

# NUTRITION NEWS & NOTES

## A Quick Guide To Nutritional Engineering

(NAPSA)—While a growing number of people are trying to eat healthy, there is still some confusion about the meaning of some of the terms used to describe the way food is grown or processed.

Here's a guide to some of the more commonly used terms—such as GMO, organic and irradiation—from the experts at Giant Eagle Inc. Supermarkets.

“GMOs” stands for genetically modified organisms. “GM food” is most commonly used to refer to crop plants created for consumption using the latest molecular biology techniques.

These plants are modified to increase resistance to herbicides, improve nutritional content, increase resistance to disease, and reduce the need for pesticides. The FDA states that GM foods are substantially equivalent to non-GM foods and therefore not subject to more stringent labeling.

In 1990, Congress passed the Organic Foods Production Act which defines three levels of organic labeling:

- “100 percent organic” for products containing 100 percent organic ingredients;
- “organic” for products containing 95 to 100 percent organic ingredients; and
- “made with organic ingredients” for products containing 70 to 95 percent organic ingredients.

The USDA Organic seal may appear only on products that are 100 percent organic or contain at



**By law, products labeled “organic” must contain ingredients that are 95 to 100 percent organic.**

least 95 percent organic ingredients.

In food irradiation, the food is exposed to a carefully measured amount of radiant energy for a specific amount of time. Irradiation works by disrupting the organic processes that lead to food decay.

Food irradiation has been researched since 1950 and has been found to be a safe and effective food treatment. Irradiation can also extend the shelf life of many foods at a competitive cost, thereby providing an alternative to the use of fumigants and chemicals.

The experts at Giant Eagle—which now has more than 200 stores—believe irradiation is safe and effective at reducing the risk of food-borne pathogens.

This might be considered a logical step for a chain of stores that in the 1990s created Nature's Basket, making it easier for health-conscious customers to find food and information resources that fit their lifestyle.