

A Conversation with a Retail Farmer Who Celebrates GMOs: Jamie Johansson

He's against the anti-GMO campaign even though he has no GMO crops.

By Julie Murphree, Arizona Farm Bureau

Jamie Johansson grows olives in Oroville, California and operates an olive oil company, Lodestar Farms. At first blush, you'd not pick him as the first one to advocate for biotech (genetically modified, or GMO) crops. But his story has valuable lessons for Arizona agriculture as we face a possible state-wide initiative to mandate labeling of GMO ingredients.

He is a co-founder of the Sierra Oro Farm Trail Association and a former board member of the California Olive Oil Council.

He served four years on the Oroville City Council, which selected him to serve as vice mayor. His community involvement also includes service on the Oroville Chamber of Commerce board.

He received the Business Advocate of the Year award from the Chico Chamber of Commerce and his farm was named Butte County Specialty Farm of the Year by the Chico Economic Planning Corp. He has served as second vice president of the California Farm Bureau Federation since 2009.

Johansson's Lodestar California Olive Oil Farm has provided olives for 15 award-winning olive oils, including one Best of Show at the prestigious Los Angeles County Fair "Oils Of The World Competition." Johansson is quick to point out, "Though it was not the Lodestar name on those bottles, having your peers within an industry look to your farm for quality has its own satisfying prestige." He started as a behind the scenes farmer providing the olives and olive oil for 10 other California olive oil companies from Santa Barbara to Mendocino.

Interestingly, with over 100 years of olive oil production in Oroville, California, where Lodestar is located, local olive growers carry on the tradition of farming a quality extra virgin olive oil. Oroville, California, the birthplace of commercial California olive production, is the only region in California that can claim a distinct flavor and style.

So, knowing his direct contact with customers, and the fact that there are no GMO olive trees one might not think Johansson is an advocate for GMOs. But he's been in the



Jamie Johansson pouring some of his award-winning olive oil. Approximately 70% of his product is sold directly to the consumer.

modified organisms (GMO)?

Johansson: It's my experience in the industry with this issue. We went through this on the county level when activist groups tried to ban [California farmers] from growing GMOs. That was the start of my education especially since currently there is no biotechnology utilized in olive production or cattle, two of the commodities we deal with here on our farm. But what really fueled my interest was the future potential of biotechnology and what it could possibly mean for all farmers and ultimately everybody.

For me, it was one of those things where you finally realize that you can't limit

fight for more than 10 years. A 2004 quote in *Western Farm Press* regarding the county battle with GMO activists trying to ban the farming of biotech crops gives us a clue. "This whole thing is very serious. It is a political power play by someone who wants to control America's food supply like a third-world dictator." He spearheaded the effort to defeat the anti-GMO initiative in Butte County in California.

He added, "The anti-biotech radicals cloak their campaign against such things as insect-resistant and herbicide-resistant crops by saying biotech crops will harm organic crops."

"There is no threat to organic farming – that is a red herring," said Johansson. "I have friends who are organic olive oil producers and they are opposed to this campaign against GMO crops. However, they are caught in a Catch 22 situation if they come out in opposition. They are afraid."

A first generation farmer beginning in 1993, Johansson is not afraid to wade into this situation. Married with three kids, ages 6, 3 and 2, he explains why. "This is one more tool we need in the toolbox. I want to know that my kids, if they decide to farm, have options that allow them to improve their farming practices."

Arizona Agriculture had a recent conversation with him on this topic.

Arizona Agriculture: How is it possible that you, an olive grower and direct-market farmer from California, would advocate for biotech crops; otherwise known as genetically

Water Rights Bill Prohibits Federal Takings

By Ana Kennedy, Arizona Farm Bureau

The U.S. House of Representatives last month approved Farm Bureau-supported legislation (H.R. 3189) that recognizes states' long-standing authority to confer water rights and retains the position that the federal government will respect those lawfully acquired rights. The legislation is needed in response to the U.S. Forest Service's attempt to extort water rights from federal land permittees in exchange for a renewal of a lease. The bill began in order to protect a ski area in Colorado but other federal lessees realized the same tack could be used by any federal agency dealing with federal land leases.

