

Australian Food and Grocery Council SUBMISSION

DECEMBER 2012

TO:
FOOD STANDARDS AUSTRALIA NEW ZEALAND

IN RESPONSE TO:
CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS - A1073 FOOD DERIVED FROM
HERBICIDE-TOLERANT SOYBEAN LINE DAS 44406-6



Australian Food and Grocery Council

The Australian Food and Grocery Council (AFGC) is the leading national organisation representing Australia's food, drink and grocery manufacturing industry.

The membership of AFGC comprises more than 150 companies, subsidiaries and associates which constitutes in the order of 80 per cent of the gross dollar value of the processed food, beverage and grocery products sectors.

With an annual turnover in the 2010-11 financial year of \$110 billion, Australia's food and grocery manufacturing industry makes a substantial contribution to the Australian economy and is vital to the nation's future prosperity.

Manufacturing of food, beverages and groceries in the fast moving consumer goods sector¹ is Australia's largest manufacturing industry. Representing 28 per cent of total manufacturing turnover, the sector the second largest industry behind the Australian mining sector and accounts for over one quarter of the total manufacturing industry in Australia.

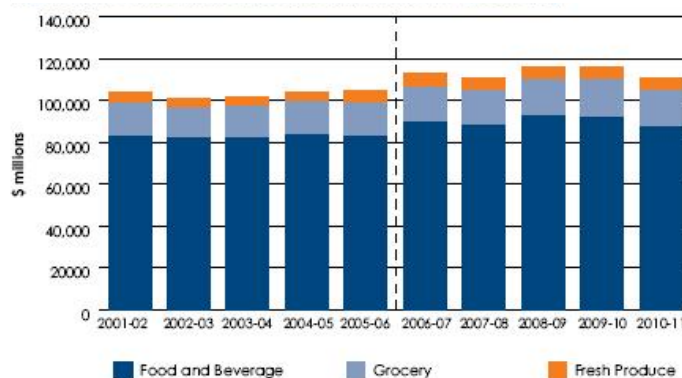
This diverse and sustainable industry is made up of over 22,600 businesses and accounts for over \$49 billion of the nation's international trade. These businesses range from some of the largest globally significant multinational companies to small and medium enterprises. The industry spends \$466.7 million a year on research and development.

The food and grocery manufacturing sector employs more than 296,300 Australians, representing about 3 per cent of all employed people in Australia, paying around \$11.3 billion a year in salaries and wages.

Many food manufacturing plants are located outside the metropolitan regions. The industry makes a large contribution to rural and regional Australia economies, with almost half of the total persons employed being in rural and regional Australia². It is essential for the economic and social development of Australia, and particularly rural and regional Australia, that the magnitude, significance and contribution of this industry is recognised and factored into the Government's economic, industrial and trade policies.

Australians and our political leaders overwhelmingly want a local, value-adding food and grocery manufacturing sector.

Figure 1. Composition of the industry's turnover (\$2010-11)



Source: Based on ABS, catalogue number 8221.0 and 8159.0

¹ Fast moving consumer goods includes all products bought almost daily by Australians through retail outlets including food, beverages, toiletries, cosmetics, household cleaning items etc.

² About Australia: www.dfat.gov.au

1. INTRODUCTION

AFGC welcomes the opportunity to make this submission to Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) in response to the assessment report for Application A1073 – Food derived from Herbicide-tolerant Soybean Line DAS 44406-6.

AFGC notes the intent of this application is to amend Standard 1.5.2 – Food produced using Gene Technology in the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (the Code) to permit the sale and use of food derived from genetically modified (GM) soybean line DAS-44406-6, conferring tolerance to three herbicides.

2. AFGC OVERALL POSITION

The AFGC **supports** this application on the basis that no potential public health and safety concerns have been identified and FSANZ has established that food derived from soybean line DAS-44406-6 is considered to be as safe for human consumption as food derived from conventional soybean cultivars.

AFGC **supports** the current requirements for labelling GM foods when novel DNA or novel protein is present.

AFGC acknowledges that, having established that a GM food is safe and approved for use; it is up to companies and individuals to make their own independent commercial decision as to whether or not to use this product and label accordingly.

