

December 2022

P1055 Consumer Survey Report – Plain English Summary

Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) is a government agency responsible for ensuring a safe food supply. FSANZ does this by setting standards in the Australian New Zealand Food Standards Code (the Code). We asked 1,000 Australians and 500 New Zealanders what they thought about genetically modified (GM) foods. Their answers will help us in our consideration of potential changes to GM food regulation in the Code, and how to communicate those changes.

In this survey, GM foods are understood as food or food ingredients that come from plants, animals or microbes whose DNA has been changed by scientists in a laboratory to add in a new or different feature, or improve an existing feature.

Our survey found:

- Most Australians and New Zealanders believe that the food they buy in shops and supermarkets is safe to eat.
- Overall, GM foods are not one of people's top concerns about food safety even though many people think they are already for sale.
- Even so, nearly half of people do have some level of concern about GM foods.
- Top concerns about GM foods are to do with their safety, the trustworthiness of the people who make them, what they might do to the environment, and what they might do to animals.
- People's level of support for GM foods changes depending on the way in which this technology is used. People are more supportive about uses that have benefits for people, the environment and animals. They are less supportive about GM food increasing profit for industry.
- People don't feel like they know a lot about GM foods, but this doesn't influence their level of support.
- Trust is key to people supporting GM foods. If people don't trust the people making GM foods, they tend to have a lower level of support. If people do trust the people making GM foods, they tend to have a higher level of support.