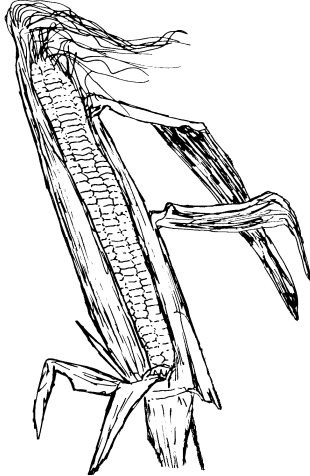




How to reduce the risk of potential GMO contamination on your Farm



As more and more genetically modified seed varieties are becoming available on the market, the risk of potential GMO contamination through pollen drift is increasing rapidly. Pennsylvania Certified Organic requires that applicants for certification complete a thorough farm map, which also includes neighboring land uses, so that we may determine the potential risk of GMO pollen drift and contamination.

At this time, the main crop of concern is corn, as it is wind pollinated, and has been shown to travel long distances. As other GMO crops become available on the market, specific issues will be addressed as necessary.

Possible ways to minimize GMO pollen drift

- **Agreement with neighbors**

Let your neighbors know you are a certified organic farmer. By agreeing with your neighbor to keep GMO crops in fields as far removed from yours as possible, much of the risk of contamination can be reduced.

Conventional farmers growing Bt crops are required to plant 20% of their acreage in non-Bt crops, to reduce the build-up of Bt-resistant insects. If your neighbor grows Bt crops, ask if they will plant their "20% non-Bt refuges" in areas that adjoin your organic fields.

- **Staggered plantings**

The goal is to have your corn and neighboring GMO corn pollinate at different times, to reduce the chance of cross-pollination. By keeping track of your and your neighbors' corn tasseling dates, we may be able to determine the likelihood of pollen contamination. Document the following: dominant wind direction, distance between fields, planting and tasseling dates

- **Planting of Buffer Areas**

Rather than leave your buffer areas unplanted and just mowing them, plant them! If corn pollen drift is a concern, plant corn in the buffer area. This way, pollen travel can be limited to the first several rows, as these "buffer corn plants" trap incoming pollen, whereas a mown grass buffer would allow pollen to reach your certified organic crop. You would then sacrifice a specific number of cornrows as a buffer, either by letting your neighbor harvest it or harvesting it yourself and selling it as

This guidance sheet developed by

Pennsylvania Certified Organic • 106 School Street, Suite 201 • Spring Mills, PA 16875
(814) 422-0251 • fax (814) 422-0255 info@paorganic.org www.paorganic.org

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conventional. This is a critical point in maintaining organic integrity by storing your buffer crop well separated from your organic crop.

Windbreak or hedgerow plantings can also reduce the amount of pollen drifting onto your fields, but a planting of corn is preferable, as it is specifically designed to trap corn pollen. Tall hedgerows can create wind turbulence behind them (as much as 2 X the height of the hedgerow), and this area should ideally not be used for an organic crop, if pollen from neighboring GMO crops is likely to be a problem there.

Other areas of possible contamination:

- **Seed Source**

Always make sure you use seeds bred through traditional methods only, including hybrids, and save your seed labels! Obtain statements from seed companies concerning the non-GMO status of the varieties to be planted. Forms for these statements are available from PCO by request. Keep GMO statements with your certification records

- **Seed Inoculants**

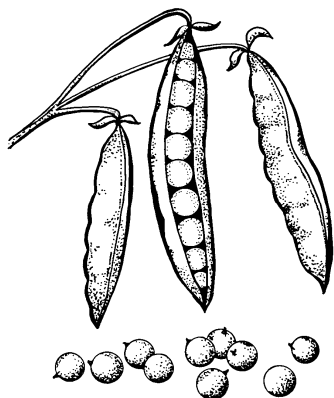
Before using inoculants, make sure they are not a GMO-product. The PCO office has a list of allowed inoculants for which we have non-GMO statements on file.

- **Harvest, Handling and Transportation**

Thoroughly clean any equipment used for conventional crops including augers, bins, grain dryers, rotary screen cleaners, etc., before using it for your organic crops. Write down what equipment was cleaned out, including when and how it was done, and how any purging materials were used.

- **Storage**

Make sure you have separate storage areas for organic and conventional crops, and that these are well marked.



For further information on GMO issues, and on what GMO varieties are currently on the market, go to www.thecampaign.org (The Campaign to label Genetically Engineered Foods)