

106TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2838

To amend the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 to provide for a program to provide information to the public on the use of biotechnology to produce food for human consumption, to support additional research regarding the potential economic and environmental risks and benefits of using biotechnology to produce food, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 30, 2000

Mr. HUTCHINSON introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

A BILL

To amend the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 to provide for a program to provide information to the public on the use of biotechnology to produce food for human consumption, to support additional research regarding the potential economic and environmental risks and benefits of using biotechnology to produce food, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Food Biotechnology
3 Information Initiative Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 Congress finds that—

6 (1) biotechnology has been used for many years
7 to develop new and useful products used in a variety
8 of industries;

9 (2) biotechnology holds the potential for bene-
10 fits to mankind in a number of areas by allowing in-
11 dividual, well-characterized genes to be transferred
12 from 1 organism to another organism and thus in-
13 creasing the genetic diversity available to improve
14 commercial plant species;

15 (3) plant varieties created with biotechnology
16 will offer foods with better taste, more nutrition, and
17 longer shelf life;

18 (4) agricultural producers will be able to grow
19 those varieties more efficiently, leading to lower
20 costs for consumers and greater environmental pro-
21 tection through effective and targeted pesticide and
22 herbicide use and a reduction in soil erosion through
23 an increase in the use of no-till farming;

24 (5) on April 5, 2000, the National Research
25 Council released a report entitled “Genetically Modi-

1 fied Pest-Protected Plants: Science and Regulation”
2 that—

3 (A) emphasized that there is no evidence
4 that foods produced through biotechnology are
5 unsafe to eat, but that, given the current level
6 of public concern over those foods, Federal
7 agencies should conduct more research to re-
8 duce the concern about potential harm to
9 human health and the environment; and

10 (B) recommended that the quantity, qual-
11 ity, and public accessibility of information on
12 the regulation of transgenic pest-protected plant
13 products should be expanded;

14 (6) the Food and Drug Administration, the De-
15 partment of Agriculture, and the Environmental
16 Protection Agency are all involved in regulating the
17 use of biotechnology for producing foods;

18 (7) United States consumers are increasingly
19 concerned that food safety issues regarding the use
20 of biotechnology in foods are not being adequately
21 addressed;

22 (8) all foods, including foods that are produced
23 using biotechnology, should continue to be subject to
24 rigorous regulation by the Federal Government
25 that—

1 (A) evaluates the safety of the products to
2 the consumer and the environment; and

3 (B) is based on scientific methods that
4 meet state-of-the-art scientific standards; and

5 (9) the sharing with consumers of scientific in-
6 formation produced in regulating biotechnology is
7 imperative and should be an integral part of United
8 States food and agriculture programs.

9 **SEC. 3. PUBLIC INFORMATION ON USE OF BIO-**
10 **TECHNOLOGY TO PRODUCE FOOD FOR**
11 **HUMAN CONSUMPTION.**

12 Subtitle H of title XVI of the Food, Agriculture, Con-
13 servation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5921 et seq.)
14 is amended by inserting after section 1668 (7 U.S.C.
15 5921) the following:

16 **“SEC. 1668A. PUBLIC INFORMATION ON USE OF BIO-**
17 **TECHNOLOGY TO PRODUCE FOOD FOR**
18 **HUMAN CONSUMPTION.**

19 “(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the
20 date of enactment of this section, the Secretary, in collabo-
21 ration with the Secretary of Health and Human Services
22 (acting through the Commissioner of Food and Drugs)
23 and in consultation with the Administrator of the Environ-
24 mental Protection Agency, shall establish a program to

1 provide information to the public on the use of bio-
2 technology to produce food for human consumption.

3 “(b) INFORMATION.—The information provided
4 under the program shall include—

5 “(1) scientific information on the safety of
6 foods produced with biotechnology;

7 “(2) scientific data on the human outcomes of
8 the use of biotechnology to produce food for human
9 consumption; and

10 “(3) an analysis of the risks and benefits to the
11 environment of such use, conducted in accordance
12 with established scientific principles and using infor-
13 mation supplied by the Administrator of the Envi-
14 ronmental Protection Agency.

15 “(c) FOOD SAFETY INITIATIVE.—

16 “(1) IN GENERAL.—This section shall be car-
17 ried out as a component of the Food Safety Initia-
18 tive of the President.

19 “(2) FUNDING.—Of the amount of funds made
20 available to carry out for the Food Safety Initiative
21 for each of fiscal years 2001 and 2002, not more
22 than \$10,000,000 shall be available to carry out this
23 section.”.

1 **SEC. 4. GRANTS FOR RESEARCH ON ECONOMIC AND ENVI-**
2 **RONMENTAL RISKS AND BENEFITS OF USING**
3 **BIOTECHNOLOGY IN FOOD PRODUCTION.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1668 of the Food, Agri-
5 culture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C.
6 5921) is amended by striking subsections (a) and (b) and
7 inserting the following:

8 “(a) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this section are—

9 “(1) to authorize and support research intended
10 to identify and analyze technological developments in
11 the area of biotechnology for the purpose of evalu-
12 ating the potential positive and adverse effects of the
13 developments on the United States farm economy
14 and the environment, and addressing public concerns
15 about potential adverse environmental effects, of
16 using biotechnology in food production; and

17 “(2) to authorize research to help regulatory
18 agencies develop policies, as soon as practicable, con-
19 cerning the introduction and use of biotechnology.

20 “(b) GRANT PROGRAM.—The Secretary of Agri-
21 culture, acting through the Cooperative State Research,
22 Education, and Extension Service and the Agricultural
23 Research Service, shall establish a competitive grant pro-
24 gram to conduct research to promote the purposes de-
25 scribed in subsection (a).”.

1 (b) TYPES OF RESEARCH.—Section 1668(c) of the
2 Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990
3 (7 U.S.C. 5921(c)) is amended—

4 (1) by redesignating paragraph (4) as para-
5 graph (5); and

6 (2) by inserting after paragraph (3) the fol-
7 lowing:

8 “(4) Research designed to evaluate—

9 “(A) the potential effect of biotechnology
10 developments on the United States farm econ-
11 omy;

12 “(B) the competitive status of United
13 States agricultural commodities and foods in
14 foreign markets; and

15 “(C) consumer confidence in the healthful-
16 ness and safety of agricultural commodities and
17 foods.”.

18 (c) PRIORITY.—Section 1668(d)(1) of the Food, Ag-
19 riculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C.
20 5921(d)(1)) is amended by inserting before the semicolon
21 the following: “, but giving priority to projects designed
22 to develop improved methods for identifying potential al-
23 lergens in pest-protected plants, with particular emphasis
24 on the development of tests with human immune-system
25 endpoints and of more reliable animal models”.

1 (d) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

2 (1) Section 1668 of the Food, Agriculture, Con-
3 servation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5921)
4 is amended by striking the section heading and in-
5 serting the following:

6 **“SEC. 1668. GRANTS FOR RESEARCH ON ECONOMIC AND**
7 **ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS AND BENEFITS OF**
8 **USING BIOTECHNOLOGY IN FOOD PRODUC-**
9 **TION.”.**

10 (2) Section 1668(g)(2) of the Food, Agri-
11 culture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7
12 U.S.C. 5921(g)(2)) is amended by striking “for re-
13 search on biotechnology risk assessment”.

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