The initiative would establish an ordinance making it unlawful to propagate, cultivate, raise or grow genetically engineered organisms in the County of San Luis Obispo. The ordinance defines genetically engineered organisms as organisms whose native intrinsic DNA has been intentionally altered or amended with non species specific DNA. The ordinance permits accredited colleges and universities to engage in the prohibited activities under specified circumstances. The ordinance authorizes the Agricultural Commissioner to confiscate and destroy offending genetically engineered organisms and impose monetary penalties for violations of the ordinance. The stated purpose of the ordinance is “to protect the county’s agriculture, environment, economy, and private property from genetic pollution by genetically engineered organisms until all the risks associated with these organisms are fully understood.”

COUNTY ORDINANCE PROHIBITING THE GROWING OF GENETICALLY ENGINEERED ORGANISMS IN SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

Section 1. Finding. The people of San Luis Obispo County wish to protect the county’s agriculture, environment, economy, and private property from genetic pollution by genetically engineered organisms until all the risks associated with these organisms are fully understood.

Section 2. Prohibition. It shall be unlawful for any person or entity to propagate, cultivate, raise, or grow genetically engineered organisms in San Luis Obispo County.

Section 3. Exemptions. Nothing in this Ordinance shall make it unlawful for (1) a fully accredited college or university to engage in scientific research or education using genetically engineered organisms under secure, enclosed laboratory conditions, taking precautions to prevent contamination of the outside environment, or (2) any licensed health care practitioner to provide any diagnosis, care or treatment to any patient.
Section 4. Severability. The provisions of this Ordinance are severable. If any provision of this Ordinance or its application is held invalid, that invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications that can be given effect without the invalid provision or application.

Section 5. Definitions.

(a) "Genetically engineered organisms" means specific organisms whose native intrinsic DNA has been intentionally altered or amended with non-species specific DNA. Such organisms are also sometimes referred to as "genetically modified organisms" or "GMO's".

(b) "Genetic engineering" means altering or amending DNA using recombinant DNA technology. For purposes of this ordinance, genetic engineering does not include traditional selective breeding, conjugation, fermentation, hybridization, in vitro fertilization, tissue culture, or to microorganisms created by moving genes or gene segments between unrelated bacteria.

(c) "DNA" or deoxyribonucleic acid, the material naturally found within living cells which contains the genetic code and transmits hereditary patterns.

(d) "Organism" means any living thing, exclusive of human beings and human fetuses

(e) "Agricultural Commissioner" means the Agricultural Commissioner of San Luis Obispo County.

(f) "Person" means an individual, partnership, corporation or organization of any kind.

Section 6. Penalties.

(a) The Agricultural Commissioner shall notify any person, firm, or corporation that may be in violation of Section 2 of this Ordinance that any organisms in violation of this Ordinance are subject to confiscation and destruction.
(b) Any person, firm, or corporation that receives notification under subparagraph (a) shall have five (5) days to respond to such notification with evidence that such organisms are not in violation of this Ordinance.

(c) Upon receipt of any evidence under paragraph (b), the Agricultural Commissioner shall consider such evidence and any other evidence that is presented or which is relevant to a determination of such violation. The Agricultural Commissioner shall make such determination as soon as possible, but at least before any genetic pollution may occur.

(d) Upon making a determination that a violation of this Ordinance exists, the Agricultural Commissioner shall cause to be confiscated and destroyed any such organisms that are in violation of this Ordinance before any genetic pollution may occur.

(e) If the Agricultural Commissioner determines there has been a violation of this Ordinance, in addition to confiscation and destruction of any organisms that are found to be in violation, the Agricultural Commissioner shall impose a monetary penalty on the person, firm, or corporation responsible for the violation, taking into account the amount of damage, any potential damage, and the willfulness of the person, firm, or corporation.

Ballot Argument in Favor of Measure Q

Yes on Measure Q!

*Genetic engineering* (GE) is a process that *never* occurs in nature. This technology is different from traditional plant breeding. GE organisms are created by forcing the genes from one species into another.

**Measure Q: YES for our economy!**

Keeping SLO County free of *genetically engineered* (GE) crops maintains our strong agricultural economy.

Our U.S. and international trading partners are demanding GE free crops. **Having pure crops will ensure a market advantage for our county’s $529 million agricultural economy.**
The American Farm Bureau estimates that U.S. exporters have lost about $300 million per year because of GE corn.

San Luis Obispo has an abundant and diverse farming and ranching economy. Why jeopardize what is working for something that is economically risky and unproven?

Measure Q: YES for farms and farmers!

GE food, pharmaceutical and industrial crops can contaminate conventional food crops at many points: seed production and transport, cross-pollination, harvest, milling, storing, and processing.

Such contamination has already occurred:

* In 2001, 1% of Iowa cornfields were planted with a GE corn but 50% of Iowa’s corn harvest was contaminated.

* In 2002, a pharmaceutical corn contaminated soybeans grown on the same ground a year later. 500,000 bushels of soybeans were destroyed.

Contamination raises liability questions for farmers and property owners.

From 2001-2003, over 73 million more pounds of pesticides were applied on GE acres than on non-GE acres.

Some GE crops are classified as pesticides by the EPA. The plant is the pesticide!

Yes on Q!

Fetzer Vineyards states: “…as the U.S.’s organic vineyard leader, Fetzer supports Measure Q as appropriate action until such time as the long-term consequences of GMO crops and animals in the food chain are fully understood.”

Measure Q is good for what we grow. It’s good for what we eat.
If you can read this text, it means you are not experiencing the Plone design at its best. Plone makes heavy use of CSS, which means it is accessible to any internet browser, but the design needs a standards-compliant browser to look like we intended it. Just so you know ;)