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To whom it concerns,

I am a nutritional consultant and feel very strongly about food labeling to disclose all ingredients so we know what we choose to put in our bodies. I feel that the manufacturers should have to disclose their practices and all ingredients.

I would like to stress the importance of the new regulations regarding food production and food labeling. GM foods may feed large populations due to foods being able to be stored for longer periods and grow without insect infestations, these methods are not proven to be safe for long term consumption and only serve the purpose of creating unhealthy junk foods. Also,, to create GM animals for our food chain is not acceptable. We will not know what is in our foods as manufacturers will not need to disclose ingredients. We need to protect our children now and all future generations so they can experience real foods and have the chose to consume GM or not, but making an informed decision to what goes into our bodies is our right.

Polling shows most Australians, and global citizens don't want to eat genetically modified (GM) foods. All GM foods should be independently assessed for their health and environmental hazards and risks, be labelled as GM, and be traceable. This will allow farmers, food producers, retailers, and shoppers to avoid them, for many important reasons.

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 labeling. 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.

Agrochemical companies cannot be trusted to self-assess the safety of GM foods as they have an appalling record of manipulating data to promote dangerous products.

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.

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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