

# A013

TOPIC: GENETICS

## Study Genetically Modified Food Crops

PROPOSER

Standing Commission on Anglican and International Peace with Justice Concerns

ENDORSED BY

SPONSORED BY

PAGE NUMBER(S) FOR REFERENCE

Blue Book: p. 99; Constitution & Canons: p. N/A

HOUSE OF INITIAL ACTION / LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

HD / National and International Concerns

CURRENT FILING STATUS

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REVIEW STATUS (PB&F, CONSTITUTION, CANONS)

None required

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RESOLUTION TEXT

1 ~~Resolved, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 77th General Convention~~  
2 ~~seek to inform the Church of the issues surrounding the development of~~  
3 ~~genetically engineered crop plants and the patenting of genetically modified~~  
4 ~~organisms (GMOs); by charging the Standing Commission on Anglican and~~  
5 ~~International Peace with Justice Concerns, the Standing Commission on Health,~~  
6 ~~the Executive Council Committee on Science, Technology and Faith, the Standing~~  
7 ~~Commission on Social Justice and Public Policy, and other CCABs deemed~~  
8 ~~relevant, to jointly study those issues and report to the 78th General Convention;~~  
9 ~~and be it further~~

10 ~~Resolved, That in commissioning such study, the 77th General Convention intend~~  
11 ~~to empower the 78th General Convention to take action toward developing policy~~  
12 ~~that will allow the Office of Government Relations to address these issues as they~~  
13 ~~relate to Congressional farm bills and other federal policy or legislation; and be it~~  
14 ~~further~~

15 ~~Resolved, That the 77th General Convention seek to empower with information~~  
16 ~~those organizations of The Episcopal Church that strive to address equity and~~  
17 ~~social justice in matters such as global economic development, the environment,~~  
18 ~~sustainable agriculture, health, and nutrition; and be it further~~

19 ~~Resolved, That the 77th General Convention encourage individual Episcopalians~~  
20 ~~seek to undertake study about GMOs and reflection upon the theology and~~  
21 ~~stewardship of creation; to learn about the influence both domestic and globally~~  
22 ~~of GMOs upon agriculture, economic development, the environment, alleviation~~  
23 ~~of hunger, and biodiversity.~~

24 ~~Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, That the 77th General Convention~~  
25 ~~seek to inform the Church of the issues surrounding the development of~~  
26 ~~genetically engineered crop plants and the patenting of genetically modified~~  
27 ~~organisms (GMOs) by requesting that the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with~~  
28 ~~the President of the House of Deputies, establish a volunteer task force~~  
29 ~~consisting of fifteen members including scientists, ethicists, advocates, clergy,~~  
30 ~~farmers, advisors on population health, and others active in agriculture and~~  
31 ~~development, with the charge to study and report recommendations to~~  
32 ~~Executive Council and to the 78th General Convention to help guide church~~

33 *public policy advocacy concerning genetically modified crops and organisms,*  
34 *recommendations that weigh the following factors as well as others deemed*  
35 *critical by the task force:*

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37 *a) food security, biodiversity, and sustainability of yields;*

38 *b) environmental degradation, including levels of pesticide usage;*

39 *c) health, nutrition and disease, including potential creation of new plant,*  
40 *animal and human pathogens; and*

41 *d) potential monopolization and trade inequities; and be it further*

42

43 *Resolved, That in commissioning such study, the 77th General Convention*  
44 *intend to empower the 78th General Convention to take action toward*  
45 *developing policy that will allow the Office of Government Relations to address*  
46 *these issues as they relate to Congressional farm bills and other federal policy or*  
47 *legislation; and be it further*

48 *Resolved, That the 77th General Convention seek to empower with information*  
49 *those organizations of The Episcopal Church that strive to address equity and*  
50 *social justice in matters such as global economic development, the environment,*  
51 *sustainable agriculture, health, and nutrition; and be it further*

52 *Resolved, That the 77th General Convention encourage individual Episcopalians*  
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54 *stewardship of creation; to learn about the influence both domestic and globally*  
55 *of GMOs upon agriculture, economic development, the environment, alleviation*  
56 *of hunger, and biodiversity.*

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#### EXPLANATION

With the development of strains of genetically modified foods crops and their dissemination worldwide, concerns are being raised about the impact of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) on ecological sustainability and global economic justice.

The issue of patenting geneplasm and other life forms raises both general and contextually specific ethical questions. When the question arises about patenting crop seeds, the particular considerations have much to do with economic justice for small-scale farmers. This applies to family farmers and sustainable farming in the United States, and especially to small-scale and subsistence farmers in the developing world.

The Executive Council commissioned a report on these issues in 2011 and has sought counsel from experts in the field. Given that these are complex issues, pertinent to both domestic and international policy, The Episcopal Church would do well to follow the example of the Lutheran Church of America and other denominations in seeking to identify the moral, ethical and theological principles involved.