

# STATE OF NEW YORK

4384

2017-2018 Regular Sessions

## IN ASSEMBLY

February 2, 2017

Introduced by M. of A. TITUS, GLICK, PEOPLES-STOKES, MONTESANO, COOK --  
Multi-Sponsored by -- M. of A. HIKIND, PERRY, SKARTADOS, THIELE --  
read once and referred to the Committee on Consumer Affairs and  
Protection

AN ACT to amend the general business law, in relation to requiring the  
labeling of all consumable commodities containing genetically modified  
organisms

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assem-  
bly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. The general business law is amended by adding a new section  
2 391-u to read as follows:

3 § 391-u. Consumable commodities; the requirement of clear and conspic-  
4 uous labeling. 1. Definitions. As used in this section, the following  
5 terms shall have the following meanings:

6 (a) "Food" means (i) articles used for food or drink for humans or  
7 other animals, (ii) chewing gum, (iii) infant formula, and (iv) articles  
8 used for components of any such article.

9 (b) "Distributor" means a person or entity that sells, supplies,  
10 furnishes or transports food intended for human consumption in this  
11 state that such person or entity does not produce.

12 (c) "Genetically modified organism (GMO)" means an organism whose  
13 genetic characteristics have been altered by the insertion of a modified  
14 gene or a gene from another organism using the techniques of genetic  
15 engineering.

16 (d) "Genetic engineering" means a process by which a food or food  
17 ingredient that is produced from an organism or organisms in which the  
18 genetic material has been changed through the application of: (i) In  
19 vitro nucleic acid techniques, including recombinant DNA techniques and  
20 the direct injection of nucleic acid into cells or organelles; or (ii)  
21 fusion of cells, including protoplast fusion, or hybridization tech-  
22 niques that overcome natural physiological, reproductive or recombina-

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets  
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 tion barriers, where the donor cells or protoplasts do not fall within  
2 the same taxonomic group, in a way that does not occur by natural multi-  
3 plication or natural recombination.

4 (e) "Infant formula" means a milk-based or soy-based powder, concen-  
5 trated liquid or ready-to-feed substitute for human breast milk that is  
6 intended for infant consumption and is commercially available.

7 (f) "Label" means a display of written, printed or graphic matter upon  
8 the immediate container of any article, provided a requirement made by  
9 or under authority of this chapter that any information or other word or  
10 statement appear on the label shall not be considered to be complied  
11 with unless such information or other word or statement also appears on  
12 the outside container or wrapper, if any, of the retail package of such  
13 article, or is easily legible through the outside container or wrapper.

14 (g) "Labeling" means all labels and other written, printed or graphic  
15 matter (i) upon any article or any of its containers or wrappers, or  
16 (ii) accompanying such article; provided, if an article is alleged to be  
17 misbranded because the labeling is misleading, or if an advertisement is  
18 alleged to be false because it is misleading, then, in determining  
19 whether the labeling or advertisement is misleading, there shall be  
20 taken into account, among other things, not only representations made or  
21 suggested by statement, word, design, device or sound or any combination  
22 thereof, but also the extent to which the labeling or advertisement  
23 fails to reveal facts material in the light of such representations or  
24 material with respect to consequences which may result from the use of  
25 the article to which the labeling or advertisement relates under the  
26 conditions of use prescribed in the labeling or advertisement thereof or  
27 under such conditions of use as are customary or usual, and provided the  
28 representation of a drug, in its labeling or advertisement, as an anti-  
29 septic shall be considered to be a representation that it is a germi-  
30 cide, except in the case of a drug purporting to be, or represented as,  
31 an antiseptic for inhibitory use as a wet dressing, ointment or dusting  
32 powder or for such other use as involves prolonged contact with the  
33 body.

34 (h) "Manufacturer" means a person who produces food intended for human  
35 consumption or seed or seed stock that is intended to produce food for  
36 human consumption and sells such item to a retailer or distributor.

37 (i) "Raw agricultural commodity" means any food in its raw or natural  
38 state, including all fruits that are washed, colored or otherwise treat-  
39 ed in their unpeeled natural form prior to marketing.

40 (j) "Retailer" means a person or entity that engages in the sale of  
41 food intended for human consumption to a consumer.

42 (k) "Sale" means any and every sale and includes (i) manufacture,  
43 processing, packing, canning, bottling or any other production, prepara-  
44 tion or putting up; (ii) exposure, offer or any other proffer; (iii)  
45 holding, storing or any other possessing; (iv) dispensing, giving,  
46 delivering, serving or any other supplying; and (v) applying, adminis-  
47 tering or any other using.

