

# NEWS RELEASE

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Nick George, President  
608-255-9946  
[Nick.George@mwfpa.org](mailto:Nick.George@mwfpa.org)

Brian Elliott  
Dir. of Communications  
608-255-9946  
[Brian.Elliott@mwfpa.org](mailto:Brian.Elliott@mwfpa.org)

## Midwest Food Processors, Coalition Urge Senate Action on GMO Labeling

The Midwest Food Processors Association ([MWFPA](#)) joined a coalition of more than 1,000 agricultural and food industry organizations on an open [letter](#) to congressional leaders announcing their strong support for the bipartisan GMO labeling legislation currently in the U.S. Senate.

The Coalition for Safe and Affordable Food said in a letter addressed to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and Minority Leader Harry Reid, that it “is vitally important for the Senate to call up and pass the legislation drafted by Chairman Roberts and Ranking Member Stabenow on biotech labeling in order to avoid the economic costs of a patchwork of state laws that will directly impact consumers, farmers, and the entire food value chain.”

The legislation would, in part, preempt Vermont’s mandatory on-package labeling law, which takes effect July 1. Vermont’s law would require items to be labeled “produced with genetic engineering.” The Second Circuit Court of Appeals is still considering the food industry’s challenge to Vermont’s enactment on constitutional grounds.

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“A patchwork of confusing state specific laws related to GMO labeling risks confusion in the marketplace and rising food costs,” said MWFPFA President Nick George. “Yet, we also understand the desire of consumers to know what is in their food and this bill provides for their ability to do so.”

George also commented that the response of the food and agriculture industries to this legislation “has been incredible” citing the large number signatories on the coalition’s letter.

The compromise bill provides for a national uniform labeling standard for the disclosure of bioengineered foods. It offers companies a choice of providing consumers with an on-package label or creating a symbol or electronic label that can be scanned with a smartphone or directs consumers to “more food information.” However, if there is an electronic label, it must take consumers directly to information on genetically modified ingredients.

Should the bill pass the full Senate, it will also have to be run through the U.S. House, which passed a bill last July that barred states from creating GMO labeling laws but established a voluntary labeling system.