

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



'In the end, consumer education, not legislation, is the key to ensuring we have a safe, sustainable and affordable food supply.'

*Teresa Tarantino
Editor-in-Chief*

Two GE Ingredient Battles Won, But The Fight Goes On

I AM NOT PICKING ON COLORADO, but one result in the recent mid-terms both pleased and surprised me.

As you will remember, I had commented during the summer on the all-too-vocal attempts in that state to demand GE ingredient labeling of food items. The noisy zealots at a July 4th parade came quickly to mind and I had an uneasy feeling about how their latest ballot initiative might fare. After all, this is the same state that legalized recreational marijuana, where everyone is into outdoor activities and supposedly healthier eating, and where some cities, such as Boulder, are famous for their progressive-leaning citizens.

However, it was not to be, with the ballot covering GE ingredient labeling being resoundingly defeated — 66 to 34 percent.

Why? Because of the massive investment food groups poured into counter-initiatives and advertising, pointing out the likely costs and resulting food price hikes? Maybe, or maybe it's because I hadn't realized that corn and beef products rule on statewide home and restaurant menus, with all the attendant understanding about ranching and agricultural efficiencies. However, this is certainly not the case in the northeast, where large-scale farming and ranching might be something seen mainly on TV.

In addition, maybe it's because I didn't realize that of Colorado's 64 counties, only 16 allow recreational marijuana stores. And with the state moving into the Republican camp, it seems there might now be more conservative thinkers heading to the polls. Of course, there is the argument the outcome was the result of anger over gridlock in DC and low turnout among Democrats. But what about Oregon, another state seen as firmly in the blue column when it comes to environmentally sensitive voters? There GE ingredient labeling opponents made their voices heard with a decision that was too close to call and at press time was in the process of a recount.

So far, the GE ingredient labeling issue has scored in the northeast, and initiatives in the west will continue. In the end, consumer education, not legislation, is the key to ensuring we have a safe, sustainable and affordable food supply. **CST**

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