

MY ^{RIGHT} _{TO} SAFE FOOD

Foe in your food
Mothers Wake Up....
Safeguard Your Children

India's First GM Food Crop Bt Brinjal
likely to be on your platter now

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Karnataka's 4000 years of Udupi Mattu Gulla Brinjal faces grave threat of extinction

The problem is that once Bt Brinjal enters the market, there is no way you can distinguish it from the normal ones. Your vegetable vendor will never be able to sell you the normal Brinjal that you are so used to buying. Moreover, once the Bt gene is out, there is no way to call it back into the bottle.

To make matters worse, the GEAC (Genetic Engineering Approval Committee) the Indian regulatory body, a rubber stamp for Biotech industry has given permission to conduct multi-location trials on Karnataka's famed traditional Brinjal varieties - Udupi Gulla. Cultivated for its special taste and unique flavour in the Udupi district of Karnataka, these strains are tied to such strong socio-cultural traditions that even today the Gulla Brinjal variety is offered to Lord Krishna on festive paryaya ceremonies. Brinjal and plants of related species are used extensively in Ayurveda and Siddha. The entry of Bt Brinjal will put into question the efficacy of Indian medicinal systems. Brinjal is also documented to have medicinal properties, used for treatment of Diabetes Type B etc.

Tracing out the antiquity of the cultivation and use of Brinjal in India, Ramesh Bhat of the Centre for Science, Society and Culture, Hyderabad, writes in a detailed paper in the journal Asian Agri-History that Gulla varieties (especially Mattu Gulla) are a perfect example of 'plant-God-science' relationship. "The example of Mattu Gulla shows how local farmers can choose a variety that meets their local needs and preferences, and is best suited to their specific local ecosystems. The practices adopted by farmers of Udupi have a scientific basis - both traditional and modern."

Realising the uniqueness of the Mattu Gulla Brinjal, the Karnataka State Department of Horticulture is trying to preserve the genetic wealth by seeking a geographical indication for the Gulla strains. Ironically, the same variety for which GI is being sought by the Karnataka government is now ready for genetic plunder. The GKVK University of Agricultural Science and Technology, Bangalore, is trying to introduce a Bt gene into the Gulla strains, thereby contaminating the genetic make-up of the traditional variety.

The uniqueness of the Gulla varieties, preserved for over four thousand years by local farmers, awaits erosion at the hands of agricultural biotechnologists.

Why worry about this Bt Brinjal, some might ask. Isn't it necessary for improving production and productivity, some of you might argue:

First of all, there is no shortage of Brinjal. Nor does the Bt gene increase productivity and production; there aren't publicly available studies to check the claims of the companies, anyway.

But what it does for sure is bring India's first genetically altered food crop to your dining table and unleash a whole bunch of new diseases. It is time you woke up before it is too late.

The excerpts are drawn from Devinder Sharma's article "[Pause before you eat](http://www.indiatogether.org/2008/sep/dsh-brinjal.htm)"
<http://www.indiatogether.org/2008/sep/dsh-brinjal.htm>

Out of all the food we eat, vegetables and fruits are truly nature's gifts. They represent a freshness and purity that is like truth itself, a part of our meals and the sacred offerings we make in a temple.

But did you know that the tomato you chop with trust and the brinjal you value for its benefits, is fast being contaminated? First, we ingested pesticide residues presuming it can be washed off, now a thousand time more toxic herbicide is soon to arrive inside of your food. Artificially and genetically engineered avatars of foods are gaining swift inroads into India.

Nature allows a tomato to be crossed with tomato, a brinjal with brinjal, a human being with another human being. But with genetic engineering, scientists breach the species barriers set up by nature.

Did you know that the genes that are inserted into genetically engineered crops transfer into the DNA of the bacteria inside your intestines and might turn it into living pesticide factories, possibly for the rest of your life? This means that long after you stop eating genetically engineered foods, your own gut (stomach) bacteria might be producing these foreign proteins, which might be allergenic, toxic or carcinogenic GM Foods, which have been banned in so many countries across the world, are entering India, a country that is home to a rich resource of all kinds of crops, vegetables and fruits.

As consumers, you have the right to an informed choice and demand safe food. To dispel your doubts, we have answered some frequently asked questions.

