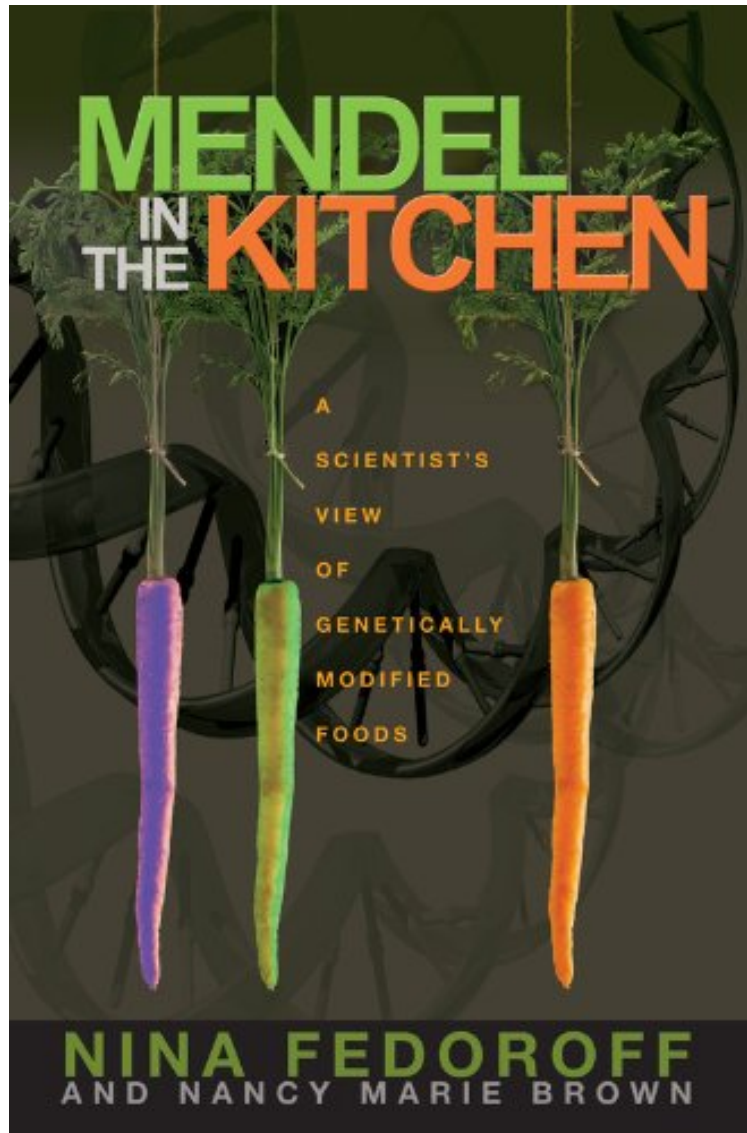


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Mendel in the Kitchen: A Scientist's View of Genetically Modified Foods

Nancy Marie Brown, Nina V. Fedoroff

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Nancy Marie Brown, Nina V. Fedoroff : Mendel in the Kitchen: A Scientist's View of Genetically Modified Foods before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Mendel in the Kitchen: A Scientist's View of Genetically Modified Foods:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. An excellent discussion of the science behind genetically modified crops. By Saba Dave I bought this book because I was interested in the science behind transgenic crops and because I wanted to know what if anything we should be concerned about. First it should be mentioned that the book is written by a well respected geneticist (Nina Fedoroff, a member of the National Academy of Sciences) with no funding from big Ag. The book explains how humans, over thousands of years, have generated edible crops since, it should be noted, none existed in nature prior to man's domestication of plants about 12,000 years ago. The author then explains clearly how genetics, beginning with the findings of Gregor Mendel in the latter half of the 19th century, and culminating in modern genetic engineering has been used to obtain superior crop strains and provide us with the abundance of food that we currently enjoy. The writing gets a bit technical at times-but I think that most educated readers will get the gist of Dr. Fedoroff's explanations. Throughout the book, Dr Fedoroff considers the benefits and risks of producing transgenic plants. Spoiler alert: Mendel in the Kitchen is not going to make the anti-GMO crowd happy. 4 stars instead of 5 only because the author lacks the panache of some of the more popular writers such as Jared Diamond or Bill Bryson. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Overall a really great book. However By Caroline Overall a really great book. However, it is a bit out of date given that a lot has happened in the GMO industry since 2004. Also, the authors did not fully explore the real, science-based drawbacks certain GMOs can have on the environment and food industry, and this made their claims seem slightly dogmatic, which in turn weakened their argument. Still, definitely an awesome book and great to lend to your anti-GMO friends 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A book for those who want to understand the science on this issue. By Robert Krampf The authors do an excellent job of laying out the science, and sorting hype from fact. Building on the history of genetic modification in plants, they give clear, scientific information on what genetic modification is, the ways it is done, and how it impacts our lives.