In protecting privately held water rights, prohibiting federal takings and upholding state water law, the bill would prohibit agencies within the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Department of the Interior from imposing conditions through the permit process that would require the transfer of privately held water rights to the federal government in order to receive or renew the federal permit for the use of land. It also would prohibit the secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture from requiring water users to acquire rights for the United States rather than for the water users themselves.

Further, the bill would assure that valid holders of water rights under state law cannot have those rights diminished or otherwise jeopardized by assertions of rights by federal agencies when those assertions have no basis in federal or state law.

According to Kevin Rogers, President of the Arizona Farm Bureau, "The bill protects Arizona ranchers and farmers on U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management lands and is of particular interest to Arizona as we continue to adjudicate water claims including those made by federal agencies."

There was bipartisan support for H.R. 3189 by the Arizona Congressional delegation with Rep. Barber (D), Rep. Kirkpatrick (D), Rep. Sinema (D), Rep. Salmon (R), and Rep. Schweikert (R) voting in support of the bill. Not supporting the bill were Rep. Grijalva (D) and Rep. Pastor (D). Rep. Franks (R) and Rep. Gosar (R) were not available to vote on the measure.

The bill now moves on to the Senate. Members are encouraged to contact Senator McCain and Senator Flake to urge their support of the Water Rights Protection Act.

For more information regarding H.R. 3189 contact Ana Kennedy at 480.635.3614 or email her at anakennedy@azfb.org.

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We're Missing the Human Connection

An Open Letter by Representative Miranda following a connection made at AgFest.

By Catherine Miranda, Representative for District 27

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines the word ‘disconnect’ as, “to separate (something) from something else: to break a connection between two or more things.”

While I’ve had the statistics of the Arizona Ag Community in front of me, every time I’ve tried to put these facts down on paper and write about them, I’ve realized that there is something missing — the human connection. I couldn’t put my finger on it until I started thinking about the relationships I had begun building as part of the Agriculture and Water Committee with those who I’ll refer to as “the Guardians of Ag.”

I represent Legislative District 27 which includes everything south of Van Buren, down past South Mountain, from Guadalupe towards 107th Avenue. While my district is no longer the Ag powerhouse it once was, it is still home to various agriculture entities such as that of Mr. John Augustine’s nursery. I had the privilege and honor of touring his nursery recently where I saw firsthand the hard work and the overall potential of this industry in our great state. I was already aware that the people in the Ag community were warm, welcoming, and hard working from our numerous encounters at the Capitol, with the Yuma lettuce grower’s tour last year, and from my experience with the Arizona Farm Bureau; however, I was unaware of the various problems and challenges faced by your industry on a daily basis.

You see, I was disconnected from your industry, and therefore could not fully appreciate everything you do for our economy, for our people, and most importantly for our lands and natural resources. I am fortunate in the fact that I have been shown friendship and support from “the Guardians of Ag” as they’ve enlightened me on various issues. Yet, there are still too many of Arizona residents and lawmakers who are disconnected from the Ag Community and therefore do not appreciate the pivotal role this industry plays in their everyday life.

I promise not be disconnected anymore, but instead to serve as a positive voice of strength for the Ag Industry because like you, I, know the value of hard work, the appreciation of our natural resources, and especially the love of our land.

As Wendell Berry stated in his novel, *The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture*, “The soil is the great connector of lives, the source and destination of all. It is the healer and restorer and resurrector, by which disease passes into health, age into youth, death into life. Without proper care for it we can have no community, because without proper care for it we can have no life.”

Thank you for taking care of our precious resources and for doing so, even without the expectation of recognition from anyone. The people that serve this industry are a true inspiration to me, and are the real representation of hard work, honesty, and humility.

Please know that my door will always be open. Thank you for everything you have done and will continue to do. 🚗

State Representative
Catherine Miranda



Representative Miranda met with John Augustine, owner of Desert Tree Farms, in February to learn more about Arizona’s agriculture industry.

