



Alliance for Natural Health USA

6931 Arlington Road, Suite 304
Bethesda, MD 20814

email: office@anh-usa.org
tel: 800.230.7622
202.803.5119
fax: 202.315.5837
www.anh-usa.org

ANH-USA is a regional office of ANH-Intl

INTERNATIONAL
anhinternational.org

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Contact:

Darrell Rogers
202.803.5123
darrell@anh-usa.org

Consumers Want to Know What's in Their Food— Fight Now Goes to the Ballot Box

***California residents collect one million signatures
and put the GMO food labeling question on the ballot***

May 2, 2012—Today, the California Right to Know 2012 Ballot Initiative is delivering enough signatures to put the labeling of genetically modified foods on the ballot in November. The Alliance for Natural Health USA (ANH-USA) has joined the campaign's leadership and is assisting in planning and organizing this crucial effort.

Thousands of California residents collected nearly one million signatures, and are delivering them to state offices in Sacramento, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego. The campaign was begun to ensure that California's citizens be informed of what is in the food they are feeding to their families—particularly any genetically engineered foods or food products.

Gretchen DuBeau, ANH-USA's executive and legal director, said, "Polls consistently show that over 90% of consumers want to know if their food was produced using genetically modified organisms, or GMOs. The food industry, regulatory agencies, and even our state and federal representatives have let us down for decades, so the people are now taking action."

At today's rallies, the campaign will reveal the final number of signatures, and supporters in four cities will hear from local leaders, farmers, concerned parents, sustainable businesses, and other noted individuals.

A recent study found traces of Bt toxin—a genetically modified insecticide implanted in corn and other crops to ward off crop pests—in the blood of 93% of pregnant mothers. The toxin was also found in 80% of umbilical cord blood. The toxin is transferred to humans through the consumption of meat, milk, and eggs from livestock fed GMO corn.

Recent state legislative efforts were threatened with lawsuits from the biotech industry, while congressional efforts have been outspent by the opposition's massive lobbying budgets. "We can't rely on FDA or USDA to review GMOs for safety or labeling given their cozy relationship with the biotech industry," said DuBeau.

That relationship was evident twenty years ago, when Michael R. Taylor, then US Food and Drug Administration's Deputy Commissioner for Policy, declared that genetically modified food was "substantially equivalent" to naturally grown food and therefore should not be subject to any additional regulations. Taylor is currently FDA Deputy Commissioner for Foods, but before moving to FDA, he was an attorney representing the biotechnology company Monsanto, and between jobs at FDA, he served as Monsanto's Vice President for Public Policy.

"All other avenues for GMO labeling have been intimidated and bullied by the opposition," DuBeau continued. "We will dedicate everything we can to make sure California residents are given the right to know what's in their food.

"The opposition may have a limitless budget, but Californians have limitless passion and knowledge, and such a superb ability to organize on this issue that we believe will win the vote in November," DuBeau concluded.

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About the Alliance for Natural Health USA (ANH-USA) ■ <http://anh-usa.org>

The Alliance for Natural Health USA is part of an international organization dedicated to promoting natural, sustainable healthcare through good science and good law. We protect the right of natural health practitioners to practice, and the right of consumers to choose the healthcare options and treatment modalities they prefer, including complementary and alternative medicine. As a membership-based organization, we unite consumers, practitioners, and industry to speak with a common voice and have worked since 1992 to shift the medical paradigm from an exclusive focus on surgery, drugs and other conventional techniques to an "integrative" approach incorporating food, dietary supplements and lifestyle changes.

About the California Right to Know 2012 Ballot Initiative <http://www.carighttoknow.org>

Consumers have a right to know what's in the food we eat and feed our children, including whether food is genetically engineered. We all should be able to make informed choices, and have the ability to choose whether to buy genetically engineered food or not. The California Right to Know Genetically Engineered Food Act is simple: The initiative would require food sold in retail outlets such as grocery stores to be labeled if it is produced with genetic engineering.