

Campbell Soup first to start GMO labeling

BY SUBRAT PATNAIK
AND SIDDHARTH CAVALE
REUTERS

Campbell Soup Co. said it will label all its U.S. products for the presence of ingredients derived from genetically modified organisms, becoming the first major food company to respond to growing calls for more transparency about contents in food.

The world's largest soup maker broke ranks with peers and said it supported the enactment of federal legislation for a single mandatory labeling standard for GMO-derived foods and a national standard for non-GMO claims made on food packaging.

The company, which also makes Pepperidge Farm cookies and Prego pasta sauces, said it would withdraw from all efforts by groups opposing such measures.

Several activist groups have been pressuring food companies to be more transparent about the use of ingredients, especially GMO-derived ones, amid rising concerns about their effects on health and the environment.

Several big companies such as PepsiCo Inc., Kel-

The six biggest agrochemical and biotech seed companies spent more than \$21.5 million to help defeat a 2012 California proposition labeling proposition, according to state election data

logg Co. and Monsanto have resisted such calls and have spent millions of dollars to defeat GMO-labeling ballot measures in states such as Oregon, Colorado, Washington and California, saying it would add unnecessary costs.

Monsanto said in a statement Friday that it sells seeds to farmers, and does not manufacture or sell food products from crops grown from those seeds.

The six biggest agrochemical and biotech seed companies — Monsanto, Dupont, Dow AgroSciences, Bayer CropScience, BASF Plant Science and Syngenta AG — spent more than \$21.5 million to help defeat a 2012 California proposition labeling proposition, according to state election data.

However, in 2014, Vermont became the first U.S. state to pass a law requiring food companies to label GMOs on their products, which will come into effect in July.

Pro-labeling groups such as Environmental Working Group and Just Label It cheered Campbell's move.

"We applaud Campbell's for supporting national, mandatory GMO labeling," Scott Faber, senior vice president of government affairs at EWG said.

Advocacy group Just Label It said Campbell's move was a step closer to reaching the goal of a federally crafted national GMO labeling solution.

Campbell said late on Thursday that if a federal solution is not achieved in some time, it was prepared to label all its U.S. products for the presence of ingredients that were derived from GMOs and would seek guidance from the FDA and approval by the USDA.

The Grocery Manufacturers Association, which represents more than 300 food companies opposed to mandatory GMO labeling, said it respected the rights of individual members to



REUTERS FILE
Cans of Campbell's brand Chunky soups are seen at a supermarket in Wheaton, Maryland, in 2015. Campbell Soup Co. said it will label all its U.S. products for the presence of ingredients derived from genetically modified organisms, becoming the first major food company to respond to growing calls for more transparency about contents in food.

communicate with their customers in whatever manner they deem appropriate.

However, the GMA said it was "imperative" that Congress acted immediately to prevent the expansion of a costly patchwork of state labeling laws that would ultimately hurt consumers who can least afford higher food prices.

Kellogg and Pepsi were not immediately available to comment on Campbell's move.

Campbell said in July that it would stop adding monosodium glutamate to its condensed soups for children and use non-

genetically modified ingredients sourced from American organic farms in its Campbell's organic soup line for kids.

The company also said it would remove artificial colors and flavors from nearly all of its North American products by July 2018.

Tea

Continued from Page C1

gotten to be a mess, we are harvesting a native plant that grows wild in Maine," Mooradian said. "I am hoping to make it more popular. It's moderately popular now."

Tea's health properties are no secret.

"Tea has always been, for 5,000 years, a medicinal herb. Tea is very, very healthy. More people drink tea because of health. That part never leaves," Mooradian said.

But specialists such as Russo don't lead with that. The pragmatist is not a tea pusher.

"If someone doesn't like tea, they should drink wine and eat vegetables," said Russo. "You should enjoy what you are drinking and eating. The whole idea of having tea is pleasure."



KATHLEEN PIERCE | BDN
Marianne Russo blends numerous varieties of tea at Nellie's Tea and Gifts.

Here are several brewing tips:



- **Black tea:** Hot off the boil. Let leaves steep three to five minutes.
- **Green tea:** Let water cool for a few minutes before pouring it over the leaves. Green leaves are more sensitive and delicate than black leaves. Steep for one to three minutes. Japanese green teas need less time.
- **Oolongs:** Oolongs fall somewhere in between. Steep two to five minutes.
- **Best method:** Put the leaves in the pot or cup, then pour water over the leaves. That begins the agitation: "The agony of the leaves is like a dance."
- **Why steep?** Steeping brings out the flavor into the water
- **Herbals teas:** Chamomile and elderflower are not technically tea but rather herbal infusions.



COURTESY OF JERRY IRELAND
The Homegrown by Heroes label is a new seal of approval in Maine. It means these products were made, grown and farmed by a veteran.

Veterans

Continued from Page C1

using to veterans. All these initiatives help "advance the business plan of our veteran farmers," said Ireland, who, despite his own injuries suffered in duty, taps maple trees, makes honey and raises 200 chickens.

He also planted 250 apple trees and farms livestock. Soon he will opening a general store.

