**GMO DID YOU KNOW’S**

Americans are eating their weight and more in genetically engineered food every year, a new Environmental Working Group analysis shows. On average, people eat an estimated 193 pounds of genetically engineered food in a 12-month period.

GMOs were first introduced in the mid1990s.

The company Monsanto is responsible for engineering GMOs.

**Types of GMOs:** GMO varieties exist for crops such as alfalfa, canola, corn, cotton, papaya, rice, soybean, sugar beet, summer squash, and tobacco. Currently, 95% of U.S. soybean and 90% of U.S. corn is genetically modified.

The European Commission states that as of August 2005, farmers had planted GMO crops on one-fourth of all land under cultivation in the world.

GMOs were created with the intention of making them able to withstand high doses of weed killers such as Roundup in the beginning, and have branched out from there.

**Outdoor GMO purposes**

Outdoor: Pest Resistant

Farmers can get GMO versions of crops including cotton, corn and potatoes that are resistant to common pests. This can help to limit crop losses and increase their overall crop yields. These crops can also limit the need for farmers to use pesticides on their crops, saving the farmers money and limiting the amount of pesticides that are released into the environment.

Outdoor: Herbicide Tolerant

Farmers who don't want to deal with weeds in their crops can get seeds for versions of canola, corn, cotton, sugar beet and soybeans that are tolerant of herbicides so that they can easily kill off the weeds without killing their crops. However, the makers of the seeds for these crops don't allow seeds to be saved, so farmers end up spending more money on seeds as well as on the herbicides that are used.

Outdoor: Delayed Ripening

Some fruits have also been genetically modified to make them ripen later, according to the European Commission. This can help make them available fresh in the marketplace during a longer time frame or, for fruits that ripen after being picked, make it easier to transport them.

Outdoor: Increased Nutrients

Although it is not as common, some types of GMOs are modified to increase their nutrient content. Corn and soybeans are two examples of crops that have higher-nutrient GMO versions available.

**Good websites:**

[Facts About Genetically Modified Food](http://www.livescience.com/40895-gmo-facts.html) – neutral about GMO’s

[Kids Right To Know About GMO's](http://www.kidsrighttoknow.com/gmos/) – against GMO’s

[How to Shop if Avoiding GMO's](http://www.wholefoodsmarket.com/gmo-shopping-tips%20) – against GMO’s

[The Debate on Genetically Modified Foods](http://www.brighthubeducation.com/middle-school-social-studies-lessons/109157-pros-and-cons-of-genetically-modified-foods-debate-lesson/) – favors GMO’s