

Mystery in the Mega-mart

Written by Bob Alexander

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A man in a restaurant says, “Hey waiter, what’s this fish doing in my strawberries?”

The waiter replies, “Genes from the arctic flounder are spliced into strawberries because the fish lives in water where other fish freeze to death. But the arctic flounder has unique genes that allow it to produce a sort of anti-freeze so it survives. These genes are put into strawberries to make them resistant to cold. Bon a petit.”

The man thinks for a moment and says, “Give me the soup that has the fly in it.”

But seriously folks ...

Unlike Rand Paul I have no problem being upfront with the fact that I’m about to cut and paste like crazy from Wikipedia.

“Genetic modification involves the mutation, insertion, or deletion of genes. When genes are inserted, they usually come from a different species, which is a form of horizontal gene transfer. However, other methods exploit natural forms of gene transfer, such as the ability of *Agrobacterium* to transfer genetic material to plants, or the ability of lentiviruses to transfer genes to animal cells.”

Now let’s look up *Agrobacterium*.

“*Agrobacterium* ... uses horizontal gene transfer to cause tumors in plants. *Agrobacterium* is well known for its ability to transfer DNA between itself and plants, and for this reason it has become an important tool for genetic engineering.”

I don’t know about you but I’m not wild about eating food made using anything that causes tumors.

If you thought *Agrobacterium* is spooky ... take a peek at lentiviruses

Lentiviruses can deliver a significant amount of viral RNA into the DNA of the host cell and have the unique ability among retroviruses of being able to infect non-dividing cells, so they are one of the most efficient methods of a gene delivery vector. HIV, SIV (Simian immunodeficiency virus), and FIV (Feline immunodeficiency virus) are all examples of lentiviruses.”

Once again ... if given a choice ... I don’t want to eat any of that stuff regardless of how much ketchup you dump on it. If given a choice ... I’d like a label on my food that tells me what it is I’m eating.

Voters in Washington state recently defeated Initiative 522. According to Wiki, “If approved, I-522 would have required that non-exempt foods and agricultural products offered for retail sale

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state "clearly and conspicuously" on the front of the package if they were genetically-engineered, contain or might have contained genetically-engineered ingredients."

Now why the hell would anyone not want to know what they were eating? After election night it looks like 55% of Washington's voters resoundingly don't. But the weird thing is that in mid-September 66 percent of voters endorsed the initiative.

What happened?

Well ... the opponents of I-522 raised 22 million dollars to defeat the initiative, setting a record for fundraising by one side in an initiative, and making it the most expensive initiative in Washington State's history. Opponents of the initiative outspent supporters by about 3 to 1. And guess how much of that 22 million came from Washington State residents?

\$550 dollars.

Where'd the rest of the millions of dollars come from? Here are just some of the usual suspects.

Bayer CropScience
Bumble Bee Foods
Campbell Soup
Coca-Cola
ConAgra Foods
Del Monte
DuPont
General Mills
Hershey
Hormel Foods
Kellogg's
Monsanto
Nestlé
Ocean Spray Cranberries, Inc
PepsiCo Inc.
and The J. M. Smucker Company

Ultimately they spent more than \$30 for every 'No' vote. Three out of four voters who had seen only ads for one side or the other planned to vote in the direction of the ads they had seen. Guess which side had the deep pockets to flood the radio and TV markets making sure their ads were the ones people saw? This just in ... Money can change the outcome of an election.

Is this a perfect example of how the more money spent on political ads ... the voters somehow get dumber?

No.

This is what happens when psychopaths spend millions of dollars lying to voters, and their

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opposition doesn't have the cash it takes to buy the radio and TV time to counter each and every lie. Psychopaths, because they lie every single goddamn day, at the end of the day, are ahead of the game.

The opponents claimed the new labeling laws would raise food prices. Lie.

The opponents claimed the new labeling laws would "cost taxpayer millions." Lie.

The opponents claimed the new labeling laws would require pet food to be labeled. Lie.

The opponents claimed the new labeling laws would ban GE crops. Lie.

When the bad guys have unimaginably deep pockets, there's no way we can outspend them to refute their lies. For that kind of protection we would need Real Journalists to take our side against the corporatocracy. But in these strange and terrible times ... We seem to be fresh out of Real Journalists. Journalism these days is not on our side.

The Seattle Times lied on its editorial page when they endorsed voting no on I-522. The editorial said, "For lots of hungry people in the world the existence of such [GE] crop options has meant higher yields and plants with disease and pest resistance."

The truth is genetically engineered crops are more costly to produce. Charles Benbrook, Ph.D, Chief Scientist for The Organic Center, in his study, Impacts of Genetically Engineered Crops on Pesticide Use: The First Thirteen Years, found farmers applied 318 million more pounds of pesticides over the last 13 years as a result of planting genetically engineered seeds. Genetically engineered crop acres required over 26% more pounds of pesticides per acre than acres planted with non GE crops. How are the poor farmers in third-world countries supposed to buy the millions of pounds of chemicals needed to grow GE crops?

The Seattle Times editorial ends by saying, "In the meantime, Washington voters and consumers can serve their best interests by voting No on I-522. Make a much stronger point by buying organic or starting a garden."

So if we really care about what's in our food we should patronize organic grocery stores or grow our own food. But if we're wandering through the aisles of our local mega-mart, we don't need to know what's in our food. Yeah ... Corporations are people my friends. Mean, lying, money-grubbing miserable people.

Why are these food companies so desperate to conceal from us the ingredients they are putting in our food that they're willing to spend tens of millions of dollars to keep us in the dark about what we're eating? It doesn't take a lot of brain power to figure out if we knew what was in the food ... we wouldn't eat it. So ... they're not going to tell us. As the Monsanto Bandit would say, "Labels ... Labels ... We don' need to show you no steinking labels."

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<http://www.superbeans.com>