Ag Education Fits Perfectly Online

By Julie Murphree, Arizona Farm Bureau

Arizona Farm Bureau’s Ag in the Classroom program continues to roll out new educational material. From our development and implementation of state-standard aligned curriculum to personalized presentations covering a variety of topics, we continue to provide educational information about Arizona agriculture to thousands and thousands of Arizona students annually.

But I’m really excited about our latest endeavors, specifically three new presentations that are now online: *Misconceptions of Agriculture*, *Biotechnology* and *Animal Welfare*. Ag Education Associate Director Katie Aikins developed the newest one, “Biotech What the Heck?” just this last fall. Having discovered overnight their popularity, Aikins just completed putting Biotech and the other two presentations online at Arizona Farm Bureau’s azfb.org website.



We now have three of our educational presentations online!

The three presentations include voiceover so that the viewer simply has to advance each slide and listen to Aikins present on these very important topics to Arizona agriculture and agriculture in general. Because the files are so big (hey, we have lots of very valuable content in each presentation!) for now, each presentation is broken into 2 parts. If you elect to view the presentations, you’ll have to click “slide show” view to see the presentation with the voice over. We hope this does not confuse people, though we’re confident teachers will know what to do.

Also, it takes 30 to 45 seconds to download once you click on the link due to the large file sizes. Be patient, it’s worth the wait. And, if you’re showing the presentation to a group you’ll need to know this beforehand.

Remember to go to azfb.org and select “Programs” in the brown-colored bar. Then from programs, select “Agriculture in the Classroom” in the green box. Select “Teacher resources” then “classroom presentations.” Scroll down to links under Jr. High and High School Presentations. From there you’ll see the 3 hyperlinked presentations.

Hunt for opportunities to share these presentations. Because they’re now online, you have a chance to tell Arizona agriculture’s story and dispel some of today’s myths. 🚗

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GMOs

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yourself. As farmers we need to have a lot of tools in the toolbox and I sincerely believe that biotechnology is another important option for us and for my industry's [olives] future.

For a real-world example right now, look at what Florida's citrus industry is going through with the Asian citrus psyllid that causes Citrus Greening Disease, an invasive insect decimating groves in that state. Biotechnology is emerging as possibly the only option against the disease. Arizona is concerned too from what I understand. It's bad for everyone if we limit ourselves or create a crop that is then given a black mark on the consumer level.

Arizona Agriculture: Is there more to this right-to-know labeling effort than we see on the surface?

Johansson: Going through the campaign [against California's Proposition 37] I can identify three different types of interest groups that we came across. One group is at the consumer level. The average consumer has a true interest in how we farm and what we do to put safe, reliable food on their tables every day. This group wants to truly be educated about our farming practices. It's certainly what we're committed to doing at Farm Bureau. It's what we in agriculture, and me that sells my product at farmers' markets, are committed to doing. Sixty to 70% of what I sell is direct to the consumer.

When we read the language for Proposition 37, we saw two other groups. One group the language revealed was a political mentality that was anti-capitalist, anti-corporate, stick-it-to-the-big-guy mentality. As a small farmer, I realized that it's actually the smaller farmer and the lower-income consumer that gets hurt the most by this mentality.

The third group that the language of California's Proposition 37 exposed was that group that wants to dictate how we farm, where we farm and what type of tools we use to farm.

So, again, the three groups include the sincere consumer who truly wants to learn about our farming practices, the anti-capitalist political philosophy and the group that wants to dictate to us the type of farming we must practice.

Arizona Agriculture: How did you get into this?

Johansson: Well, as second vice president for the California Farm Bureau, when the state-wide initiative came up everyone realized that we'd been successful in Butte County in 2004. We were the first county to defeat a countywide initiative that would have banned farmers from growing genetically modified crops. At that time, the county initiative would have impacted only corn and soybeans. California doesn't grow any soybeans and very little corn. Primarily we're a strong rice county so there was initial concern within the farming community for preserving the integrity of rice and that market, especially the export market. We knew such an initiative could negatively impact any future biotech crops.

