

International Efforts to

Save the Earth:

A new law in the Philippines requires students to plant 10 trees before they can graduate.



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Students at every level (elementary, high school, and college) are legally required, under the “Graduation Legacy for the Environment Act” law, to plant 10 trees before they are allowed to graduate. This law is designed to help reverse deforestation in the Philippines. The drafter of the bill, Philippine Congressman Gary Alejano, wrote that “the initiative would see at least 175 million new trees planted every year, totaling over 525 billion additional trees “in just one generation.”



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Do you think this is something the United States should implement?

Green View



Original Artwork by Gayle Boyd, Dreher High School

Misconceptions about Genetically Modified Foods

What is it?

Genetic modification of food refers to food products that have altered genes. For thousands of years humans have helped food evolve by choosing the sweetest and best tasting foods so the next crop or animal has those characteristics. Now, the process is faster because scientists directly alter the DNA in our food by finding a desired trait (sweetness, color, flavor, texture) and inserting a gene into the cell of that plant or animal. This is why genetic engineering is popular - scientists actually cater alterations to farmer’s needs, allowing them to not only grow more crops, but more voluminous ones.

Significance

You might be asking, why is this important? Well, according to Megan Norris, a biomedical researcher at the UT Southwestern Medical Center, GMOs (Genetically Modified Organisms) are “designed to be extra — extra healthy, extra fast-

growing, and extra resistant to weather or pests.” This technology could help stop famine within areas around the world.

Not only are GMO foods reducing hunger, they also influence the environment. GMO crops are environmentally friendly because they use fewer chemical pesticides, and less land and water. This saves our earth’s natural resources!



Original Art by Gayle Boyd

Consumers

If the reasons listed above aren’t enough for people to be excited about GMO foods, there are personal benefits too! Because of the money farmers save on producing the crops, the selling cost of final products

can be on average 15-20% less expensive. GMO crops are designed to be more nutritious, containing more vitamins, or minerals than conventional crops.

Cows

Recently, scientists have looked at genetically modifying animals as another solution to environmental problems. Since cows play such a large role in emitting harmful methane gasses, reducing the amount of gas from the cows could reduce methane emissions by as much as 50%!

Scientists in England proved this theory by testing 1,000 genetically modified cows and found that the cows could be selectively bred to burp and pass less gas. Therefore, by selecting the lowest methane-producing cows and breeding them, scientists and farmers could dramatically reduce methane emissions in the atmosphere and slow the warming of the planet!