



RIGHT & WRONG

Light Brown Apple moth

GT

Is there any middle ground in the LBAM controversy?

By Chris J. Magyar

✓ Blame it on advertising.

How long has America (and the rest of the developed world) been conditioning itself to only accept the best ingredients? From Burger King commercials that hilariously feature plump tomatoes flying through the air while beads of fresh water trail off their fire engine red skins, to gourmet chefs who peddle cookbook after cookbook insisting only on straight-from-the-source ingredients of the highest quality—produce might be the last unbranded item in the grocery store, but it's still expected to live up to our standards. And what are those standards? In America, everyone believes they are above

average, which is why we are so driven toward achievement as a culture.

The other sharp edge of this sword, however, is that we still believe there are average people out there—other people, who don't necessarily deserve what we have—and it's easy to slough our responsibilities and problems off on them. None of this is conscious. In fact, many of you are probably bridling right now at the idea that you ever intentionally clutch privileges to your bosom at the expense of the masses. But that's the underlying meaning every time you pause at the apple bin to pick the best apple, leaving the ones with small blemishes, or slight discolorations, for someone else.

"Go ahead," advertising has relentlessly ingrained in you. "You deserve it."

Agriculture knows this. It's why apples are waxed, asparagus stalks are genetically modified (whether in a lab or through more traditional cross-breeding) to be more green, and cows are pumped full of hormones. It's why organic foods must label themselves organic, for fear of being passed over on visual qualities alone. It's why tomatoes now come packed