All you need to know about GM Foods

1. What is Genetically Modified (GM) Food?

Genetically Modified (GM) Food is food in which genes from one species is transferred into the DNA of another species to give it certain new traits. The genes are taken from non plant sources like bacteria, viruses, spiders, scorpions, fish and pigs, and forcibly inserted into the genomes of brinjal, potatoes, corn, cabbage, tomatoes, etc.

Consider these bizarre potent trial combinations - Gene from a pig is inserted in cabbage; the gene of a human being into rice; a gene from a fire fly into peas, and now into cows; fish into tomatoes, spider into a goat, scorpion into corn, soil bacterium into brinjal.

2. Is genetic engineering precise?

The current technology of GM Foods is based on obsolete information and theory, and is prone to dangerous side effects.

It is not possible to insert a new gene with any accuracy, and the transfer of new genes can disrupt the finely controlled network of DNA in an organism. The new gene could, for example, alter chemical reactions within the cell or disturb cell functions. This could lead to instability, the creation of new toxins or allergens, and changes in nutritional value.

Economic interests have pushed it onto the market too soon.

3. How is GM Food different from normal food?

In appearance, there is no difference between GM Crop and normal crops. The difference lies in its genetic make up – GM Food has an alien gene inserted in it which is a thousand times more toxic. For example - you will not be able to differentiate a normal brinjal from a Bt Brinjal. They look alike.

4. Which crops are being tampered with in India?

Bt brinjal trials are in advance stage on Karnataka's famed traditional Brinjal varieties - Udupi Mattu Gulla. The uniqueness of the Gulla varieties, preserved for over 4,000 years by local farmers, awaits erosion at the hands of agricultural biotechnologists. The following crops are facing advanced field trials - Genetically Modified cabbage, corn, cauliflower, chickpea, cotton, groundnut, maize, mustard, okra, pigeon pea, potato, papaya, rice, sorghum, and tomato.

5. Who is behind Bt Brinjal in India?

M/S Mahyco (Maharashtra Hybrid Seeds Company), the same company responsible for developing and selling (along with Monsanto)

Why lose this biodiversity



Bt Cotton in India, is developing Bt Brinjal in India. This transfer of technology was free-of-cost, with the public sector institute allowed to develop, breed and distribute its own Bt Brinjal varieties on a cost-to-cost basis

6. Are GM Foods Safe?

The development of GM Food crops will lead to irreversible evolutionary level changes in the natural eco-system. More worrying are the harmful impact these foods will have on your health. The risk of contracting precancerous cells, and mild to advanced renal diseases, will multiply. Scientists' warnings are proven correct - When GM Crops and Foods were first introduced in the 1990s, scientists raised concerns that genetic modification of foods was imprecise and unpredictable

FROM ALLERGIES TO CANCER

» A recent research report by the Austrian Government states that consumption of one of the GM Foods - Bt Corn – for instance can lead to infertility.

» In UK, a study found that soya allergies skyrocketed by 50 per cent after GM Soyabean were imported.

» Russian Academy of Sciences reported six time higher mortality rate for new-born rats when the mother rat was fed on a diet of modified soya.

» Italian researchers have found that GM Soya affected the liver and pancreas of mice.

» Even seed giant Monsanto's own studies have shown that some rats fed on GM Corn had smaller

kidneys and variations in the composition of their blood, while the rats fed on normal maize were healthy.

» Australia had to even abandon a decade-long attempt to develop Genetically Modified Peas when an official study found it caused lung damage.

» Independent analysis of Mahyco's Bt Brinjal biosafety data proved that the Genetically Modified (GM) Brinjal is unsafe for human consumption. The study team led by Prof. Gilles-Eric S  ralini of Committee for Independent Research and Information on Genetic Engineering (CRIIGEN), France concluded that Bt Brinjal release into the environment, for food, feed or cultures, may present a serious risk for human and animal health and the release should be forbidden.

7. Who are the most susceptible to the ill-effects of GM Foods?

GM Foods pose grave health risks to everyone but children are especially vulnerable. Children have young, fast-developing bodies and are influenced the most by GM Foods.

Children are more susceptible to allergies. Children are more susceptible to problems with milk. Children are more likely to have nutritional problems. Children are also in danger of antibiotic resistant diseases.

Thousands of schools around the world, particularly in Europe, have decided not to let their kids be used as guinea pigs.

8. Then why are the Governments Not Careful?

The governments are hand-in-glove with the food industry.

