

# Myths and Facts

## H.R. 875 – The Food Safety Modernization Act

**MYTH:** H.R. 875 “makes it illegal to grow your own garden” and would result in the “criminalization of the backyard gardener.”

**FACT:** There is no language in the bill that would regulate, penalize, or shut down backyard gardens. The focus of the bill is to ensure the safety of food in interstate commerce.

**MYTH:** H.R. 875 would mean a “goodbye to farmers markets” because it would regulate and penalize “each farmer who wishes to sell locally.”

**FACT:** There is no language in the bill that would result in farmers markets being regulated, penalized by any fines, or shut down. Farmers markets would be able to continue to flourish under the bill. In fact, the bill would insist that imported foods meet strict safety standards to ensure that unsafe imported foods are not competing with locally-grown foods.

**MYTH:** H.R. 875 would result in the “death of organic farming” or “mandate the use of chemicals or certain types of seeds on organic farms.”

**FACT:** There is no language in the bill that would stop or interfere with organic farming. The National Organic Program (NOP) is under the jurisdiction of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The Food Safety Modernization Act only addresses food safety issues under the jurisdiction of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

**MYTH:** H.R. 875 was written by Monsanto and other large agribusiness companies because Stan Greenberg, Rep. DeLauro’s husband, is a consultant for Monsanto.

**FACT:** Monsanto and other large agribusiness companies did not write or express support for H.R. 875. Mr. Greenberg had no involvement in the drafting of the bill. Greenberg, Quinlan Rosner does no lobbying on any issue and its work is wholly independent. Mr. Greenberg never worked for Monsanto, and has not conducted surveys for Monsanto in the past decade. The bill is supported by several Members of Congress who have strong progressive records on issues involving farmers markets, organic farming, and locally-grown foods. Also, H.R. 875 is the only food safety legislation that has been supported by all the major consumer and food safety groups:

- Center for Foodborne Illness Research & Prevention
- Center for Science in the Public Interest
- Consumer Federation of America
- Consumers Union
- Food & Water Watch
- The Pew Charitable Trusts
- Safe Tables Our Priority
- Trust for America’s Health

**MYTH:** H.R. 875 would implement a national animal ID system (NAIS).

**FACT:** There is no language in the bill that would implement NAIS, which is under the jurisdiction of the USDA. H.R. 875 addresses issues under the jurisdiction of the FDA.

**MYTH:** H.R. 875 will pass the Congress next week without amendments or debate.

**FACT:** Food safety legislation has yet to be considered by any Congressional committee. As legislation moves forward, the House Energy and Commerce Committee will consider H.R. 759 as its base bill. The Senate HELP Committee will consider S. 510 as its base bill.

Source: Office of Representative Rosa DeLauro in collaboration with Food and Water Watch