Subcommittee Two (economic impacts/tracking & monitoring) Report
April 27, 2009: Points of consensus and continuing queries

We reached consensus on the following:

(a) Subcommittee process:
Reports delivered by subcommittee members represent the consensus of the subcommittee and are therefore to be agreed upon in advance. If the report in its final form is not yet available at the subcommittee meeting, the text is to be circulated to the members by email before presentation to the full committee. Internal subcommittee email communications are to include all members, using "Reply All."

(b) Substantive economic issues:
°Longterm profitability of GE crops will be determined by market considerations
°Costs and benefits have to be assessed on a case by case basis
°Lake County agriculture is dependent on niche as well as commodity marketing
°Consumer perceptions of Lake County can affect demand for local products
°Opportunities for new crops are constantly evolving
°A thriving agricultural economy is beneficial for Lake County
°A diverse agricultural economy -- including many different kinds of products -- is more likely to prosper in the long term than one dependent on only a few products
°Opportunities to promote local consumption of local products should be encouraged
°Direct sales to the public can offer growers an opportunity for increased revenues
°Customers at farmers markets/farm stands/CSA usually look for top quality
°The most important feature of farmers markets is the direct connection between farmers and consumers
°Even if correct, the belief that an action is economically advantageous does not convey the right to compel others to adopt it.

We were still unable to resolve the following questions:

°Does mere movement of pollen ("pollen drift") constitute "contamination" or "trespass" that could be potentially damaging to another, or does "pollenization" (meaning fertilization) have to take place?
°Does an organic certifier have the right to require testing of a cover crop (that will not be sold or consumed by humans) if GE pollination is suspected?
°Could buffering standards established by seed saver exchanges be applied to GE crops?