

# **Opinion: Natural-food industry should get political**

**By Michele Simon, Al Jazeera America**

The organic and natural food industry is booming. Last year, sales of organic products topped \$39 billion.

That's the good news. The bad news is that most natural food companies steer clear of political battles that can have a significant effect on their business model.

The conventional food industry has had a decades-long head start in D.C. – and knows far too well how to play the game. The Grocery Manufacturers Association was formed more than a century ago, and in recent years has been leading the (largely successful) opposition to the labeling of foods containing genetically engineered ingredients – a key issue for the organic foods sector.

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