

## **Genetically Modified (GM) Food**

Scientists can change the DNA of seeds to change crops, fruits and vegetables. These foods are genetically engineered to make them grow faster and be resistant to disease and predators. However, GM foods are controversial because some argue they are harmful to our health and the environment.

### **Genetically Modified (GM) Food: Advantages**

Farmers can produce crops that can grow bigger and faster.

Some GM crops are more resistant to disease or insects.

This could be important for food production in developing countries.

Faster growing cereals, fruits and vegetables will mean more profit.

GM foods can be modified to look perfect.

They may be more attractive to customers.

### **Summary**

Genetically-modified foods have many advantages. Firstly, farmers can grow faster and bigger crops. This may be especially beneficial in countries with food shortages, as GM crops may produce more food. Secondly, some GM crops are more resistant to disease or insects. This can also help to increase the size of harvest and potentially make crops cheaper.

Faster growing cereals, fruits and vegetables will mean more profit. Clearly, the companies who engineer the seeds will make lots of money selling them. However, farmers may also make more money if they can grow more produce. In addition, shops may make more money because GM foods can be modified to look perfect, so they may be more attractive to customers.

## **Genetically Modified (GM) Food: Disadvantages**

There may be risks involved in the genetic engineering of foods.

GM crops might change whole ecosystems.

Food chains could be broken if crops are resistant to predators.

Organic foods are produced without chemicals or genetic modification.

Organic farming may be slower and more expensive.

However, the environment is not damaged by fertilisers or pesticides.

### **Summary**

There are some significant downsides to the genetic engineering of foods. Firstly, GM crops can damage whole ecosystems. For example, some GM crops are designed to be poisonous to insects, which may lead to population numbers declining. This would then hurt the small animals that eat the insects, and then the larger animals that eat the small ones.

Furthermore, it is possible to produce organic foods without chemicals or genetic modification. While organic farming may be slower and more expensive, the food produced is safer to eat and does not damage the ecosystem. In addition, organic food is grown without the use of fertilisers or pesticides which damage the environment.

### **Summary**

Biotechnology companies all over the world are developing different types of genetically modified (GM) crops. However, not enough is known about these crops on our health and the environment. Interfering with nature in this way should be prohibited.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?