Writing Assignment #1 Recommendations to a Representative

Advancements in technology tend to happen before the public has the chance to weigh in on how the technology should be used or regulated. This assignment is about going back in time, and suggesting how government should or should not have regulated Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and their use in our society.

It is 1990. You are a time-traveling congressional staffer, working for Representative Smith. Smith has been assigned to create a list of recommendations regarding the regulation of Genetically Modified Organisms (or GMOs) a new technology that has not yet produced widely marketable products. You have been able to jump to 2013, so you know that in the future there will over one million acres of GM crops in the U.S. alone. You have also observed the reactions to GMOs in the United States (where there has been very little regulation of GMOs) and in Europe (where there has been more regulation of GMOs). Your job is to compile a report to Representative Smith with three recommendations regarding the regulation of GMOs in the United States. Some points to potentially consider are below:

- food safety
- food labeling
- monoculture (having many acres of fields that grow just one type of plant)
- affects on developing countries/world hunger
- preservation of non-GMO fields (prevention of GMO contamination)
- research and development of GMOs
- ownership/patenting of GMO strains
- use of pesticides or herbicides
- farmer dependence on large companies
- U.S. commerce with other countries
- public perception of GMOs
- impact on wild plants and animals

Pick three different points (and they can be different from those listed above) to address in your memo. You will not be able to cover everything- confine yourself to three points for now. Feel free to argue either in favor of regulation (and be specific about what type of regulation you recommend) or to argue AGAINST government regulation. (And you may argue FOR regulation on some points and AGAINST regulation on other points). For each of your three points, state clearly what your recommendation is, and WHY you recommend it. (And BE specific: if you suggest regulation WHAT kind of regulation do you suggest and why?) Find at least one resource to support each of your three recommendations. For example, if you argue against regulation, you might present a case in which having the regulation led to an
undesired outcome. Feel free to use MORE than one resource to support each stance, but you must have at least one.

Representative Smith is intelligent and interested, but doesn’t know much about biology so you will need to explain to her what a GMO is and why they might be desirable or profitable. (Also she KNOWS you can time travel, so it is appropriate as well as necessary to use post-1990 references!)

Your paper should be no longer than 5 double-spaced pages, or ~1500 words (not including references cited). Be sure to include a description in the beginning of what a GMO is, how they are made, and an example of at least one GMO that you observed in your post-1990 time travels. Next address the three points you want to make in your advice to Representative Smith.

**On Style**
- Use APA referencing
The Fairfield University Library has an excellent guide to APA referencing. You can get there by going to the Fairfield University Library home page, going to the “Research Assistance” menu which is part of the list on the left, then clicking on “Citation and Style Guides” on the drop-down menu. Then click on APA to get the details about how to cite. Otherwise just go straight to this link: http://www.fairfield.edu/library/libgd_apacitations.html

- The MOST important thing about referencing is that all information be cited in the text, then all references you cited in-text must be listed at the end in the “References Cited” section.

- DO NOT QUOTE DIRECTLY. Quotations are inappropriate in a document of this kind. Instead, paraphrase (use your own words) and still cite the source from which you got the information.

- Your goal is to be concise, clear, and logical.

**Grading**
- Clarity and organization: 50%
Is your explanation of GMOs understandable to a lay person? Do you clearly articulate your position on each of your three points? Is it easy to understand what you are trying to say? Do you avoid spelling and syntax errors? Does each of your paragraphs encompass a single point, or do you include information from one paragraph that really belongs in a different one?

- Quality of arguments: 50%
Do you adequately defend your stance? Do you use evidence to support your position on each of the three points? Do the references you cite support your stance? Do you consider arguments from the alternate point of view and explain why your recommendations would lead to a better outcome?
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