So, having been successful in educating the public during that initiative and the science behind genetic modification and the future and what it could hold for farmers

and consumers when Prop 37 came along everyone kind of looked at me. Prop 37 was at the consumer level so it's personal for everybody. The county initiative was personal to the farmer. When we start talking about what's on someone's table then it becomes an entirely different challenge. People should have a right to have a say in what they serve at their table. With Prop 37, we certainly did not want to deny the consumer of that right. At Farm Bureau and as an agriculture industry we have supported a person's right to make a statement whether it is based on an environmental, nutritional or political concern. We support various label programs and a person's right to voluntarily participate in them to serve a niche market whether it's organic or more recently the GMO-Free movement. But that's between a farmer and a consumer; not the government and not a mandate getting between the farmer and the consumer.

The two propositions were completely different. That's what was hardest for us as farmers. In the case of Proposition 37 we wanted to discuss the science. We wanted to defend an industry. But, Prop 37 had nothing to do with science. The science was not on the table. We had to be careful to not confuse the consumer with the science but let them know that there was going to be a pocketbook impact not only for them as a consumer but for their local farmers and their local agriculture community.

They were two different animals. The biggest mistake we make in agriculture is we lean too heavily on the science. If an initiative is talking about labeling, then let's talk about labeling and what that means to the consumer and then what that means to the farmer.

Certainly, they tried a labeling initiative in Oregon a few years ago which failed. Then we defeated it in Prop 37 here in California. We showed consumers the studies that it would cost hundreds of dollars a year extra including what farmers, processors and grocery stores would have to spend in terms of labeling and preserving the identity of that label.

If you talk at the farm level, mandating labeling would require a third-party verification to justify you saying you were GMO-free. Third-party verification always costs money. If you want to prove you are GMO-free — to make it legitimate — you have to pay someone to provide the records and verification to prove that.

There is certainly going to be a cost. Biotechnology is about a 21st century technology. What we wanted to do with the labeling initiative is talk about the labeling.

Arizona Agriculture: How can you argue with right-to-know? I'm an American; I have a right to know!

Johansson: Yes. And with the efforts we've taken at [California] Farm Bureau and also the agriculture community in developing those paths for people who want to know specifically how their food is grown, they can do that through buying organic. Part of why we have organic and that method of farming is so that consumers have that option. Plus, there are a lot of resources that allow consumers to search out products that participate in the GMO-Free project. I'm not going to argue with a consumer who really wants to know about their food. This is a reasonable request. But, let's get consumers information that's actually useful for them when they make their decisions in the marketplace. Prop 37 did nothing to help in this way.

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GMOs

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Arizona Agriculture: How should Arizona’s farmers and ranchers handle this issue?

Johansson: The best thing is to tell your story and what it will cost your farm to comply with mandatory labeling if it’s a labeling issue.

For my farm to comply under California’s Proposition 37, had it become the law of the land, the labor cost alone of filling out the paperwork would have been prohibitive. Ultimately, the third-party verification that would have been required by stores and distributors to protect themselves from lawsuits would have been a cost we haven’t even penciled out yet. It really is hard to put a number on it right now since the initiative did not pass. But I can look at something like the health license I have to get to sell olive oil in the state of California which costs me around \$600 a year. That’s a legitimate license. Then layer on what Prop 37 would have required and the costs for small farms would become prohibitive; this along with the cost of the paperwork.

If you are on Twitter, you might have seen a serious discussion taking place among soybean farmers in terms of the cost to comply with mandatory labeling. I recall them mentioning that the cost to comply would be 50 cents a bushel ... what it would take for their operation to be GMO-free including the tractors and the harvesters and everything else. Plus, you would have to factor in segregation of the process so there would be no co-mingling.

Focus on the legitimate request of consumers in terms of what is happening on our farms. I enjoy giving consumers that information. You are also going to have those people, as I mentioned earlier, who have an ulterior motive.

I use the example of corn syrup. We label for corn syrup. Yet, we still have a lot of people that would like to see corn syrup banned as one of the ingredients in our foods. So ultimately, for many political groups, it’s not just about labeling. Instead it’s certain groups wanting to determine what, when and where we farm.