AFGC Recommendation - Support Option 1:

Prepare a draft variation to Standard 1.5.2 to include food derived from soybean line DAS-44406-6.

3. SPECIFIC COMMENTS

3.1. Consumer information

AFGC considers the current regulatory arrangements for foods derived from gene technology ("GM Foods"; Australian New Zealand Food Standards Code *Standard 1.5.2 Foods Produced using Gene Technology*) are appropriate to **ensure protection of public health and safety** and adequate information to consumers for informed choice.

The labelling of GM food is not a safety issue. It is solely related to the nature, extent and practicalities of providing information for informed consumer choice.

Current labelling regulations require food to be labelled when it contains genetically modified (GM) material or when the food is materially modified through the use of gene technology. The regulations also recognise the need for flexibility through exemptions and thresholds, in a way which does not undermine the effectiveness of providing for informed consumer choice.

These provisions are necessary as the food supply chain cannot guarantee absolute segregation of ingredients all the time, resulting in occasional trace (i.e. less than 1%) accidental presence of GM material. The provisions also recognise that if a company determines not to use GM ingredients and has production processes which deliver non-GM foods, the occasional accidental presence of GM material should not render the company non-compliant with food labelling regulations.

The AFGC Product Information Form (PIF)³ may be of assistance to companies in identifying GM ingredients, and components of ingredients, and to ensure compliance with labelling requirements.

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³ <http://www.afgc.org.au/tools-guides-/product-info-form.html>

