

As a Nutritionist I am highly aware of the dangers of genetically modified food. Our bodies don't do well with man-made food in general. Processed foods are known to contain significantly fewer nutrients. The companies who are wanting to be allowed to use these genetically modified foods have likely not done enough investigations, especially over the long term. I would suggest engaging completely independent studies that show how those same foods can contribute to increased good health and that are not funded by those same companies. I believe that would be impossible. To be really clear - these types of so-called foods would help increase dis-ease and only lines the financial pockets of the companies owners. No-one should be allowed to self-assess the safety of their own product.

Changing the actual gene sequence of a food means that the body cannot use that food properly and would increase the long term health of the whole population.

I therefore strongly oppose changes to the Food Code that would allow a wide range of GM foods, made using novel methods that have scant history of safe use, to be sold without safety assessment or labelling. These would include meat and milk from some genetically modified animals and substances like vanilla and stevia produced by genetically modified microbes in factory vats. These changes would undermine FSANZ's key responsibilities to ensure food safety and our right to know what is in our food.

Gene editing techniques have been found to make genetic changes that could never occur in nature and to result in widespread genetic damage that often goes undetected by GM developers.

The proposed changes would make Australia one of very few countries in the world to allow genetically modified animal products into our food chain with no regulation or labelling. This would put us at odds with

our international trading partners, which FSANZ admits “may have a significant impact on trade”. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, an international agreement signed by 166 governments worldwide, and the UN’s food standards body Codex Alimentarius agree that all GM techniques differ from conventional breeding and that pre-market safety assessments are essential before GM organisms are used in food.

I support expanding the definition for ‘gene technology’ so FSANZ continues to assess and regulate all techniques and methods of genetic modification, other than conventional breeding. The proposal to deregulate new and emerging GM techniques and their food products, which pose new and unassessed risks, is completely unacceptable.

Thank you for taking my well-founded and informed concerns into consideration.

Yours sincerely,

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