We label for two reasons: for nutritional information and certainly for any health concerns. Essentially GMO labeling does neither.

From a producer’s and a manufacturer’s standpoint then truly there is no limit for what could be asked for on a label.

The proponents and the supporters of Prop 37 were pretty clear that the ultimate goal would be that GMO labeling has skull and crossbones driving farmers to not use the technology. Another thing with Prop 37 is that it went to a zero tolerance level for any traces of GMOs. They like to talk about the other 50 countries that label for GMOs, however, the GMO labeling proposed in California would have been the strictest in the world and would not have allowed for any GMO presence. The thresholds for GMOs in California through Prop 37 would have been zero percent, which is a stronger standard than what’s allowed for in organics. Because in organics, it’s simply that you took every precaution necessary to avoid GMO contamination and that’s all you have to prove.

Arizona Agriculture: Many contend a patchwork of state-by-state initiatives will obviously hurt more than just agriculture but the food industry. Your take?

Johansson: This point was a bit more difficult in California because we are a large market. It’s also why we were the prized catch in the GMO labeling quest because they figured that if California passed a mandatory GMO initiative since our market is so

large manufacturers would have been likely to put it into Oregon, Washington, Nevada and perhaps even Arizona. You have a situation in Connecticut where recently their legislature passed GMO enabling legislation but only if the other surrounding states joined them like New York, for example. If for your state you have to do specific packaging and labeling, your consumers are going to be at a greater financial disadvantage than anywhere else in the country.

So, if something is going to be done, it needs to be done at a national level.

Arizona Agriculture: Why did you stick your neck out like you did on behalf of California Farm Bureau and the industry in general? We heard you even got death threats!

Johansson: Yes. It’s just one of those things you do when you find yourself in a leadership position. It’s kind of what you sign up for. I do hope that biotechnology is a solution that will benefit my farm in the future. A lot of these solutions will come through with better technology, like biotechnology, and what we’re doing in our orchards, for example.

Even though a biotech crop for the olive industry does not exist, I’m willing to look down the road to the possibilities knowing that more and more is expected from the market. I’ve seen the advantages of biotech with other crops. Ultimately, I’m also convinced that the consumer will respond better to a farmer, a retail farmer, that’s been honest with them from the beginning about this technology.

The encouraging part is that you run into those people who truly want to understand; who have been fed a lot of misinformation, whether it’s the science or what’s happening on the farm level, who have never heard anyone speak up and tell a different story ... the real story about our amazing agriculture system. When they do hear from us, you can see the light bulb go off in their head. They then see the potential in the technology. Then the real education and dialogue can begin.

In a forum, I tell consumers that I’ve seen the advantages of this technology and how successfully it works on the farm and that it’s another tool for farmers to continue to make American food the safest, most affordable food there is in the world. And, if they want to go into the science, then I tell them, the science is in. This technology is not inherently more dangerous than conventional breeding. If someone wants to go more into labeling and right-to-know then that’s when I go into discussing how this has very little to do with right-to-know because the majority of the food you will come into contact with you don’t know anything about it. It will not be labeled.

I have confidence in the average Joe that they don’t want to pay for someone else’s politics. You have a right to your politics and you have a right to make a statement with your food purchases and there are avenues that allow you to do that. Farm Bureau has supported those avenues in the consumer markets but the individual and the farmer have to take responsibility for paying for that. It can’t be a blanket fee on everybody.

In agriculture, never put industry in a position to be shut off from a technology that could help the farm and ultimately the consumer. No matter what the other side says on the GMO issue, they can’t say this is about the science because the labeling they’re requiring has nothing to do with the science. They don’t want to get into the science argument. 🚜

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June 5 & 6, 2014



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- June 5

6:30 p.m.

(Casual or western attire)

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• Play the "Believe it or Not" Game. Hosted by Sherry Saylor, Vice-Chair of the American Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee, Arizona Farm Bureau Ex-Officio board member, and cotton, wheat and alfalfa farmer in Buckeye.
- June 6

7:30 a.m.

