

Submission re Proposal P1055 - Definitions for gene technology and new breeding techniques

Based on my extensive reading and online research over a number of years, I have grave concerns about the use of genetically modified organisms which are now used extensively in food production, animal feed, medicines and medical treatments – including current Covid ‘vaccines.’ There is a significant body of science that shows GMOs pose a risk to human health, and that increases in food and other allergies, as well as cancers, have been linked to GMOs in foods and other products.

For example: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/18989835/>

Health risks of genetically modified foods

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Abstract

As genetically modified (GM) foods are starting to intrude in our diet concerns have been expressed regarding GM food safety. These concerns as well as the limitations of the procedures followed in the evaluation of their safety are presented. Animal toxicity studies with certain GM foods have shown that they may toxically affect several organs and systems. The review of these studies should not be conducted separately for each GM food, but according to the effects exerted on certain organs it may help us create a better picture of the possible health effects on human beings. The results of most studies with GM foods indicate that they may cause some common toxic effects such as hepatic, pancreatic, renal, or reproductive effects and may alter the hematological, biochemical, and immunologic parameters. However, many years of research with animals and clinical trials are required for this assessment. The use of recombinant GH or its expression in animals should be re-examined since it has been shown that it increases IGF-1 which may promote cancer.

Science supporting GM foods is far from adequate, and claims of long term safety is not proven. Quite the contrary. Messing with nature rarely works out well in the end.

Furthermore, most studies supporting GM foods are industry funded, and history shows industry funded studies are biased at best. Data manipulation to put their product in a good light is rife, and amounts to scientific fraud. Yet regulators seem to be turning a blind eye.

The discovery of bacterial antibiotic resistance genes in gene edited cows illustrates the potential human health risks.

Scientific evidence clearly shows that new GM techniques such as CRISPR pose risks that require expert assessment and management. It's vital that gene edited organisms are **independently** assessed for safety before being released into our environment and supermarkets.

The European Union's top court ruled that the new GM techniques pose similar risks to older GM methods and must be assessed for safety in the same way. Reviews commissioned by the Austrian and Norwegian Governments agree.

Please note: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3791249/>

Excerpt:

One has to agree that there are many opinions (Domingo [2000](#)) about scarce data on the potential health risks of GM food crops, even though these should have been tested for and eliminated before their introduction. Although it is argued that small differences between GM and non-GM crops have little biological meaning, it is opined that most GM and parental line crops fall short of the definition of substantial equivalence. In any case, we need novel methods and concepts to probe into the compositional, nutritional, toxicological and metabolic differences between GM and conventional crops and into the safety of the genetic techniques used in developing GM crops if we want to put this technology on a proper scientific foundation and allay the fears of the general public. Considerable effort need to be directed towards understanding people's attitudes towards this gene technology. At the same time it is imperative to note the lack of trust in institutions and institutional activities regarding GMOs and the public perceive that institutions have failed to take account of the actual concerns of the public as part of their risk management activities.

Informed consumers are rightly suspicious of foods containing GMOs. Already markets are flooded with such products, and labelling is non-existent - aside from claims on a limited number of products that they are 'GMO free.' This makes it almost impossible for consumers to make informed choices - unless they can afford to buy organically produced foods exclusively, which is nigh on impossible because of limited availability. And the higher cost of organic products is beyond the budgets of many consumers.

Australian authorities were initially hesitant to introduce GM products to the food chain – but it seems things are heading in opposite direction. If this proposal goes ahead, it seems Australia will become one of very few countries that allow GM animal products into our food chain with inadequate regulation and no labelling – putting us at odds with international trading partners.

Any further rollout of novel methods of producing foods using GM technology, particularly without proper independent safety studies or adequate regulation, which will add unknown further risks to human (and animal) health, is completely unacceptable. Particularly as the lack of labelling will further erode consumer rights to informed consent regarding what they wish to ingest.

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