

STATE OF NEW YORK

5002

2019-2020 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

February 6, 2019

Introduced by M. of A. TITUS, GLICK, PEOPLES-STOKES, MONTESANO, COOK --
Multi-Sponsored by -- M. of A. PERRY, 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-
23 tion barriers, where the donor cells or protoplasts do not fall within

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

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1 the same taxonomic group, in a way that does not occur by natural multi-
2 plication or natural recombination.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

55 (iii) in the case of such food that is a raw agricultural commodity,
56 on the package offered for retail sale or, in the case of any such

1 commodity that is not separately packaged or labeled, on the bill of
2 sale or invoice for such commodity and on the retail store shelf or bin
3 that holds such commodity displayed for sale with the clear and conspic-
4 uous words: "Produced with Genetic Engineering"; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

53 3. Rules and regulations. (a) The department of agriculture and
54 markets shall enforce the identification of genetically modified organ-
55 isms (GMOs) in consumable commodities and shall promulgate rules and

1 regulations in furtherance of the provisions set forth in this section;
2 and

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

8 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately.