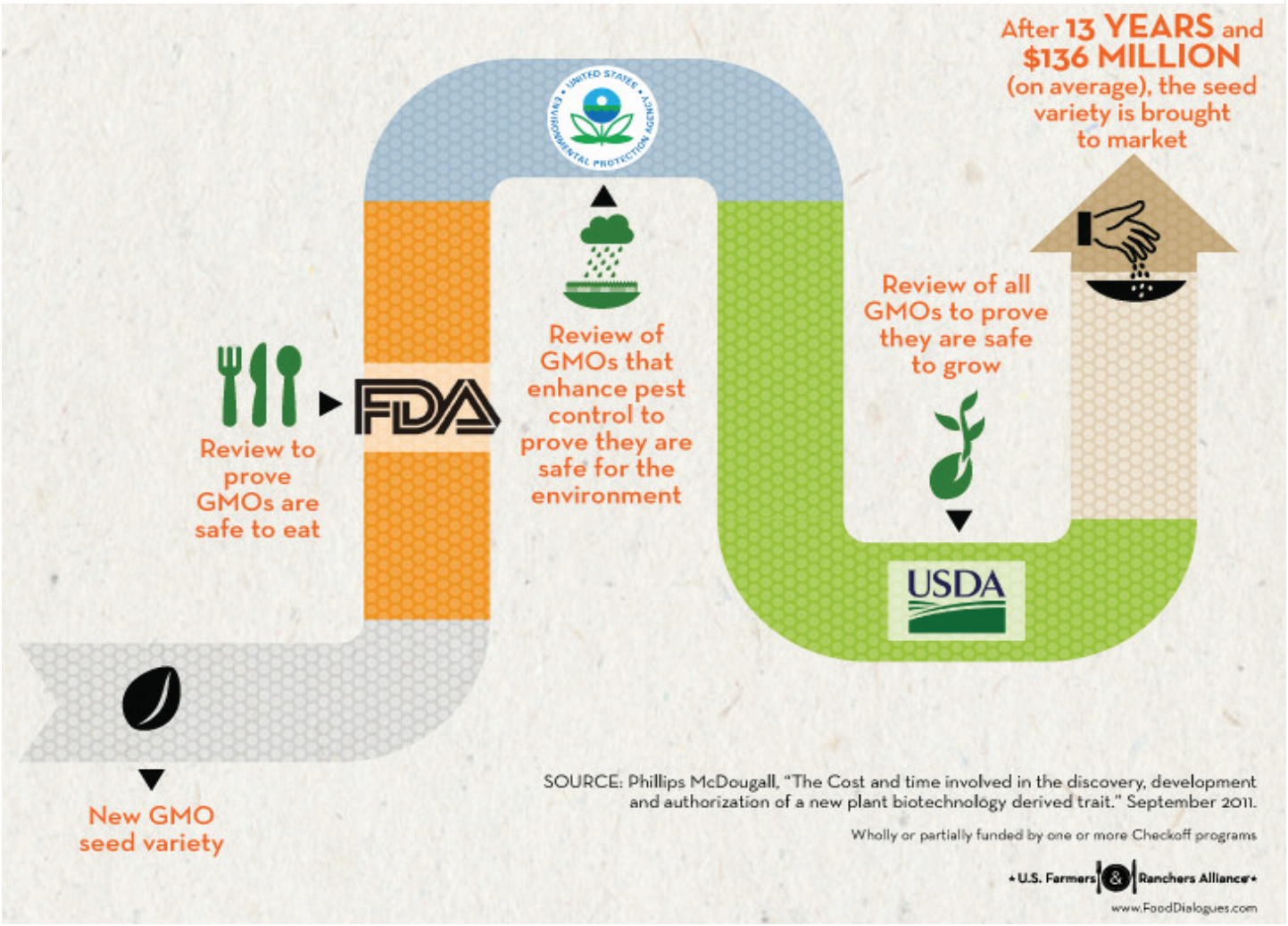
How a GMO seed gets to market

No other type of new seed that comes to market from other breeding methods goes through regulatory approval, including the thousands of conventional and organic seeds developed from mutagensis*. Only genetically modified organisms (GMOs) are required to be reviewed. Even before the new seed goes through the review process, years of testing and research take place.

* Deliberately engineered DNA mutations.



What safety measures apply to agricultural biotechnology?

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) ensure crops produced through genetic engineering for commercial use are tested and studied to make sure they pose no significant risk to consumers or the environment. Crops improved by biotechnology are also known as genetically modified organisms or GMOs.

Crops using genetic engineering are the only ones formally reviewed for the potential transfer of novel traits to wild relatives. The potential for two plants to exchange traits via pollen must be evaluated before the new crop is released.

Other potential risks considered include any environmental effects on birds, mammals, insects, worms and other organisms, especially with insect- or disease-resistant plants.

USDA and EPA review any environmental impacts of pest-resistant, biotechnology-derived crops before approving field tests and commercial production. Testing on honeybees and other beneficial insects, earthworms and fish is done to ensure there are no unintended consequences caused by the crops.

When new traits are introduced, the biotech plants are examined by the EPA and FDA for potential toxicity and allergic responses. Those tests are completed before the plants enter into the food or feed supply.