

Comments from the Victorian Department of Health and the Victorian Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions

Due date of submission – 31 January 2022

The Victorian Departments of Health and Jobs, Precincts and Regions (the departments) welcome the opportunity to respond to Application A1232 – Food derived from drought-tolerant wheat line IND-00412-7 (the Application).

The Application seeks permission for the sale and use of food derived from genetically modified wheat line IND-00412-7. Wheat line IND-00412-7 has been genetically modified for tolerance to drought and to the herbicide glufosinate.

From the FSANZ assessment report it is understood that:

- If approved, food derived from wheat line IND-00412-7 may enter the Australian and New Zealand food supply as imported food products. These may include flour, bread, pasta, biscuits, and other baked products.
- Wheat line IND-00412-7 is not intended to be grown or sold in Australia or New Zealand.
- Existing labelling requirements for GM food will apply to food derived from wheat line IND-00412-7 in accordance with the Code.
- Genes encoding the expression of proteins HaHB4 and PAT were introduced into wheat line IND00412-7. There is a history of human exposure to HaHB4 through the consumption of sunflower seeds. The safety of PAT has been assessed by FSANZ in numerous previous applications.
- FSANZ found that foods using GM wheat line IND00412-7 are considered to be as safe for human consumption and nutritionally equivalent, to food derived from conventional non-GM wheat cultivars. With no toxicity or allergenicity concerns from either protein.
- Food containing unprocessed Wheat IND-00412-7 (viable seed that has the ability to germinate) could not be imported into Australia or New Zealand without environmental approval from the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator.

The departments support the progression of this application.