



Pat-MedMUNC III WHO

The Use of Genetically Modified Foods to Combat Malnutrition

In developing countries, the need for sustainable crops that also provide nutrition is a difficult issue. The environments of developing nations are not always suitable for nutritional crops or the people do not have the knowledge to farm efficiently. Lack of nutrition causes the overall health of a person and a nation to suffer drastically. Malnutrition increases the risk of diseases and death, especially in women and children. To combat this, the WHO needs to find a way to give developing countries accessible and nutritious food. One possible solution to malnutrition is genetically modified food.

Genetically modified foods are foods derived from organisms whose DNA has been modified unnaturally, e.g. through the introduction of a gene from a different organism. Currently, most GM foods are mostly from plants, but with the advancement of technology, GM animals are on the horizon.

Most GM seeds are made specifically for crop protection. This allows the crops to be less susceptible to plant diseases caused by insects or viruses, to be more resilient in hostile environments, and to increase crop yields. This increase in sustainability of the crops makes them easier to grow and protect, thus, increasing the amount of crops being produced. The most recent product and research, is making GM foods more nutritious than regularly grown food, like the production of "golden rice", which increased the amount of Vitamin A in rice. GM foods also cut down on the expenses due to pesticides because of their resilient qualities.

In developing countries, GM foods can be a great benefit to stabilize the nutritional intake of the country. Though GM foods and food technology is seen as the solution to world hunger to many, some see it as unsafe and illogical. Many countries and scientists believe that there is not enough testing being done about the effects and safety of GM foods. The possibility of risks such as gene

transfer and allergies caused by GM foods may not be worth the nutritional gain. GM foods also pose a threat to biodiversity due to the combining of genes from different plants.

Some places have already benefited from GM foods. Hawaii, though it is not a country or a developing country, has been using GM foods in their economy and as a result it became the number one industry of Hawaii, increasing crop production. In South Africa, GM foods allow poor farmers to successfully produce food, making South Africa the 8th top producer of GM foods. The GM foods they have produced have been produced without any substantial medical adverse effects on humans or animals. With the world's population constantly increasing, consider the following:

Points to Consider

- What is your country's opinion on GM Foods?
- How has GM Foods affected your country, especially the environment and economy?
- What can your country and this committee do to help increase the usage of GM foods in developing countries, or should GM foods be used in developing nations?
- What are some long term goals that the world needs to combat malnutrition and how can GM foods help?