



the Desk of  
Senator  
Hansell

## **SB 863 - Preempts Local Governments from Regulating Farmers' Seed Choices and Genetically Engineered Crops**

SB 863 would ensure that agriculture seed and seed products are only regulated at the state and federal levels, preempting additional regulations by local municipalities. This would prevent a potential patchwork of 36 different county regulations, and over 400 city regulations on agricultural seed. Plant breeding, including genetic engineering (GE) is an extremely complex process and counties lack the financial and scientific resources to regulate these products.

### **What is agriculture biotechnology?**

This technology is perhaps the single most important innovation that's helping our farmers be the most productive and efficient producers in the world. Modern agriculture biotechnology refers to genetic modification using recombinant DNA (rDNA) methods to bring together genetic material from multiple sources. It enables them to grow more crops using fewer costly inputs, while significantly improving agriculture's impact on the environment and helping cope with the biggest challenges we face from nature and from a growing world population.

***Genetic modification is not new in agriculture.*** Modern biotechnology is just the latest in a long progression aimed at improving plants and animals for the benefit of mankind, starting with domestication of crops and livestock and including selective breeding and more recent gene modification techniques.

The primary commercial biotech crops grown today are corn, soybeans and cotton, as well as other crops such as alfalfa, sugarbeets, canola, papaya, squash and sweet corn. ***In the U.S. over 50% of cropland and 90% of major export commodities are grown with seeds improved through modern biotechnology.***

***Agriculture products derived from modern biotechnology are the most thoroughly reviewed and strictly regulated in history.*** Since 1986, the U.S. has regulated plants improved through biotechnology under the Coordinated Framework for the Regulation of Biotechnology. Three federal agencies share regulatory responsibilities:

- The U.S. Department of Agriculture
- The Environmental Protection Agency
- The Food and Drug Administration

***The overwhelming scientific consensus on the safety of modern biotechnology is unequivocal.*** The U.S. government, the World Health Organization, the American Medical Association, and the National Academy of Science all agree that food derived from biotechnology is just as safe as, and in some cases safer than, any other food.

## **Support SB 863**



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