


GMO Food Contamination is Forever

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A top executive at Aventis CropScience, maker of [StarLink Corn](#), said that **the food supply will never be rid of the new strain of corn** that the company genetically engineered at Research Triangle Park. The executive, John Wichtrich, called for a change in federal regulations to allow some level of the engineered StarLink corn in human food. The product is now approved only for animal feed and industrial products such as ethanol.

But the environmental watchdog who first discovered the new corn in food objected sharply. "Aventis broke the promise of biotechnology," said Larry Bohlen of Friends of the Earth in Washington, D.C. "They were supposed to improve the quality of our food, not cause so many problems and introduce so much risk."

Wichtrich, general manager of Aventis in RTP, said that 437 million additional bushels of StarLink have been found in storage, which is much more than previously thought. About 50 million bushels of StarLink corn were grown under license during 2000, and Starlink was inadvertently mixed into another 20 million bushels. Last fall, Bohlen discovered [StarLink corn in Kraft taco shells](#) at a Maryland grocery store. The discovery led to a recall of almost 300 food products. Now, Wichtrich said, "no matter how diligent our collective efforts are, we can never get to, or guarantee, 'zero.' "

Because the StarLink corn can never be cleaned out of the U.S. food supply, Wichtrich said, Aventis wants the Environmental Protection Agency to change its rules. The EPA now has a "zero-tolerance" policy, meaning it views any amount of the StarLink corn in the U.S. food supply as a violation.

One kernel of StarLink corn in a sample of 2,400 kernels would cause a load of corn to be rejected, Wichtrich said. EPA should give Aventis an exception or revise its policy to tolerate a certain level of StarLink in food, he said. But Bohlen said, "**Aventis is asking the government to legalize genetic pollution.**" Until the Centers for Disease Control finishes its study, no one will know whether the StarLink corn causes allergic reactions, he said.

CDC is investigating the claims of 44 people who said they got sick after eating corn products, he said. Wichtrich said only dry-milled corn products -- those made from corn meal, grits and flour -- are in danger of being contaminated. Wet milling, which produces corn syrup and oil, kills the protein, he said. Aventis, which employs 550 people at its North America headquarters in RTP, has taken hundreds of angry phone calls from farmers, grain elevator managers and food processors.

Aventis has 87 people working on rerouting the corn, and another group of scientists looking into the allergy question, Wichtrich said.

[Organic Consumers Association March 2002](#)

DR. MERCOLA'S COMMENT:

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While the StarLink corn debacle is not a serious issue for most people, it is an ominous example of how widely genetic engineering can penetrate our food supply. Once the genetic genie is out of the bottle, our current technology and resources won't be able to stuff it

back inside. If Monsanto or some other corporate giant develops a crop that does unleash some unanticipated problems, we are in big trouble, and no three wishes can save us. These were my related statements from last year:

Investigators have found that rats fed genetically modified potatoes had an increased thickening in the lining of their stomach and intestine and a weakening of their immune system. And now these mad scientists want to put vaccines into the plants. Sheer lunacy.

What these geniuses have failed to fully appreciate is that once these plants are growing, it is physically impossible to prevent them from pollinating other plants and contaminating them with these new proteins -- we have no clue of these proteins long-term consequences.

The entire process is mind-boggling. The vaccines they are using don't even work, yet they are willing to sacrifice the food supply for it. If this insanity continues, our grandchildren may not have access to any non-genetically modified food, and the health of our society will continue to decline rapidly.

One of the keys to health is good food. Although most of us don't choose to do so, we can still purchase real, unaltered food in this country. The future does not appear to provide that option.

Genetically modified foods did not exist prior to 1995. Ninety percent of the money Americans spend on food is spent on processed foods and seventy percent of processed foods have genetically modified foods in them. There are NO STUDIES with humans on what happens when one consumes genetically modified foods. The FDA has ASSUMED that they are equivalent to the original and never required any studies to have them approved. This is despite the fact that this technology has never existed in the history of the world before.

Absolutely brilliant! Especially in light of the US Federal track record on genetically engineered safety, which is terrible.

Last year Starlink corn was only approved for animal consumption -- NOT human consumption. This was due to a concern that it could cause allergies in humans. Well, Starlink corn wound up trapped in the human food supply, despite FDA precautions.

There are EIGHT different agencies in the US regulating biotechnology under TWELVE different sets of laws. NONE of the laws had biotechnology in mind when they were passed, as they are 40-50 years old.

This is one big disaster just waiting to happen.

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