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I don't want to eat or for my kids to eat genetically modified (GM) foods. Your proposed plan to deregulate them means that I will no longer be able to find out which foods are currently genetically modified and I won't be able to avoid buying them. I can currently avoid buying and eating cottonseed oil as I know it is always genetically modified. With your proposed regulations I will no longer be able to know if a type of apple or oil is genetically modified and it will be impossible for me to avoid these. All GM foods should be independently assessed for their health and environmental hazards and risks, be labelled as gm, which you already don't do, unlike in Germany and the Netherlands. Your agencies lack of regulation already makes it impossible for me to avoid these gmos. Do you not think people should be able to choose to avoid them as a matter of conscience and religion? The lack of current and proposed regulation also means that if there were an issue with a genetically modified bacteria or food, like with the GM L-tryptophan in 1988 it would be difficult to link the problem with the product and to recall it and save people from harm. 37 people did die and 1500 were injured from the genetically modified L-tryptophan in 1988. 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. These changes would be at odds with FSANZ's key responsibilities to ensure food safety and our right to know what is in our food. If FSANZ no longer regulates something as novel and potentially dangerous as genetically modified foods there is little point in the agency even existing and should be disbanded to save our tax dollars. The agency already is a quaint formality that simply approves every application it receives, asking no questions, requiring no additional information and with no independent safety testing commissioned whatsoever. Your agency operates exclusively for the benefit of major companies and really not need exist if Australia is operating with virtually zero regulation, allowing products like tractoamine that are banned in China and approving unneeded novel products that pose no benefit to Australian consumers.

Agrochemical companies cannot be trusted to self-assess the safety of GM foods as they have an appalling record of manipulating data to protect their profits. They do not look for failures as the people want to protect their jobs.

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.

I am deeply concerned that FSANZ has relied on advice from scientists with serious conflicts of interest, to conclude these new GM foods pose no greater risks than existing foods. Those seeking to commercialise GM plants, animals and microbes should play no role in deciding how - or even whether - foods derived from them should be regulated.

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. It is essential that Australia follow the codex alimentarius or we will not be able to access trade.

I support expanding the definition for 'gene technology' so FSANZ continues to assess and regulate all new 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.

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