(Business casual attire)

Registration and Continental Breakfast
- 8:00

Call to Order
- 8:30

Sharla Mortimer, Chairman, AZFB Women's Leadership Committee

BioTech, What the Heck

Katie Aikins, Arizona Farm Bureau's Ag Education Associate Director. In this presentation and workshop, Katie addresses both sides of the agriculture biotechnology issue. She will share the facts, her knowledge and challenge each of us to become better spokesman for agriculture.

...And Much More!

✂

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Postmarked after May 8, 2014

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Persons with a disability may request a reasonable accommodation, such as a sign language interpreter, by contacting Monica Pastor 602.827.8200. Requests should be made as early as possible to allow time to arrange the accommodation.

Young Farmers Remain Concerned

About Land Availability

American Farm Bureau Survey Report with Contributions by Julie Murphree, Arizona Farm Bureau

Securing adequate land to grow crops and raise livestock was the top challenge identified again this year in the American Farm Bureau Federation's annual outlook survey of participants in the Young Farmers & Ranchers program. That challenge was identified by 22 percent of respondents, followed by economic challenges, particularly profitability, which was identified by 15 percent of the respondents.

"For young people today, securing adequate land to begin farming or expand an established farm or ranch is a major challenge," said Jake Carter, AF-BF's national YF&R Committee chair and a farmer from Georgia. "Another major challenge is figuring out how to excel—not just survive—in today's economy," he said.

"In Arizona, labor is the biggest thing we're dealing with as well as water," says Arizona Farm Bureau's Young Farmer & Rancher Chair, Eric Rovey. "Without labor and water, even with the land, it doesn't do us much good." Part of a dairy family heritage, Rovey believes agriculture in Arizona has great continuing potential and suggests that keeping land, labor and water a priority focus will help young farmers and ranchers succeed into the future.

Other issues ranked as top concerns by young farmers and ranchers included burdensome government regulations and red tape, 12 percent; availability of farm labor and related regulations, 9 percent; water availability and urbanization of farm land, 7 percent each; and health care availability and cost, 6 percent.

The 22nd annual YF&R survey revealed that 91 percent of those surveyed are more optimistic about farming and ranching than they were five years ago. Last year, 90 percent of those surveyed said they were more optimistic about farming compared to five years ago.

The 2014 survey also shows 93 percent of the nation's young farmers and ranchers say they are better off than they were five years ago. Last year, 83 percent reported being better off.

More than 91 percent considered themselves lifetime farmers, while 88 percent would like to see their children follow in their footsteps. The informal survey reveals that 87 percent believe their children will be able to follow in their footsteps.

The majority of those surveyed—69 percent—consider communicating with consumers a formal part of their jobs. Many use social media platforms as a tool to accomplish this. The popular social media site Facebook is used by 74 percent of those surveyed. Twenty-two percent of respondents said they use the social networking site Twitter, 16 percent have a farm blog or webpage and 13 percent use YouTube to post videos of their farms and ranches.

"Use of technology and all the tools at our fingertips to not only improve production practices on the farm but also to interact with consumers—our customers—among young farmers continues to grow," Carter said. "Use of social media platforms, personal outreach through farm tours, agri-tourism, farmers' markets or a combination of these methods is where we're at today," he added.

High-speed Internet is used by 71 percent of those surveyed, with 28 percent relying on a satellite connection and fewer than 2 percent turning to dialup.

New this year, the young farmers and ranchers were asked about their rural entrepreneurship efforts, with 40 percent reporting they had started a new business in the last three years or plan to start one in the near future.

The survey also shows that America's young farmers and ranchers are committed environmental caretakers, with 55 percent using conservation tillage to protect soil and reduce erosion on their farms.

AFBF President Bob Stallman said the results of the YF&R survey point to the future of U.S. agriculture being in good hands.

The informal survey of young farmers and ranchers, ages 18-35, was conducted at AFBF's 2014 YF&R Leadership Conference in Virginia Beach, Va., in February. The purpose of the YF&R program is to help younger members learn more about farming and ranching, network with other farmers and strengthen their leadership skills to assist in the growth of agriculture and Farm Bureau.