Remember, it took 50 years for governments all over the world to finally accept that cigarette smoking is injurious to health. In these 50 years, millions died from smoking-related diseases and ailments, while governments looked the other way. Cigarette smoking, which was the biggest killer in America, has now been pushed to the second spot. Obesity (obviously the result of industrially produced junk food in the market) is now the biggest killer – killing over 4 lakh people every year in the US alone.

9. So, does anyone benefit from GM Foods?

GM Foods will not benefit nature, the environment and certainly not mankind.

The only beneficiaries are a handful of trans-national agro giants - Monsanto, Syngenta and Dupont, to name a few. They have made an entry through the laboratory and the crop fields and are finally dictating what's on your plate so as to garner more profits by monopolising food supplies. What happens to you is not their concern, it never was.

10. One would think that the United States of America has tough regulations for GM Foods?

You are quite mistaken. The US FDA (Food and Drug Administration) is a corrupt body. It has over the years been approving GM Crops and testifying them as 'substantially equivalent,' which means no different in any significant way than the normal crops. This is simply absurd. It turns out that the FDA's policy written in 1992, claimed it is "Not aware of any information showing that the foods created from these methods differ in any meaningful or uniform way." That's the quote in their policy upon which they made the statement that they don't need to test anything, "If the biotech companies tell us that these foods are safe, there are no further questions by the FDA."

It may shock you to learn that 44,000 pages from the FDA files were made public due to a lawsuit. It turns out that the overwhelming consensus among the FDA's own scientists was that the foods could create allergies, toxins, new diseases and nutritional problems. They had urged their superiors to commission long-term studies, but were completely ignored by the bureaucrats and their concerns brushed under the carpet.

DID YOU KNOW?

In the 1980's, nearly 100 Americans were killed and more than 5,000 fell sick from a disease called 'Eosinophillia-Myalgia Syndrome (EMS) which was traced to a genetically engineered brand of GM soya (L-tryptophan) produced by a Japanese company Showa Denko. The company had paid US \$ 200,000,000 to avoid damage trials.

The US Government is aggressively pushing GM Foods, to protect and safeguard the commercial interests of its agribusiness giants. The Indian Government too is accepting GM Foods without any questions being asked. Commercial interests take precedence over human lives.

11. Doesn't India have a regulatory body?

Yes. In fact, India has a three-tier regulatory process. There are three committees, of which the apex one is called GEAC (Genetic Engineering Approval Committee). It is an inter-ministerial body housed in the Ministry of Environment & Forests.

12. What role does GEAC play in controlling GM Foods?

Nothing. GEAC is a mere rubber stamp for the bio-technology industry. It has always brushed aside the objections raised by civil society groups, and has unabashedly upheld the claims of the private seed and agribusiness companies. It is primarily for this reason that the Ministry of Science & Technology is now pushing for a single window clearance for GM Foods.

13. Then, why are people not taking recourse through the legal process?

There are a number of lawsuits that have already been filed and pending. The Supreme Court of India is hearing a petition filed by Aruna Rodrigues, Devinder Sharma, Rajiv Barua and P.V. Satheesh, seeking a moratorium on GM Foods. There are separate law suits pending before the Supreme Court filed by Suman Sahai and Vandana Shiva.

14. Isn't that enough?

Certainly not. You cannot let the Supreme Court decide what you should be eating.

15. So what can I do as a Consumer?

You can do a lot.

Firstly, consciously ask the seller, arouse his curiosity – be it the local vegetable seller or the super market chain vendor. Ask him whether he is selling normal brinjal or Bt Brinjal.

If the vegetable seller does not know whether it is normal Brinjal or Bt Brinjal, ask him in turn to find out. **IT IS YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW IF IT IS Bt BRINJAL.** Don't buy if you are not sure.

Remember, Your Right to Safe Food begins with your knowledge about food and what you are buying. **Say NO to Bt Brinjal.**

Secondly, it is also your responsibility to create greater awareness about the dangerous impact of GM Foods among your colleagues, friends and family members.

16. And what can I do as a parent?**Parent Actions**

Educate yourself, and stay informed. A good place to start is viewing "The Hidden Dangers in Kids' Meals", by Jeffery Smith, a 28 minutes video, which presents a compelling case for the dangers of GM Foods to children of all ages.

Your prayer is to safeguard the health of your loved ones, especially children. If you love your children, you should be saying NO to GM Foods.

