Genetically Modified Organisms

Who would have imagined it? These GMOS are creating such confusion one just can’t ignore them. Everyone talks about them: the papers, the TV... laws are being passed in parliaments.

Even I have started to read the labels on the products to see if the things I eat contain GMOS.

I like corn but I must confess, I am a little troubled by the thought it could be different from the corn I have always eaten until now. However, I feel reassured by the fact that in Europe there are laws that control the use and consumption of genetically modified organisms. This is not the case in the United States. Over there everyone is starting to use GMOS. They are much less worried. They don’t care that such organisms might prove dangerous.
WHO KNOWS WHO IS RIGHT? THE EUROPEANS WITH THEIR CAUTION, OR THE AMERICANS WITH THEIR NONCHALANCE?

WELL, ACTUALLY, I DON'T THINK I HAVE HEARD OF A SINGLE CASE OF A PERSON FALLING SICK AS A RESULT OF HAVING CONSUMED GMOS. BUT I MIGHT HAVE MISSED THAT NEWS.

WHAT ARE THESE GMOS, ANYWAY?

IT SAYS HERE: "TRANSGENIC FOOD IS DERIVED FROM PLANTS OR ANIMALS THAT HAVE BEEN IMPLANTED WITH DNA FROM OTHER STRAINS OR SPECIES THAT MODIFIES THEIR GENETIC CODE."

AS A MATTER OF FACT, THOSE WHO SUPPORT GENETIC MANIPULATION CLAIM THAT BY MODIFYING THE DNA OF CERTAIN PLANTS YOU CAN CREATE VARIETIES MORE RESISTANT TO PARASITES OR DISEASE AND THEREBY IMPROVE THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF THE PRODUCE.
SEE HERE:
THEM HAVE MODIFIED THE DNA OF SOME SORT OF NUT AND REMOVED A PROTEIN THAT CAUSES ALLERGIES. THIS NUT IS NOW SAFER, OR TAKE SOY AS EXAMPLE: IT HAS BEEN IMPLANTED WITH A GERM GENE THAT MAKES SOY MORE RESISTANT TO HERBICIDES SO THE PLANT CAN BE SPRAYED WITH HERBICIDES WITHOUT SUFFERING HARM. WHEREAS THE GENETICALLY MODIFIED CORN PRODUCES TOXINS OF A CERTAIN BACTERIA AND KILLS SOME HARMFUL INSECTS: THIS LEADS TO THE REDUCTION IN USE OF PESTICIDES THAT ARE NOXIOUS TO ANIMALS AND EVEN TO MAN.

NAY, IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE.

THOSE SCIENTISTS AND ECOLOGISTS WHO ARE CONTRARY TO THE GMOS ARGUE IT ISN'T TRUE THAT TRANSGENIC PLANTS HAVE REDUCED THE USE OF PESTICIDES.

WHAT IS MORE, THEY CLAIM WE DON'T KNOW ENOUGH ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE GMOS AND WE CAN'T THEREFORE PREDICT, AT PRESENT, THE DAMAGE THAT SUCH ORGANISMS COULD BRING TO FUTURE GENERATIONS.

I'VE RECORDED A TV TRANSMISSION WITH THAT BIOLOGIST WHO IS OPPOSED TO THE USE OF GMOS.
THERE WAS ALSO AN INTERNATIONAL APPEAL CONCERNING THE DANGERS OF PATENTING LIVING SPECIES.

... IT’S CALLED THE PRINCIPLE OF PRECAUTION!

UNTIL WE ARE SURE THAT THE GMOS HAVE NO HARMFUL EFFECT, THEY SHOULDN’T BE GROWN IN OPEN FIELDS OR SOLD ON THE MARKET. BUT THE REAL PROBLEM SEEMS TO LIE JUST THERE. SOME BIOTECHNOLOGICAL COMPANIES AND A FEW AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD MULTINATIONALS WHO SELL TRANSGENIC FOOD, ARE STRONG SUPPORTERS OF GMOS.

NOW, HOW DO YOU ASK A COMPANY TO STOP MAKING PROFITS?

BESIDES, THERE IS THE PROBLEM OF PROVIDING ENOUGH FOOD FOR MANKIND. TRANSGENIC FOOD COULD BE A SOLUTION TO THIS PROBLEM: IS TRADITIONAL AGRICULTURE STILL AN OPTION AT ALL?

TODAY, WE ARE 6 BILLION PEOPLE ON THIS PLANET AND GOING UP TO 9 IN TWENTY YEARS TIME. ALREADY NOW, 800 MILLION PEOPLE SUFFER FROM MALNUTRITION.

TAKE CHINA: WITH 23% OF THE WORLD’S POPULATION, AS I HEAR, IT HAS ONLY 7% OF THE ARABLE LAND.

THE GMOS OFFER A MUCH HIGHER YIELD ... AND CAN BE IMPROVED AT WILL.
WHAT WAS THE VITAMIN ISSUE? 125 million people all over the world suffer from vitamin deficiency due to bad nutrition. In Switzerland, experiments are being carried out with transgenic rice, so called golden rice, modified with the genes of jonquil and some bacteria to make it richer in vitamin A. Well then, this could solve the vitamin problem.

NO, IT JUST DOESN’T SEEM RIGHT. WHAT DOES THE BIOLOGIST SAY?

... THE PROBLEM WITH THE GMOS IS THAT IN ORDER TO HAVE CROPS WITH CONSTANT CHARACTERISTICS, THE TRANSGENIC SEEDS HAVE TO BE PURCHASED EVERY YEAR FROM THE PRODUCING COMPANIES.

THIS IS PARTLY DUE TO THE FACT THAT THE COMPANY DOESN’T WANT TO SELL ITS SEEDS ONLY ONCE BUT WANTS THE FARMER TO KEEP COMING BACK FOR SEEDS EVERY YEAR, SO THE COMPANY TRIES IN EVERY WAY TO MAKE THE TRADITIONAL SEEDS USELESS.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE FARMER’S FREEDOM?
The growers become heavily dependent on the agro-chemical company that supplies them with seeds and other necessary chemicals, putting their fate at the mercy of the company.

One must know that there are only a few, a very few, such companies.

Those in favour of the GMOs say that antitrust bills, similar to those in the U.S., could be brought forward or competition could be sustained through special funds.

Is this really a viable option? Maybe the real problem is gene patenting.

In the U.S., 2000 patents have already been issued and there are 6,500 requests deposited solely by Celera Genomics...

...the famous scientific company that has drawn almost the entire human genome map.

More funds should be granted for basic research and no gene patents should be allowed.

It is always the same problem: is there a way to solve the problems of humankind with solidarity and mutual help...
... OR MUST WE ACCEPT IT FOR A FACT THAT THE SYSTEM FUNCTIONS ONLY IF SOMEONE GETS SOMETHING OUT OF IT?

IN THE MEANTIME, I KEEP CHECKING THE LABELS.

BUT WHAT IF THE PATENT PROS ARE RIGHT?

I ASK MYSELF, IS IT APPROPRIATE TO PATENT THE GENETIC PATRIMONY OF LIVING CREATURES, OR NOT?

Vote!

Genetically Modified Organisms?

Yes  No

% Yes % No