48 2. Labeling of consumable commodities. (a) Consumable commodities  
49 shall be labeled as follows: (i) In the case of such food that is sold  
50 wholesale and is not intended for retail sale, on the bill of sale  
51 accompanying such food during shipping, with the clear and conspicuous  
52 words: "Produced with Genetic Engineering";

53 (ii) in the case of such food for retail sale contained in a package,  
54 including infant formula, with the clear and conspicuous words:  
55 "Produced with Genetic Engineering";

1 (iii) in the case of such food that is a raw agricultural commodity,  
2 on the package offered for retail sale or, in the case of any such  
3 commodity that is not separately packaged or labeled, on the bill of  
4 sale or invoice for such commodity and on the retail store shelf or bin  
5 that holds such commodity displayed for sale with the clear and conspic-  
6 uous words: "Produced with Genetic Engineering"; and

7 (iv) in the case of any such seed or seek stock, on the container  
8 holding the seed or seed stock displayed for sale or on any label iden-  
9 tifying ownership or possession of the commodity with the clear and  
10 conspicuous words: "Produced with Genetic Engineering".

11 Such food labeling shall be displayed in the same size and font as the  
12 ingredients in the nutritional facts panel on the food label.

13 (b) The requirements of paragraph (a) of this subdivision shall not  
14 apply to any of the following: (i) Alcoholic beverages;

15 (ii) Food intended for human consumption that is not packaged for  
16 retail sale and that either: (A) is a processed food prepared and  
17 intended for immediate consumption, or (B) is served, sold or otherwise  
18 provided in any restaurant or other food facility that is primarily  
19 engaged in the sale of food prepared and intended for immediate consump-  
20 tion;

21 (iii) Farm products that are sold by a farmer or the farmer's agent to  
22 a consumer at a pick-your-own farm, roadside stand, on-farm market or  
23 farmers' market; and

24 (iv) Food consisting entirely of, or derived entirely from, an animal  
25 that was not genetically engineered, regardless of whether such animal  
26 was fed or injected with any genetically-engineered food or any drug  
27 that was produced through means of genetic engineering.

28 (c) Any person selling, offering for sale, manufacturing or distribut-  
29 ing in this state any food, seed or seed stock required to be labeled as  
30 provided in paragraph (a) of this subdivision shall be responsible for  
31 ensuring that such food, seed or seed stock is so labeled.

32 (d) The provisions of paragraph (a) of this subdivision shall be  
33 enforced, within available appropriations, by the department of agricul-  
34 ture and markets.

35 (e) Any person found to knowingly violate paragraph (a) of this subdivi-  
36 vision shall be liable for a civil penalty not to exceed one thousand  
37 dollars per day, per product. Calculation of such civil penalty shall  
38 not be made or multiplied by the number of individual packages of the  
39 same product displayed or offered for retail sale. Civil penalties  
40 assessed under this paragraph shall accrue and be assessed per each  
41 uniquely named, designated or marketed product.

42 (f) Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (a) of this subdivi-  
43 sion, a retailer shall not be penalized or otherwise held liable for the  
44 failure to label pursuant to paragraph (a) of this subdivision unless  
45 (i) the retailer is the producer or the manufacturer of the genetical-  
46 ly-engineered food, seed or seed stock and sells the genetically-engi-  
47 neered food under a brand it owns, or (ii) the retailer's failure to  
48 label was knowing and wilful.

49 (g) In any action in which it is alleged that a retailer has violated  
50 the provisions of paragraph (a) of this subdivision, it shall be a  
51 defense that such retailer reasonably relied on (i) any disclosure  
52 concerning genetically-engineered foods contained in the bill of sale or  
53 invoice provided by the wholesaler or distributor pursuant to paragraph  
54 (a) of this subdivision, or (ii) the lack of any such disclosure.

55 3. Rules and regulations. (a) The department of agriculture and  
56 markets shall enforce the identification of genetically modified organ-

1 isms (GMOs) in consumable commodities and shall promulgate rules and  
2 regulations in furtherance of the provisions set forth in this section;  
3 and

4 (b) The department of agriculture and markets shall adopt any rules  
5 and regulations necessary for a special task force to be implemented  
6 with the charge of investigating the full effects, both harmful and  
7 beneficial, of using genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in consumable  
8 commodities.

9 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately.