



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EAT LOCAL! Week Event Highlights “The Great GMO Debate”

Four Local Speakers to Shift Controversy Beyond Scientific and Economic Perspectives

Boulder, CO (Aug. 24)—A major event in Transition Colorado’s EAT LOCAL! Week is an evening of four “TED Talk” style presentations exploring aspects of the GMO issue that are rarely given voice in the current debate, to be held at Unity of Boulder, 2855 Folsom St., Tues., Aug. 30, at 7:00 p.m. The goal is to raise the level of public discourse about GMOs in the local food system.

In 2009, controversy erupted in Boulder County over the proposed use of GMO sugar beets on county-owned Open Space land. Still unresolved, the conflict has widened to call into question the use of GMOs in local agriculture and a public demand for labeling of all GMO food products.

Meanwhile, the cropland policy process mandated by the county commissioners and being managed by Parks and Open Space (POS) drags on, with tensions mounting dramatically. Recent meetings of the Cropland Policy Advisory Group (CPAG) seemingly have only deepened the divide between conventional farmers and increasingly vocal opponents of GMOs.

As the debate rages on, limited primarily to scientific and economic perspectives, the eyes of the world are on Boulder County, watching to see what happens here over this vital issue. The stakes are high.

Activist groups have been ratcheting up the heat. In response to public outcry, POS has recently bowed to pressure and reluctantly agreed to include the voice of the people in their process, which to date has explicitly excluded citizen comment (except for written comments), focusing instead on discussions with the members of CPAG and a few outside experts.

To provide needed counterpoint, Transition Colorado will host a series of four 15-minute presentations by some of the most articulate local voices who can provide a broader perspective on the issues. After the presentations, the four speakers—all Boulder County residents—will share a discussion and invite questions and comments from the audience.

PRESENTERS

Robyn O’Brien (author of *The Unhealthy Truth*) became galvanized by the food-caused health crisis of her children, and is a leading advocate of GMO-free food. **Rich Pecoraro** of Abbondanza Organic Seeds & Produce is considered by many one of the wisest and most articulate “beyond

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organic" farmers in Boulder County. **Mark Guttridge** of Ollin Farms in Longmont is a rising young local star in the organic farming scene, and is a strong proponent of sustainable agriculture. Speaking to the broader moral and ethical issues will be **Michael Brownlee** of Transition Colorado, also a former member of the Food and Agriculture Policy Council.

Admission for the event is \$5 at the door.

Major sponsors of EAT LOCAL! Week include Localization Partners LLC, AM760, Chipotle, Slow Money, Chautauqua, Madhava, Lyons Farmette, Boulder Weekly, and the Rocky Mountain Sustainable Living Fair.

Full details for all EAT LOCAL! Week events are available at www.TransitionColorado.org.

Boulder-based Transition Colorado is a leader in the international movement to build community resilience and self-reliance in response to converging global crises—fossil fuel depletion, climate change, and economic instability. Through its EAT LOCAL! Campaign the organization is focused on catalyzing localization of food systems in the Colorado Front Range and beyond.

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