Australian Food and Grocery Council

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Full Members

- Arnott's Biscuits Ltd
- Australian Blending Company Pty Ltd
- Barilla Australia Pty Ltd
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- Body Science International Pty Ltd
- Bronte Industries Pty Ltd
- Buderim Ginger Limited
- Bulla Dairy Foods
- Bundaberg Brewed Drinks Pty Ltd
- Bundaberg Sugar Ltd
- Byford Flour Mills/Millers Foods
- Byron Food Science
- Campbell's Soup Australia
- Canon Foods
- Cantarella Bros Pty Ltd
- Carman's Fine Foods
- Cerebos (Aust) Ltd
- Cheetham Salt Limited
- Christie Tea Pty Ltd
- Church & Dwight (Australia) Pty Ltd
- Clorox Australia Pty Ltd
- Coca-Cola Amatil Ltd
- Coca-Cola South Pacific Pty Ltd
- Colgate-Palmolive Pty Ltd
- Coopers Brewery Ltd
- D.E Coffee & Tea Retail Australia/Sara Lee Coffee & Tea Retail Australia
- Danisco Australia Pty Ltd
- Devro Pty Ltd
- DSM Food Specialties Australia Pty Ltd
- Eagle Boys Pizza
- Earlee Products Pty Ltd
- Epicurean Products Pty Ltd
- Ferrero Australia Pty Ltd
- Fibrisol Service Australia Pty Ltd
- Fonterra Australia Pty Ltd
- Food Spectrum Group
- FPM Cereal Milling Systems Pty Ltd
- Freedom Foods Group
- Frucor Beverages (Australia) Pty Ltd
- General Mills Australia Pty Ltd
- George Weston Foods Ltd
- GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare
- Go Natural
- Goodman Fielder Limited
- H.J. Heinz Company Australia Limited
- Harvest FreshCuts Pty Ltd
- Healthy Snacks Australia Pty Ltd
- Hoyt Food Manufacturing Industries Pty Ltd
- Hungry Jack's Australia
- Igea Group
- Jalna Dairy Foods Pty Ltd
- JBS Australia Pty Limited
- Jireh International Pty Ltd
- Johnson & Johnson Pacific Pty Ltd
- Kellogg (Aust) Pty Ltd
- Kerry Ingredients Australia Pty Ltd
- Kimberly-Clark Australia Pty Ltd
- Kitchens of Sara Lee
- Kraft Foods Limited
- Laucke Flour Mills Pty Ltd
- Lindt & Sprungli Australia
- Lion Dairy and Drinks Pty Ltd
- Madura Tea Estates
- Manildra Harwood Sugars
- Mars Chocolate
- McCain Foods (Aust) Pty Ltd
- McCormick Foods Australia Pty Ltd
- McDonald's Australia Ltd
- Merisant Australia Pty Ltd
- Metarom Australia P/L
- Mrs Mac's Pty Ltd
- Murray Goulburn Co-operative Co Ltd
- Myosyn Industries Pty Ltd
- Nerada Tea Pty Ltd
- Nestle Australia Ltd
- Nutricia Australia Pty Ltd
- Ocean Spray International, Inc
- Only Organic 2003 Pty Limited
- Parmalat Australia Ltd
- Patties Foods Ltd
- Pfizer Consumer Healthcare
- Popina (Vic) Pty Ltd
- Procter & Gamble Australia Pty Ltd
- QSR Holdings
- Queen Fine Foods Pty Ltd
- Reckitt Benckiser (Australia) Pty Ltd
- Red Bull Australia Pty Limited
- Rosella Foods Pty Ltd
- Sandhurst Fine Foods Australia
- Sanitarium Health and Wellbeing Company
- SC Johnson & Son Pty Ltd
- SCA Hygiene Australasia Pty Ltd
- Sensient Technologies (Australia) Pty Ltd
- Simplot Australia Pty Ltd
- Solaris Paper Pty Ltd
- Spicemasters Australia Pty Ltd
- Steric Pty Ltd
- Stuart Alexander & Co Pty Ltd
- Subway Franchisee Advertising Fund Australia/NZ
- Sugar Australia Pty Ltd
- SunRice
- Swisse Vitamins Pty Ltd
- Tasmanian Flour Mills Pty Ltd
- Tate & Lyle ANZ Pty Ltd
- The Smith's Snackfood Company
- The Vege Chip Company
- The Wrigley Company Pty Limited
- Tixana Pty Limited
- Unilever Australasia
- Vital Health Foods (Australia) Pty Ltd
- Ward McKenzie Pty Ltd
- Yakult Australia Pty Ltd
- Yum! Restaurants Australia Pty Ltd
- Baker & McKenzie
- Benchmarking for Performance(B4P)
- Bizzcaps Pty Ltd
- Brisbane Marketing
- CHEP Asia - Pacific
- CROSSMARK Asia Pacific
- CSIRO Food and Nutritional Sciences
- Dairy Australia
- Ettlin International Pty Ltd
- Food Allergen Control Training Analysis(FACTa)
- Food Liaison Pty Ltd
- Foodbank Australia Ltd
- Grain Growers Ltd
- Grant Thornton
- GS1 Australia Ltd
- IBM Australia Ltd
- Investment Attraction/trade and Investment Queensland
- King & Wood Mallesons
- KPMG
- Legal Finesse
- Linfox Australia Pty Ltd
- Logan City Council
- Meat and Livestock Australia
- Monsanto Australia Ltd
- New Zealand Trade and Enterprise
- Pacific Strategy Partners
- Red Rock Consulting
- Rentokil Initial Pty Ltd (Rentokil Pest Control)
- RQA Product Risk Institute
- S A Partners LLP
- Samples Express Pty Ltd
- Simons Green Energy Pty Ltd
- Six Degrees Executive Pty Ltd
- Spectrum Automation
- StayinFront Group Australia
- Strikeforce Alliance Pty Ltd
- Swire Cold Storage
- Swisslog Australia Pty Ltd
- Tetra Pak Marketing Pty Ltd
- The Food Group Australia
- The Nielsen Company
- Touchstone Consulting Australia Pty Ltd
- Visy Pak
- Wiley & Co Pty Ltd

Affiliate Members

- Australian Self-Medication Industry
- Association of Sales and Marketing Companies Australasia
- Baking Associations Australia
- CropLife Australia Limited
- Food & Beverage Importers Association
- Food Industry Association Qld Inc
- Food Q Inc
- Foodservice Suppliers Association of Australia
- Grains & Legumes Nutrition Council
- Private Label Manufacturers Association Australia/New Zealand



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