17. What is happening with GM Foods in the rest of the world?

180 countries in the world do not allow GM Foods.

All over the world, regions and even nations are demanding an end to GM Crop cultivation. Twenty-two countries in Europe have regions wanting to be GM-Free. States in Australia, regions in New Zealand and Brazil, the countries of Venezuela, Zambia, Sudan, Angola, and others, all want to be GM-Free. Thus, world markets are shrinking.

In 2007 over three million Italians signed a petition, declaring their opposition to GM Crops in their country. France, Hungary, Italy, Greece, Austria, Poland and Romania have all banned Monsanto's Mon 810 GM Corn because of its documented hazards to biodiversity and human health. In Europe over 175 regions and over 4,500 municipalities have declared themselves GM-free zones. In Spain alone this includes over 50 municipalities and regions like Asturias, the Canary Islands and the Basque country.

Also view this link on worldwide initiatives ban on GM Foods: <http://www.twinside.org.sg> - Third World Network, Penang, Malaysia

For further information view www.indiagminfo.org or register your protest to support by writing to myrighttosaffood@gmail.com

Suggested links for your reference - <http://www.responsibletechnology.org/GMFree/AboutGMFoods/HealthRisksBrochure/index.cfm>

<http://www.GeneticRoulette.com>
<http://www.bangmfood.org>

Join Our Efforts at

Coalition for a GM - FREE India for building a healthy society. We cannot allow a few Agri Business companies to play with our health and the lives of our children.



It is up to us to take charge of our food to safeguard our children, our health and our environment. We have identified safe food choices available at the outlets following organic principles in Karnataka.

Safe Food Outlets

SI No.	Outlet Name	Address	Contact Person	Contact No's	Website /Email ID
1	Jaivik Krushik Society (R)	Lalbagh Bangalore 04	Rangaswami	080-65624197 080-26577323	jk_society@rediffmail.com jaivik@vsnl.com
2	Jeevasudhe Organic Products	Gandhinagar Main Road Shimoga	Mallikarjun	9845087558	
3	Adhi Naturals	# 620, 6th Main 11 th cross JP Nagar 3 rd phase Bangalore 78	Aperna	9945517525	info@adinaturals.co.in
4	Simply Organics	# 2069, 20 th Main Road 2 nd block, Rajajinagar Bangalore 10	Govind Kabadi	9844064995	
5	Honey Bees Gifts	# 75/76 Aikya, 2 nd Main Road 8 th Block, Jayanagar Bangalore 82	Kumarswami	9845345349	mmkumarswamy@gmail.com
6	Bhoo Siri Weekly Organic Sante	Gandhi Shanti Prathistana Kendra Near Kort Dharwad	Hosamani	9448130647	
7	Arambha Krushi Balaga	# 406, 14 th Main Road Saraswathipuram Mysore	B.R. Ravindra	9242457114	brravimys@gmail.com
8	Nesara Organic Service Society	# 1116, Geetha Road Chamarajapuram Mysore 05	Guruprasad	0821-23304040 9945606160	pugupra@gmail.com guruprasad_engr@yahoo.co.in
9	Savayava Siri	# 7, Nandana, 2 nd Cross 7 th Main, Sultanpalaya Bangalore 32	N.R. Shetty	080-22715744	savayasiri@gmail.com
10	Era Organics	#348, Dollars Colony RMV Club Double Road RMV 2 nd Stage Bangalore 94	Jayaram	080-41606003 41606004	eraorganic07@gmail.com
11	Organic Impulse	#82, 5th Cross Royal Hermitage Gottigere Bannerghatta Main Rd. Bangalore 83	Sukant Adhikari Anuradha Adhikari	80-26967682 98440 54469	info@organicimpulse.com

