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To whom it concerns,

Polling shows most 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 to enable farmers, food producers, retailers, and shoppers to avoid them.

Thus I am strongly opposed to the Food Code changes allowing GM foods, made using novel methods that have no evidence of safe use, to be sold without safety assessment or labelling. 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, our right to know what is in our food and animal welfare.

Since agrochemical companies have an appalling record of manipulating data to promote dangerous products, it is reckless to trust them to self-assess the safety of GM foods.

Gene editing techniques make genetic changes that could never occur in nature, resulting in widespread genetic damage that often goes undetected by GM developers.

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 making decisions about the regulation of foods derived from them.

The proposed changes would make Australia and New Zealand among very few countries in the world to allow genetically modified animal products into the food chain with no regulation or labelling. This would put them at odds with their 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 world-wide, 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.

As a UK citizen, I seriously object to our government negotiating a trade deal with Australia and New Zealand while they persist with FSANZ's Food Code changes allowing GM foods to be sold without safety assessment or labelling.

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,