



## Office of Hon Nikki Kaye

Minister for Food Safety  
Minister of Civil Defence  
Minister of Youth Affairs

Associate Minister of Education  
Associate Minister of Immigration

Min12-1033

18 APR 2013

Jon Muller  
GE Free New Zealand  
P.O. Box 13402  
**WELLINGTON 6440**

Dear Jon Muller

Thank you for your letter of 18 March 2013 regarding Food Standards Australia New Zealand's approval of a new genetically modified (GM) soybean (soybean DAS-44406-6).

As you know, on 22 February 2013 FSANZ released its Assessment Report of GM soybean DAS-44406-6. The Assessment Report finds that this new GM soybean is safe for human consumption and recommends that FSANZ's approval should be accepted by the Australia and New Zealand Legislative and Governance Forum on Food Regulation (the FoFR).

The safety assessment process for GM foods shared by New Zealand and Australia is well respected internationally, and was subject to scrutiny by the Royal Commission on Genetic Modification in 2001. In its final report the Royal Commission concluded that *'the Authority's assessment is independent and that by international standards its methodology is sound'*. FSANZ can and does consider new and emerging evidence about GM foods and can reassess previous approvals if necessary. To date the scientific evidence has not suggested a need to reassess approved GM foods.

I am advised that the specific issues you raise in your letter have been addressed by FSANZ in responses to submissions received on soybean DAS-44406-6, and in reviews of published studies on the relevance of animal feeding studies to GM assessments. These responses are available in fact sheets on the FSANZ website.

The FoFR has collectively determined that there are no grounds to seek a review of the FSANZ approval. The FoFR's decision was publicly notified by FSANZ on 18 April 2013 in the *New Zealand Herald* and the official *New Zealand Gazette*.

I am advised that officials from the Ministry for Primary Industries have met with representatives of your organisation to discuss options available to you to seek a review of FSANZ's GM approvals. I also note your letter to the Chair of Parliament's Regulations Review Committee in relation to this particular GM food approval. As the FoFR has agreed to accept the FSANZ approval, I will issue a standard to give effect to this decision in New Zealand. This standard will be laid before the House of Representatives for scrutiny in early May 2013. It is from this point that a standard, and therefore the FSANZ approval, could be subject to review by the Regulations Review Committee.

I note your request to meet with me to discuss the issues raised in your letter. My office will arrange a time for us to discuss this issue and I look forward to meeting you.

Thank you again for your correspondence.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nikki Kaye', written in a cursive style.

Hon Nikki Kaye  
**Minister for Food Safety**