

To: Food Standards Australia New Zealand

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RE: Submission on application A1274 – GM Banana

I am a citizen with a strong interest in natural health; organic food, farming and growing; heritage plant varieties and animal breeds (selective breeding); and indigenous sovereignty.

The application from Queensland University of Technology for food derived from genetically engineered bananas offers no assurance to consumers about the health and safety of consuming these bananas.

1. The safety of food derived from these bananas is assumed, rather than rigorously tested.
2. Consumers deserve scientific evidence on the long-term safety (or otherwise) of consuming these bananas or foods derived from them.
3. The application contains no analysis of the seven new proteins identified in the GE banana – let alone any other potential new proteins that may be formed (which could be toxins or allergens). Gene editing is a risky technology with many unknowns.
4. FSANZ has a statutory duty on behalf of citizens to require adequate safety testing, data and analysis from applications.
5. However this application provides no research to show the impacts of these new proteins on people (or animals) who eat the banana.
6. There have been no animal feeding studies using these bananas.
7. Eating these GE bananas could add to the already burdensome global problem of microbial resistance. The bananas will contain a gene for expressing antibiotic resistance which, if transferred to gut bacteria, could increase the problem of bacterial resistance to kanamycin-type antibiotics.
8. More detailed safety assessments are needed. There is a lack of evidence on the impact of different medicines that can change the survival rate of GE constructs in the gut and bloodstream of consumers.
9. There is no study of different impact for infants, children, the sick or elderly from eating the GE bananas.

10. Laboratory diagnostic tests for detection of the transgenes should be made available for health professionals before any approval of this food.
11. Until there is scientific data on the effects of the transgenes and inflammatory response in the human gut, in long-term studies, the GE banana must be declined.

OUTCOME SOUGHT

Given the lack of safety data and analysis as outlined above, I urge Food Standards Australia New Zealand to **decline this application**.

Please could you acknowledge receipt of this submission, and keep me informed.