While European restaurants race to footnote menus, reassuring concerned gourmards that no genetically modified ingredients were used in the preparation of their food, starving populations around the world eagerly await the next harvest of scientifically improved crops. Mendel in the Kitchen provides a clear and balanced picture of this tangled, tricky (and very timely) topic. Any farmer you talk to could tell you that we've been playing with the genetic makeup of our food for millennia, carefully coaxing nature to do our bidding. The practice officially dates back to Gregor Mendel -- who was not a renowned scientist, but a 19th century Augustinian monk. Mendel spent many hours toiling in his garden, testing and cultivating more than 28,000 pea plants, selectively determining very specific characteristics of the peas that were produced, ultimately giving birth to the idea of heredity -- and the now very common practice of artificially modifying our food. But as science takes the helm, steering common field practices into the laboratory, the world is now keenly aware of how adept we have become at tinkering with nature -- which in turn has produced a variety of questions. Are genetically modified foods really safe? Will the foods ultimately make us sick, perhaps in ways we can't even imagine? Isn't it genuinely dangerous to change the nature of nature itself? Nina Fedoroff, a leading geneticist and recognized expert in biotechnology, answers these questions, and more. Addressing the fear and mistrust that is rapidly spreading, Fedoroff and her co-author, science writer Nancy Brown, weave a narrative rich in history, technology, and science to dispel myths and misunderstandings. In the end, Fedoroff argues, plant biotechnology can help us to become better stewards of the earth while permitting us to feed ourselves and generations of children to come. Indeed, this new approach to agriculture holds the promise of being the most environmentally conservative way to increase our food supply.

From Publishers Weekly Is genetically engineered Golden Rice (enriched with vitamin A) a dangerous "Frankenfood" or a safe, nutritionally enhanced food that could fill a major vitamin deficiency in the Third World? Fedoroff, a molecular biologist and member of the prestigious National Academy of Sciences, and science writer Brown (A Good Horse Has No Color) argue forcefully for the latter view, saying we should embrace most of the advances genetic engineering has made in the agricultural arena. In an extremely accessible style, they take readers through the basics of genetics and genetic engineering to demonstrate why they believe that the risks associated with this technology are trivial. They also contend that the use of modern molecular technology to insert genes from one species into another isn't very different from the hybrid crosses that agriculturalists have been doing for millennia. Taking on concerns voiced by environmentalists, the authors articulate how genetically modified crops could reduce the amount of pesticides and fertilizers used and increase the yield of crop plants to keep up with a growing world population that could reach eight or nine billion in this century. Though likely to be controversial, the authors' clear and rational presentation could well change the opinions of some readers. Illus. not seen by PW. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "Some countries, many in Europe, have imposed bans on importing and growing GM crops. Others, notably the U.S., have grown, cooked and eaten them without knowing about it, or seeming to care that they don't know." From the Inside Flap "Mendel in the Kitchen is a highly readable and well documented account of the science, issues and people involved in the development of genetically engineered foods. This is a must-read for anyone interested in learning how the DNA in our food has been altered over the

years." -- Alan McHughen, author of *Pandora's Picnic Basket* "...well prepared and well written, a pleasure to read. It will inform a wide range of readers about issues posed by genetically modified (GM) foods, hopefully contributing to elevation of the argument by inclusion of more scientific information." -- Eric M. Hallerman, professor, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University