

GMO -ethical or not?



Utilitarianism : increased happiness

- Less hunger
- Less agricultural area needed
- Other environmental benefits
- Less economical losses



Utilitarianism : decreased happiness

- Eco system risks
- Slippery slope for human enhancement
- Risks for abuse of the technology
- Suffering for the modified organisms



Utilitarianism

How to
measure,
or predict,
happiness?



Summation of happiness

(happiness * probability weight)

- Environmental benefits (8 * 10)
 - Hunger (8 * 10)
 - Money (2 * 5)
 - Environmental risks (-10 * 3)
 - Slippery slope (-1 * 5)
 - Suffering organisms (-5 * 3)
- Sum : $165 - 50 > 0$

Cultural Relativism & GMOs

- Regulatory efforts 1975-2003, international treaty for use and transfer of the GMOs.
- Difference between the U.S. and Europe.
- GMO labeling.
- India & China.
- The “culture” argument: but how do we define culture.

Emotivism & GMOs

- Emotivism at Wikipedia
 - Two studies in 2007. One finds “surprisingly limited” number of GMO safety articles. The other finds 692 articles due to the “multi-disciplinary nature” of research.
- Similarities between GMO and Global warming debate.
- “The development of GM products which have been found to cause allergic reactions have been halted” vs. “GM products can cause allergic reactions”
- To label or not to label.
- Weeds and butterflies:
 - “raises the somewhat radical notion that perhaps weeds on farms should be protected”

Divine Command & GMOs

- Problem: No divine command available ☺
- Arguments for:
 - God's image argument.
 - No law argument.
 - No restriction argument
- Arguments against:
 - The perfection argument.
 - The kosher argument.
 - The modification argument.

Factors to Consider

- Health risks vs. Nutrition benefits.
- Intellectual property.
- Environment:
 - Roundup and Monsanto.
 - Biodiversity.
 - Release / Gene flow.
 - Secondary pests / Resistant pests.