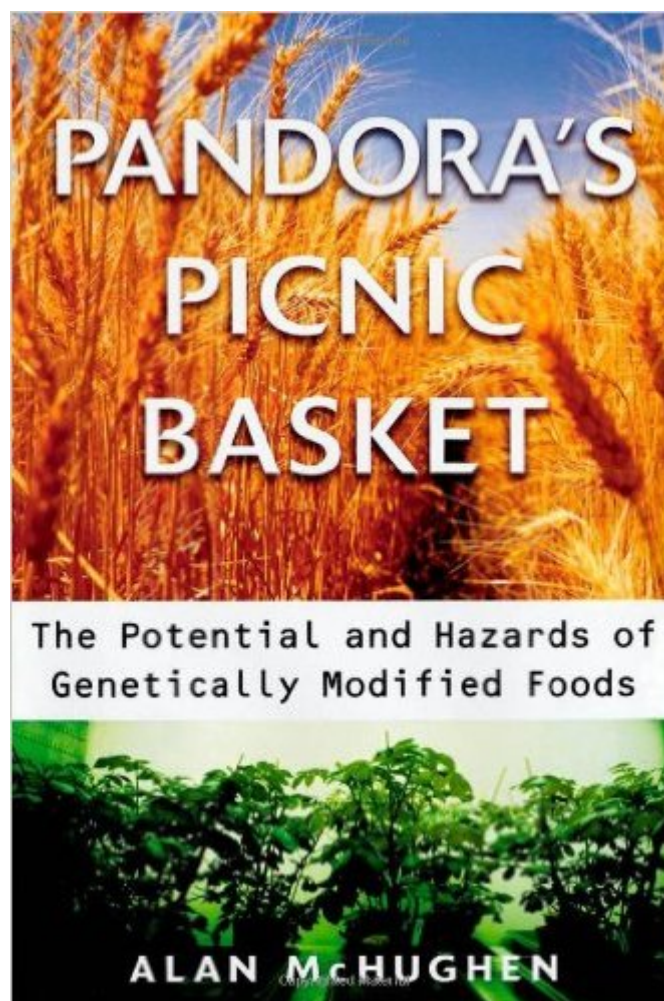


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Pandora's Picnic Basket: The Potential And Hazards Of Genetically Modified Foods



Synopsis

Did you know that there are fish genes in some tomatoes? That Brazil nut genes in soybeans can result in potentially lethal allergic reactions? That rapeseed plants bred to be resistant to herbicides could become uncontrollable superweeds? Genetically modified foods do pose real risks, and in recent years they have become the focus of a pitched battle between scientists, entrepreneurs, consumer advocates, and environmentalists. Yet despite the great heat generated by the debate, there is very little real information on the subject, either about the technologies in use or about the regulatory processes established to protect us from potentially dangerous products. Pandora's Picnic Basket explains, in clear and direct language, the technologies underlying genetically modified food, comparing them with other "natural" methods of plant breeding and production. Researcher Alan McHughen evaluates the safeguards in place from regulators around the world and asks whether these are sufficient. In particular, he examines the question of labeling, held by some to be an obvious way to help protect consumers, and addresses the honesty and usefulness of some of these labels. Throughout the book, McHughen offers fair-minded, well-informed accounts of issues of real concern, particularly environmental issues, and he outlines ways in which consumers can avoid genetically modified food if they so choose. The author uses question-and-answer boxes to address key issues and real case histories to illustrate the development and regulation of genetically modified food. Genetically modified foods are increasingly available to the public. Pandora's Picnic Basket will help consumers make informed choices about this controversial technology.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I found this book was an excellent survey of its subject. McHugen knows his stuff well and his descriptions from the point of view of somebody who was trying to develop a strain of flax at his university in Canada was excellent. He also seemed to have a good grasp of the UK and US situations as well. Unfortunately the book is a little dated as it was written in 2000 but his comments are often surprisingly up to date and his history sections are extremely good.

This book is great. It is objective and gets down to the nitty gritty issues. After reading this book you will almost be an expert on this subject. This is absolutely no "hot-air" in this book. It provides solid facts, in a conversational manner so it is not dry.

When I wanted to learn more about GM, I looked for a book to read that was based on science, not on rhetoric from activists that have only preconceptions and no real understanding of science. That is why I chose this book. Alan McHughen is not only a scientist, but he has done research on GM plants. This gives him a unique perspective into the pros and cons of GM plants and the GM process. He does a good job of describing the science behind GM, which is essential to understand for anyone interested in GM. Then he goes on to describe the application of GM technology and current issues. He emphasizes that one should separate the process of GM from the products of GM; something that the media and activist groups rarely do, further clouding the issue. If you would like to learn facts about GM so that you can decide for yourself, then this book is for you.

lots of science - good look at the facts which will not support the hype about modified foods!

It is easier to destroy an atom instead of a prejudice, stated in certain opportunity Albert Einstein. Are you anxious for knowing the advances about the genetically designed food? The public education will turn off the opposed voices and peregrine interpretations about the superstitions weaved around this new subject. Hughes affirms that sixty per cent of the processed aliments contain some trans genetic product and we have been consuming them without ulterior consequences. He points out two positive aspects behind this newness technique: Those improvements will help to mitigate the hunger in the world and reduce also, the ecological impact in the intensive agriculture. A reference reading which undoubtedly forms part of one additional consequence of the Third Wave existence.

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