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## **NUTRITION IN PUBLIC HEALTH (THIRD EDITION)**

### **A Handbook for Developing Programs and Services**

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#### **...Genetically Modified or Engineered Foods**

It has been estimated that approximately 70% of the current processed or packaged food items contain a genetically modified organism or ingredient.<sup>120</sup> This estimate is based on the fact that the highest yield crop items that U.S. farmers produce are soy, corn, cottonseed, and canola, which are genetically engineered food items almost ubiquitous in our food supply. One would be hard pressed to find products on our supermarket shelves that do not include some form of soy, corn cottonseed, or canola oil. The introduction of genetically engineered foods into our diet was done quietly and without the mandatory labeling that is required in many other of the world's industrialized countries.

**Unfortunately, precaution is not the default legal position in our country, so hazards and risks are defined on a case-by-case basis in the courts. This is in contrast to Canada and the European Union's commitment to a Precautionary Principle, where instead of a judicial system of 'guilty until proven innocent', their philosophy is: "When an activity raises threats of harm to the environment or human health, precautionary measures should be taken even if some cause-and-effect relationships are not fully established scientifically."**<sup>121</sup>

(p.118)

These countries believe that scientific experts' opinions cannot be solely depended upon to determine what the public would consider as acceptable types of risks.

**121 Kogan, LA, Precautionary Preference, Institute for Trade, Standards and Sustainable Development, 2005, Available at [http://www.nftc.org/default/Trade%20Policy/WTO\\_Issues/Kogan-ITSSD%202005.pdf](http://www.nftc.org/default/Trade%20Policy/WTO_Issues/Kogan-ITSSD%202005.pdf) Accessed April 12, 2010.**

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