

YUNMUN XXX

World Food Programme

Topic 2: Genetically Modified Organisms

Ever since the Flavr Savr tomato, the first commercialized Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) food, was approved for sale in 1994, GMOs have been a hot topic in the food world. Their advocates believe the advantages presented by GMOs should place them at the front of all food stores, while their critics are just as outspoken against them. Some companies have gone so far as to pick a side in the debate, as did the restaurant-chain Chipotle when they announced in 2015 that none of their foods would contain GMOs, claiming the reasoning to be to maintain their food's integrity.¹

The question behind all of this is what makes GMOs such a controversial topic? Is the addition of certain genetics into food able to supply humans with nutrients they weren't able to receive prior? Or is the issue that with foreign genetics, foreign issues might come as well? Do we need to trust our food 100%, or should we make necessary sacrifices in order to ensure what many consider the "best" product?

The WFP has been dealing with this question for a number of years. In using GMOs, there is an ensured supply of food that is ready to be distributed, and ready to be recreated quicker than regular food can be made. In 2002, during a food shortage in many countries in Africa as a result of a drought, the UN released a statement regarding food distribution in the area. It said that the WFP had received donations of food to distribute, some containing GMOs. When informed, some countries took the food with no hesitation, while others had reservations about the food, even with many of their citizens starving.² Even as of today, the WFP has no general policy on GMOs, or if countries should be forced to accept them in times of crisis or not.

Your task here is to represent your country's view on the issue of GMOs, which will set the framework for our potential discussion. The important questions to consider when writing your paper are:

- Does your country have an official policy on GMOs? If so, what is it and why led them to choose it?
- What are the advantages and/or disadvantages of GMOs in general? What about specifically with regard to food distribution on a large scale?
- Should the WFP have a policy on whether or not countries suffering should be forced to accept the GMOs in order to alleviate the suffering? Why or why not?

¹<https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2015/04/27/402632212/chipotle-says-adios-to-gmos-as-food-industry-strips-away-ingredients>

²<http://www.fao.org/english/newsroom/news/2002/8660-en.html>

- Should our resources be used to try and make GMOs more acceptable on a wider scale? Or does the responsibility fall on another group?

I remind you that you are representing your country's view and not your own. Additionally, you should make yourself familiar with the guidelines for these papers and for the conference itself, all of which can be found in the YUNMUN handbook. Finally, plagiarism is not allowed, and all papers will be submitted to turnitin.com.

Good luck in your research, and looking forward to debating these important issues!

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