This spring our Seattle Tilth Farm Works farmers grew dozens of crops from locally sourced Organic and non-GMO seeds.

GMOs and You
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You’ve probably heard about an initiative in WA state that would require labeling of foods made from genetically modified organisms (GMOs). Last fall and winter, initiative supporters collected over 350,000 signatures. I-522, known as the “The People’s Right to Know Genetically Engineered Food Act,” will be on your ballot this November.

What are GMOs?
GMOs are created by inserting the genes from one species into another completely unrelated species. Most GMO crops used today have genes that allow them to tolerate a particular herbicide.
Why should we be concerned?
This new technology brings environmental, health and social consequences.
• Environment – A study last year found that U.S. farmers are using more and more pesticides to fight weeds and insects, due largely to the widespread adoption of GMO crops. This is giving rise to pesticide-resistant and hard to kill insects as nature adapts to the new technology.
• Health – The jury is still out on whether GMO foods are safe to eat. Given that inconclusiveness, other countries, such as those in the EU, have decided to ‘wait and see’ before widely introducing GMO foods.
• Social – GM crops are proprietary technology, meaning that farmers cannot save seeds from year to year. Farmers whose crops have been contaminated by pollen from nearby fields have been sued by Monsanto for growing corn that contains the new genes. In India and elsewhere, farmers have been driven to suicide by the debt they incur to buy GMO seeds year after year.

What can we do?
Today most of the corn, canola, soybeans and sugar beets grown and consumed in the US are genetically modified. Because these products are so prevalent in processed foods, many of us are eating GMO foods every day, whether we know it or not.

Concerned? You can take the following steps:
• Eat fresh fruits and vegetables. With the exception of papaya, sweet corn and some zucchini and yellow squash, most fruits and vegetables in supermarkets today are not genetically modified. This could soon change, however, since several fruits and vegetables currently under GM testing.
• Buy organic. Certified organic foods cannot contain genetically modified ingredients under current labeling standards.
• Grow your own. Growing your own food using heirloom or saved seeds gives you the most control over what you are eating.
• Look for certified non-GMO labels. Look for the Non-GMO Project’s label on the foods you buy. Visit their website, nongmoproject.org, to get a list of non-GMO verified products.
• Support GMO labeling efforts. I-522 will be on your ballot this November. If you feel strongly about your right to know, get involved, tell your friends and vote to approve.

You can find out more at labelitwa.org.