

Support Progressive Farming

Spencer Creek Grange Ag Committee, March 18, 2014

- Whereas: Currently food plants come from different seed types: Open Pollinated (including heirlooms), hybrids (crosses), reverse and Doubled Haploid breeding, and GMO's
- Whereas: The terms **GMO, GE, transgenic, and biotech crops** (the first 3 of which are a subset of the latter) are often used interchangeably; and
- Whereas: **Open-pollinated** seeds, including all heirloom seeds, are seeds which will breed true when crossed naturally, and are the basis of seed saving and selective breeding in conventional farming for the last 10,000 years (1)
- Whereas: **Hybrid** seeds are crosses between varieties of plants; achieved by natural selection, selective breeding (conventional breeding) or biotech techniques such as marker assisted breeding,
- Whereas: **Reverse breeding and Doubled Haploid Breeding** are biotech techniques of line-breeding (inbreeding)
- Whereas: There are advantages and disadvantages to all the above types; and
- Whereas: There are crops produced in each type that may negatively affect human health, the environment or the economy; and
- Whereas: Most industrial farming methods use pesticides and herbicides to control unwanted destructive organisms and chemical fertilizer to increase yields; and
- Whereas: Most organic farming methods use what is termed *sustainable*, or *environmentally friendly* methods of pest control; and
- Whereas: By requiring specific herbicides and pesticides to be used in conjunction with the seed, GMO crops seek to increase yields by decreasing the amount of crop destroyed by pests, resulting in increased income to the farmer; and
- Whereas: For poorer farmers this increased income can result in reducing poverty and malnutrition,
- Whereas: The Grange membership is very diverse with farmers and growers involved in growing vegetables using seeds derived from all types of the above mentioned seeds.

Therefore be it

- Resolved: That the Spencer Creek Grange support farming methods which minimize unwanted cross pollination of seed types. And be it further
- Resolved: That the Spencer Creek Grange support and encourage methods of seed creation which minimize the use of pesticides and herbicides. And be it further

- Resolved: That the Spencer Creek Grange support and encourage methods of seed creation that will increase the nutritional value of the food. And be it further
- Resolved: That the Spencer Creek Grange support and encourage independent research assessing long term impacts of agricultural seed and practices on human health, the natural environment, and the economy. And be it further
- Resolved: That the Spencer Creek Grange, out of respect for all, will take the precautionary principle and withdraw its support for any agricultural practices or seed, when there is cause for reasonable doubt of safety to human health, the environment or the economy. And be it further
- Resolved: That the Spencer Creek Grange equally support farming originating from all seed types on condition that the above assurances are met.

(1) Piperno, D. R.; Ranere, A. J., Holst, I., Iriarte, J., & Dickau, R. (2009). "Starch grain and phytolith evidence for early ninth millennium B.P. maize from the Central Balsas River Valley, Mexico". *PNAS* 106 (13): 4957-4958.

Spencer Creek Grange:

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Mike Gaber, Master

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Jeanne Taylor, Secretary

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