

Information to help you capitalize on markets  
for organic and non-genetically modified products

## HIGHLIGHTS

- 4 **Straus Family Creamery becomes first company to be verified through The Non-GMO Project**
- 5 **Judge orders moratorium on sale of GM alfalfa seed**
- 6 **French study reveals liver and kidney damage from approved GM corn**
- 8 **Nearly 76 million certified organic acres planted worldwide**
- 12 **USDA pulls rice seed that may contain GM material**
- 14 **California bill would grant protection from genetic contamination**

View past articles from

***The Organic & Non-GMO Report***

on our website,

[www.non-gmoreport.com](http://www.non-gmoreport.com)

## Verification aims to protect natural and organic foods from GMOs, assure consumers

Speaking at The Non-GMO Project meeting, Dr. John Fagan, of FoodChain Global Advisors, said, "As use of GMOs grows in conventional agriculture, natural and organic companies are looking for tools enabling them to take GMO risk by the horns and deal with it effectively. The Non-GMO Project provides those tools."

### **Non-GMO verification is the heart of The Non-GMO Project.**

FoodChain Global Advisors will oversee verification and provide technical assistance and information technologies to aid the process. "We work closely and confidentially with manufacturers enabling them to assess the status of their products and avoid GMO risk," said Fagan.

Fagan gave an overview of the non-GMO verification process. Each ingredient in a food product will be evaluated to determine its non-GMO status, as well as raw materials going into each ingredient, thus ensuring traceability back to the farm. The verification process makes use of a manufacturer's existing documentation, such as organic

certification records and GMO test results, thereby avoiding the effort and cost of preparing new documents.

Similarly, Fagan said the process respects manufacturers' existing relationships with service providers, such as GMO testing labs and certifiers. Also, the verification database is structured to prevent redundancy. Any ingredient need only be assessed once, thereby reducing costs to all users of that ingredient. "All stakeholders are sensitive to making the process practical, smooth, and economical," said Fagan. The entire verification process is secure to protect manufacturers' confidential business information and organic certification status.

### **Practical standard that satisfies consumers**

Products will be verified to a non-GMO standard that aims to be practical for industry and credible for consumers. Specific GMO thresholds such as 0.1% and 0.5% were discussed at the meeting. Fagan said such thresholds and other parameters of the program would be established through the consensus of the project's techni-

cal advisory board, which is represented by industry members.

At this point, the non-GMO verification program "is ready for beta testing," said Fagan. "During this phase, the project's technical advisory board will work with participating companies to fine-tune the verification process."

Fagan encouraged industry members to participate in this stage. "This is when your input will be most influential in defining the process and standard."

Non-GMO verification may be easier for some companies than others. "For those already working to control GMO risk, their systems may need only minor tweaking. For those not actively addressing GMOs, there will be a learning curve," said Fagan.

Overall, he described the non-GMO verification process as economical, efficient, vendor-friendly, confidential, user-friendly, fast, and reliable.

Products going through non-GMO verification will first be placed on a "white" list, and once the process is complete, companies can place The Non-GMO Project seal on their products.

"The Non-GMO Project enables manufacturers to implement systems that will protect their products from GMO risk, now and continuing into the future," said Fagan. ■