"I look at it as a business, not just a farm," Ireland, 40, said.

Why do former military members make good farmers?

"Veterans bring similar skill sets to the table. From survival to changing on the fly. ... You always prepare for three courses of action: When you get there, none of those plans work," Ireland said. "All of those translate into huge successes in the farming world."

Just like local, organic and non-GMO, farming veterans have their own label to set their product

apart in the marketplace. The Homegrown By Heroes sticker slapped on goods from maple syrup to soap to pork is a new seal of approval. And for its producers, it's much more than branding.

"The pride I felt as a veteran on active duty is lost along the way in civilian life. You put it on a shelf," Ireland, a farmer for 3½ years, said. "With the label, we get that sense of pride and ownership back."

At 10 a.m. Tuesday, products such as pork, barbecue sauce and maple syrup carrying the Homegrown By Heroes label will be showcased, and a chef from Searsport will hold a cooking demonstration. A press conference follows.

From 10 to 11 a.m. Thursday, a workshop called "Meet Your Farmer Veteran" will showcase five farming veterans who will share their stories and take questions from the public.

The Agricultural Trades show at the Augusta Civic Center and is free. For more information, visit getreal-maine.com.

Winter gardening class in Brunswick

BRUNSWICK — The Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust's Tom Settlemyre Community Garden does not let winter in Maine stand in the way of conversations about gardening. The fifth annual Winter Gardening Workshop series will be held 2-3:30 p.m. beginning Sunday, Jan. 10, at St. Paul's Episcopal Church at the corner of Pleasant and Union Streets in Brunswick.

Other workshop dates are Jan. 24 and 31, Feb. 21, March 6 and 20.

The series is appropriate for gardeners of all levels including beginning and novice gardeners. Workshops focus on organic gardening methods and cover a wide range of subjects. This year topics include growing vegetables in Maine, selecting native woody plants, growing small fruits, pruning techniques, and gardening without aches and pains.

The series has been consistently popular, regularly attracting 70 to 100 people to each workshop.

Intermediate beekeeping course

ELLSWORTH — The University of Maine Cooperative Extension at Hancock County will offer a six-week Intermediate Beekeeping course intended for the beekeeper with at least a season or two of keeping bees.

Classes will be held 6:30-8:30 p.m. Wednesdays, Jan. 20 and 27, and Feb. 3, 10, 17 and 24, at 63 Boggy Brook Road.

The course covers fewer topics more deeply than the beginner's class and concentrates on keeping bees successfully in this area. There will be a private Facebook group for the class to expand on discussions started in class, and for the instructor to post additional articles and video links.

The cost is \$60. Preregistration is required and can be done online at <http://umaine.edu/hancock/intermediate-beekeeping/>.

Knotty Knitters in Damariscotta

DAMARISCOTTA — The Knotty Knitters with Carole Howland will provide instruction and materials for those who wish to learn to knit and knitters who wish to work on projects of their own 1-3 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 19, at Spectrum Generations Coastal Community Center, 521 Main St. Class fee, materials provided is \$5. Drop-in donation is \$1. For information and to express interest, call 563-1363.

75th Maine Agricultural Trades Show Jan. 12-14 in Augusta

AUGUSTA — The 75th annual Maine Agricultural Trades Show will be held Tuesday-Thursday, Jan. 12-14, at the Augusta Civic Center. Hosted by the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, the show highlights Maine agriculture and the people involved through demonstrations, presentations and meetings of nearly 40 major agricultural organizations.

There will be more than 120 exhibits featuring the newest in agricultural products, equipment and services. One of the state's largest agricultural exhibitions, the event is expected to draw more than 5,000 people over the course of three days. Hours will be 9

a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 12; 9 a.m.-7 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 13; and 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 14. Admission is free and open to the public.

Gov. Paul R. LePage will be on hand Tuesday for the Trades Show opening day, to highlight the economic importance of agriculture to Maine. He will join Commissioner Walt Whitcomb in publicly recognizing this year's recipient of the Commissioner's Distinguished Service Award.

This year's show features several new offerings for attendees in addition to a wide variety of presentations covering diverse topics of interest. New 2016 program highlights also include:

- Market access semi-

nars for Maine food interests entering the world export markets.

- Instructions for growing beef production and processing.
- A farmers market in the Augusta Civic Center for vendors to show their wares to food buyers.
- Dozens of other meetings to advance the output of Maine farms and the return to Maine farmers.
- Somerset Auction House Co. Farm Auction to benefit the Maine FFA Association.

The show also provides opportunities for growers, conventional and organic, to learn the latest developments in pest management and earn credits required for pesticide license recertification. The Maine Board of

Pesticides Control will also be on hand to discuss basic safety training.

This three-day event has something for everyone, the farmer, non-farmer, hobbyist, educator or supplier. Attendees can walk through, observe and learn about how food is harvested and processed. Farmers and producers can see the most up-to-date farm equipment and processing methods and equipment.

The complete program and schedule are available at: <http://www.getrealmaine.com/>.

For information about the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, go to: <http://www.maine.gov/dacf>.

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