Sl No.	Outlet Name	Address	Contact Person	Contact No's	Website /Email ID
12	Simply Organic	#2069, 20 th Main 2 nd Block, Next to Yesu Krupalaya Church Rajajinagar Bangalore 10	Govind Kabadi	23321314 9844064995	simplyorganic@rediffmail.com
13	Khandige Organic Health Products	# 68/1, Jaraganahalli Near Sarakki Gate Kanakapura Main Road Bangalore 78	Sudhakar Karanth	080-26714599 080-25215738	info@khandigeorganic.com
14	Fresh Earth	CMH Road, Indiranagar	Somnath	080-25215738 9880007105	jsomanath@gmail.com
15	Pro Nature Organic Foods Pvt. Ltd.	2/1, 12 th Cross, Kaggadapura C.V. Raman Nagar Bangalore 93	Varun Gupta	080-32983773 25247256 9341974822	varun@organicfoodsindia.com
16	Gramya Turnkey Services (Pvt.)	K-43, 2 nd Floor 14 th Cross 19 th 'B'main 1st Block, Rajajinagar Bangalore 10	S.M. Hebbal	080 23320789 23123652	gramyaservices@gmail.com www.gramyaservices.co.in
17	Green Fundas	92, 5 th Main, 5 th Cross Kodihalli Extn. HAL 2 nd Stage Bangalore 08	Amin Manjrekar	98862-90013 080-40972576	greenfundas@hotmail.com
18	Pristine Organics Private Limited Organic Lifestyle (Dharani)	#44/2a Kodigehalli Gate, NH-7 Sahakarnagar Post Bangalore 92	K.C. Raghu	080-23620878 23534367 Fax: 23620879	ecofoods@pristineorganics.com pristineorganics.com
19	Sustain Life Products	Krac- A -Dawna Organic Farm Halaur Vill Birval Post H.D. Kote Taluk Karnataka 571121	Julie & Vivek Cariappa	08221 -238472	www.geocities.com krac_a_dawna@yahoo.com
20	Varanashi Research Foundation	P.O. Adyanadka Karnataka 574 260	Krishna Moorthy Ashwini Moorthy	08255 -270254 270686	
21	Navadarshanam Trust	A4, Whitefield Ville ECC Road, Whitefield Bangalore 66	Nagarajan		www.navadarshanam.org navadarshanam@gmail.com

Sl No.	Outlet Name	Address	Contact Person	Contact No's	Website /Email ID
22	Namdharis Fresh 18 stores in Bangalore	12 th main HAL 2 nd Stage Adj. to Sony Station Bangalore 38	Ms Tanuja	9980222833 42115147	peter@namdharis fresh.com
23	Organic Lifestyle Products of ISKON available at 37 stores in Bangalore	Dharani Store ISKON Hare Krishna Hill West of Chord Road Rajaji Nagar Bangalore 10	Charu Krishna Das	23578359 9901670000	charu@ecoagri.in
24	The Higher Taste	Garna Garnet 119/A/36, 9 th Main Behind Jain Temple 4 th Block, Jayanagar	Charu Krishna Das	42068110 9901670000	charu@ecoagri.in
25	Fab India 10 stores in Bangalore	# 54, 17 th Main 2 nd Block, Koramangala Bangalore 36	Somni Raman	080-42549000	koramangala.bangalore@fabindia.net
	Fab India Mysore	451, JLB Road Near RTO Chamarajpuram Mysore 570010	Vibhuthi Rana	0821-4259009	mysore@fabindia.net
	Fab India Mangalore	F11-F14, Empire Mall MG Road, Mangalore	Joan Lobo	0824-3252656	mangalore@fabindia.net
26	Greens Exotica	566, 21 st Main 36 th Cross, 4 th Block Jayanagar Bangalore 41	J. Manjunath	9880064863	manju.wildlife@rediffmail.com

In our endeavour to provide organic producers and outlets profile in Karnataka, we may have missed out on you but this is not intentional so we apologise. To make this a comprehensive list and to be known to consumers, we urge and request you to write to us at myrighttosafefood@gmail.com





**"Have mercy on the planet.
Stop using Genetically Modified Food".**

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar - Guruji

**" This time it involves you, through the food you eat.
If there is a reason to get angry, it is now!"**

Devinder Sharma
Prominent Food & Trade Analyst

**"GMO is man's heinous act of playing God and
can lead only to total destruction of the planet."**

Jai Chaitanaya Dasa, ISKON

**"Production and promotion of Genetically Modified Foods
is an act of Bio-terrorism. Question is –should we remain a
mute spectator and let the biotech companies use our
bodies as their slaves in India?"**

Mahesh Bhatt
Filmmaker & Presenter of Poison on the Platter

MY ^{RIGHT} TO SAFE FOOD

For further information log on to
www.indiagminfo.org
<http://myrighttosafefood.blogspot.com>

Exercise your right as a consumer
Register your protest against GM Foods at myrighttosafefood@gmail.com