Part of a family dairy heritage and current chair of Arizona Farm Bureau's Young Farmers & Ranchers, Eric Rovey believes agriculture in Arizona has great continuing potential and suggests that keeping land, labor and water top priorities will help young farmers and ranchers succeed into the future.

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News Briefs

Supreme Court Upholds Landowner Rights

The Supreme Court sided last month with a Wyoming landowner who challenged the Forest Service’s construction of a bicycle trail on an abandoned railway that slices through his property. This case involves an 1875 railroad easement, of which there are many throughout the western United States. The American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) filed an Amicus Brief in support of the landowner. AFBF argued that the United States does not retain an “implied reversionary interest” in land patented to private owners. Nor does the United States retain an “implied reversionary interest” in a railroad right-of-way easement established under the Act of 1875. The Tenth Circuit erred when it concluded the United States retained such an interest.

By an 8-1 vote, the justices held in *Marvin Brandt Revocable Trust v. United States* that the government had no right to Brandt’s Fox Park tract once the railroad formally abandoned the property around 2004. The Court found that the U.S. has no reversionary interest in a 1987 railroad easement — the easement reverts to the adjacent/underlying landowner upon abandonment (unless something in the patent says otherwise).

Chief Justice John Roberts, writing for the majority wrote, “Basic common law principles resolve this case. When the Wyoming and Colorado Railroad abandoned the right of way in 2004, the easement referred to in the Brandt patent terminated. Brandt’s land became unburdened of the easement, conferring on him the same full rights over the right of way as he enjoyed over the rest of the Fox Park parcel.”

“The ruling is a great win for property rights which should help preclude future property takings by the government,” said AFBF’s Director of Congressional Relations Ryan R. Yates.

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This is a free service. Groups are asked to feed our speakers if they meet during breakfast, lunch or dinner.

To sign up as a speaker, contact Peggy Jo Goodfellow at 480.635.3609 or peggyjogoodfellow@azfb.org.

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Sourcing for Answers about GMOs? 10 Places to Check Out

By Julie Murphree, Arizona Farm Bureau

As reporters, we’re extensively taught in journalism school about our sources; how it’s important to hear and investigate all sides of the issue. That’s still important today (at least it should be).



In fact, we should be skeptical from any one source that contends something is “all good” or “all bad.” On the GMO front [genetically modified organisms] we have too many telling us this issue is “all bad” or “all good.” Nothing is perfect, right?

If you do an Internet search, you’ll find mostly “all the bad” as it relates to GMOS. So, if we want a well-rounded listing of sources, I’d encourage you to check out the following as it relates to the GMO — biotech — topic.

1. Best Food Facts features information from university-based experts (PhDs and RDs) on many facets of food production, preparation and consumption: www.bestfoodfacts.org

2. Biology Fortified provides information and fosters discussion about issues in biology with an emphasis

on plant genetics and GMOs: www.Biofortified.org.

3. Common Ground promotes conversation between women who grow food and women who buy it: www.findourcommonground.com.

4. CropLife International Database includes nearly 500 scientific studies chronicling the safety and benefits of agricultural biotechnology: <http://biotech-benefits.croplife.org>

5. U.S. Farmers & Ranchers Alliance focuses on creating dialogue around current topics related to food production: www.fooddialogues.com

6. Food Insight from the International Food Information Council provides numerous resources on GM Foods: www.foodinsight.org/

7. GENERA Database (also by Biology Fortified) makes studies on GM foods easy to find: www.biofortified.org/genera/guide/

8. GMO Answers enables consumers to ask questions about GMOs and get answers from independent and industry experts: www.gmoanswers.com

9. The International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications provides communication materials and annual updates on the global status of GM crops: www.isaaa.com

10. Grocery Manufacturers Association provides facts and the latest news on GMOs including the food industry’s position on mandatory GMO labeling: www.factsaboutGMOS.com

Today, we have access to a wealth of information. Maybe it’s time to tap that treasure-trove of information and get the facts! 🚗



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