

MONTEREY COUNTY



Board of Supervisors

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Monterey County, Fifth District Supervisor

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Memorandum

To: Lew Bauman, CAO
From: Supervisor Dave Potter

RE: Board referral re: enacting a moratorium on Genetically Modified Organisms in Monterey County

The request is to have the Agricultural Commissioner and the Director of Environmental Health provide a response to the Board of Supervisors that outlines what the process would be for the County to consider adopting a moratorium on genetically modified organisms (GMO's) similar to what was passed in the County of Santa Cruz in 2006.

There are a number of concerns that are raised with the question of potentially banning GMO's in Monterey County, which would need to be thoroughly addressed and researched in a public process prior to this coming to the Board of Supervisors. As some of these topics may address public health, the Environmental Health Director will need to work with the Agricultural Commissioner on this referral. Some of the concerns that would need to be answered are:

- What is the potential impact to the health of the residents in Monterey County due to GMO's being produced in Monterey County and in the marketplace?
- How would we balance the interests of agriculture, research, agricultural workers and the citizens of Monterey County?
- What tools and resources would the Ag Commissioner and / or Environmental Health need in order to implement an ordinance if adopted?
- Is it appropriate for the County to enact and enforce such an ordinance?
- Is this issue better addressed at the federal or state level?
- What would be the time involved in staff time to research issue? What would the cost be for the time necessary to conduct this research?
- What would be involved to do a thorough a public process? What would the cost be for the outreach and public review process?

I appreciate staff's assistance with this referral as it is one of great importance to many people in Monterey County.

Cc: Eric Lauritzen, Allen Stroh, Charles McKee and Gail Borkowski