

## Food and Water Watch

### 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 gardner.”  
**FACT:** There is no language in the bill that would regulate, penalize, or shut down backyard gardens. This bill is focused on ensuring the safety of foods sold in supermarkets.
  
- **MYTH:** H.R. 875 would mean a “goodbye to farmers markets” because the bill would “require such a burdensome complexity of rules, inspections, licensing, fees, and penalties for each farmer who wishes to sell locally - a fruit stand, at a farmers market.”  
**FACT:** There is no language in the bill that would result in farmers markets being regulated, penalized 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.”  
**FACT:** There is no language in the bill that would stop 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:** The bill would implement a national animal ID system.  
**FACT:** There is no language in the bill that would implement a national animal ID system. Animal identification issues are under the jurisdiction of the USDA. The Food Safety Modernization Act addresses issues under the jurisdiction of the FDA.
  
- **MYTH:** The bill is supported by the large agribusiness industry.  
**FACT:** No large agribusiness companies have expressed support for this bill. This bill is being 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, including:  
-- 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: The bill will pass the Congress next week without amendments or debate.

FACT: Food safety legislation has yet to be considered by any Congressional committee.