLY the following textual statements: "bioengineered food(s)" or "contains a bioengineered food ingredient." Use of bioengineered symbol, QR codes, and 1-800 numbers for disclosure is not permitted on PCC products.
- 2.3. As permitted by law, PCC must encourage vendors to use textual statement for bioengineered disclosures.
- 2.4. Any and all "undetectable" bioengineered food products falling under PCC's NBFDS labeling requirements and authority must voluntarily be labeled as bioengineered pursuant to section 66.116 of the NBFDS rule.<sup>v</sup>

## Standard-Specific Glossary

**Bioengineered food** as defined by the NBFDS means:

(1) Subject to the factors, conditions, and limitations in paragraph (2) of this definition:

(i) A food that contains genetic material that has been modified through in vitro recombinant deoxyribonucleic acid (rDNA) techniques and for which the modification could not otherwise be obtained through conventional breeding or found in nature; provided that

(ii) Such a food does not contain modified genetic material if the genetic material is not detectable pursuant to § 66.9.

(2) A food that meets one of the following factors and conditions is not a bioengineered food.

(i) An incidental additive present in food at an insignificant level and that does not have any technical or functional effect in the food, as described in 21 CFR 101.100(a)(3).

**Fresh meats** include any and all meat, poultry, and game products sold without preservatives in the refrigerated meat section of PCC.

**Genetically Engineered (GE)/Genetically Modified Organism (GMO)** does not have a standardized definition. (In part, this has created some of the problems for achieving GE transparency and reaching consensus on how best to identify and communicate this with consumers.) Many authorities, however, would define GE food or GMOs as a living organism whose genetic material (otherwise known as DNA) has been artificially manipulated in a laboratory through genetic engineering. Genetic engineering creates combinations of plant, animal, bacteria, and virus genes that do not occur in nature or through traditional crossbreeding methods.

**High-Risk Genetically Engineered Crop Ingredients** are identified on the [Non-GMO Project](#) list of crops and inputs that are highly likely to be GE. These include, but are not limited to, canola, corn (except popcorn), papaya, soy, and sugar beet.

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<sup>i</sup> “GE Food & Your Health,” Center for Food Safety, accessed January 22, 2021, <https://www.centerforfoodsafety.org/issues/311/ge-foods/ge-food-and-your-health>.

<sup>ii</sup> Mike Coats, “Engineering An Environmental Disaster,” Earthjustice, March 27, 2015, <https://earthjustice.org/features/engineering-an-environmental-disaster-2>.

<sup>iii</sup> “Policy Advocacy: GMO’s and Nanotechnology,” PCC Community Markets, accessed January 22, 2021, <https://www.pccmarkets.com/sustainability/statements/gmos-and-nanotechnology/>.

<sup>iv</sup> “Label Lowdown: ‘Non-GMO,’” *PCC Community Markets* (blog), May 2020, <https://www.pccmarkets.com/sound-consumer/2020-05/label-lowdown-non-gmo/>.

<sup>v</sup> National Bioengineered Food Disclosure Standard, 7 CFR § 66.1, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2018-12-21/pdf/2018-27283.pdf>