

Consumer Rights in the GM Food Labelling— EU Law and Practice

Der-Chin Horng

Institute of European and American Studies, Academia Sinica
No. 128, Sec. 2, Academia Rd., Taipei 11529, Taiwan
E-mail: dchorng@sinica.edu.tw

Abstract

Labelling is compulsory for genetically modified (GM) food in the European Union (EU), based on principles associated with consumer rights, food safety, fair competition, environmental protection, etc. Consumer rights are explicitly provided for in Article 153 of the EC Treaty. GM food labelling is seen to demonstrate that consumer rights are protected through information disclosure and public participation in the EU's policy-making procedures on GM food. As the Lisbon Treaty commits the EU to pursuing common policies in its external relations to safeguard its interests and contribute to the protection of its citizens, it is expected that EU practices, based on consumer protection and civil society, will have a substantial impact on international GM food labelling regulations.

Key Words: EU, consumer rights, GM food labelling, informed choice, civil society