

# Words on Wellness

Your extension connection to nutrition and fitness

## Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) Explained

Misinformation about the safety of GMOs is widespread today, especially on the Internet. Dr. Ruth MacDonald, professor and chair of the department of food science and human nutrition at Iowa State University, answers some common questions about GMOs.



### Why do we use GMO technology?

GMO technology allows farmers to use fewer pesticides and fertilizers on their fields and produce higher quality and greater yields of crops. This has the potential to result in less damage to the environment and in lower food prices.

### How are GMO crops made?

To make a GMO crop like corn, scientists insert a very carefully selected section of DNA into the corn plant. The DNA is converted by the plant, as part of the corn's own DNA, into a protein. That protein gives the corn plant the ability to resist a herbicide or prevent a pest from damaging the plant. The added DNA and protein affect only the pests and herbicides, not people or animals. The added DNA and protein are broken down when we eat them, just like all the other DNA and protein already in the plant.

### Are foods made with GMO plants safe to eat?

We eat DNA and proteins all the time! Every living thing, including plants, animals, and bacteria contain DNA and protein. The added versions, such as those found in GMO foods, are not different. Since the beginning of agriculture, farmers have been combining and selecting varieties to improve crops. Using modern tools, scientists speed up this process and make it much more specific.

Most of the major health organizations including the American Medical Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics have declared that foods from GMO plants are safe. Farm animals have been consuming GMO grain for many years and the meat, milk, and eggs they produce are safe and healthy for people to eat. Farmers in the United States have been growing GMO corn and soybeans for almost 20 years and these foods and ingredients have been part of our food system all along. To date, there have been no reported cases of sickness from or allergic reactions to foods grown using GMO technology.

### Is the use of GMO technology monitored?

Before farmers can grow foods that contain GMO technology, rigorous testing is done to make sure the plants are safe for the environment, animals, and humans. Government agencies, including the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), carefully examine the plants for safety and only those that pass are allowed to be grown.

### Are GMO foods labeled?

FDA scientists are responsible for food labels, and they agree that foods produced with GMO technology are as safe and nutritious as other foods—and therefore do not need to be labeled. Some food companies have chosen not to use GMO ingredients in their products, like Cheerios®. General Mills, the company that makes Cheerios®, has said that they are not concerned about the safety of GMOs but believe some consumers might want to have a choice.

For more information about GMOs visit: [www.GMOAnswers.com](http://www.GMOAnswers.com) and [www.foodintegrity.org](http://www.foodintegrity.org)



## Scrambled Egg Muffins

**Serves: 6 (Serving size: 1 muffin)**

### Ingredients

- 2 cups washed vegetables, diced (e.g. broccoli, peppers, onion, mushrooms, tomatoes, or spinach)
- 6 eggs
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 cup low fat cheddar cheese, shredded

### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray muffin tin with nonstick spray.
2. Add chopped veggies to the muffin tin.
3. Beat eggs in a bowl. Stir in salt, pepper, and garlic powder.
4. Pour eggs into the muffin tin and bake 20-25 minutes. To add cheese, remove the tin from the oven during the last 3 minutes of baking. Sprinkle the cheese on top of the muffins and return the tin to the oven.
5. Bake until the internal temperature reaches 160°F or a knife inserted near the center comes out clean.

**Meal Idea:** Serve extras in tortillas or with a green salad and roll.

### Nutritional information per serving

100 calories, 6 g total fat (2 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat), 215 mg cholesterol, 230 mg sodium, 3 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 1 g sugar, 9 g protein

Source: *Spend Smart Eat Smart* <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/foodsavings/>



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## Spring: An Egg-citing Time of Year!

Cooking, coloring, hiding, and eating eggs are a sign of the season. Follow these easy tips to ensure the safety of the eggs.

1. Use eggs that have been properly stored in the refrigerator and are not past their "use by date." Uncooked eggs can be stored three to five weeks in the refrigerator.
2. To hard cook eggs, put eggs in a single layer in a pan; completely cover all eggs with cold water. Cover the pan and bring the water to a boiling point; then turn off the heat, and leave pan on the burner for 15-17 minutes. Cool under cold running water to stop the cooking process.
3. Refrigerate hard-cooked eggs in their cartons if you won't be coloring them right after cooking and cooling. Refrigerate the eggs again right after you dye them. Cooked eggs can be safely stored in the refrigerator for one week.
4. Everyone who helps dye the eggs should wash his/her hands thoroughly (before and after handling eggs).
5. Eggs should not be left at room temperature for more than two hours if they will be eaten. If they will be hidden in an egg hunt or used as a centerpiece, they should be thrown away after use.
6. Color only uncracked eggs. If you plan to eat your dyed eggs later, use food coloring or specially made food-grade egg dyes dissolved in water that is warmer than the eggs. If any eggs crack during dyeing or while on display, throw them away along with any eggs that have been out of refrigeration for more than 2 hours.



For more information contact ISU Extension and Outreach Answerline 800-262-3804 or email questions to [answer@iastate.edu](mailto:answer@iastate.edu)

## Get Motivated to Move

Getting bored with your workout? Want new ideas on how to get active? Check out Let's Move! at <http://www.letsmove.gov/>.

February 2014 marked the fourth anniversary of Let's Move!, an initiative to inspire families and communities to help children grow up healthy and reach their full potential. First Lady Michelle Obama celebrated the anniversary by encouraging people of all ages to show her how they

move (through an everyday fitness routine, by making better food choices, or by moving their community toward a new norm) on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Vine, etc., using #LetsMove.

Be inspired to take your own physical activity up a notch by following Let's Move! on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/letsmove> and follow the Let's Move! blog at <http://www.letsmove.gov/blog>

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