

## **Comments from the Victorian Departments of Health & Human Services and Economic Development, Jobs, Transport & Resources**

The Victorian Departments of Health & Human Services and Economic Development, Jobs, Transport & Resources (the departments) welcome the opportunity to provide comments on Application A1140 – Food derived from herbicide-tolerant canola line MS11 (the Application).

The Application seeks permission for the sale and use of food derived from the genetically modified canola line MS11 that has been engineered to confer both tolerance to the herbicide glufosinate ammonium, and male sterility of the line. It is understood that it is not the intention of the Applicant that the MS11 line will be used directly as a food producing line.

In terms of the Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) safety assessment report, the departments note that:

- Molecular characterisation indicates a single integration site in the plant genome with all three genes, and their regulatory elements, faithfully transferred with no plasmid backbone, stability of the insert across generations, and no disruption of endogenous genes.
- The herbicide tolerant PAT<sup>1</sup> protein has been assessed and approved by FSANZ in previous applications for food produced using gene technology.
- The specific proteins<sup>2</sup> conferring male sterility and controlling activity in non-target tissues have also previously been assessed by FSANZ in applications for food produced using gene technology.
- Characterisation of the three newly introduced proteins demonstrated that they did not display toxic, anti-nutritional or allergenic properties.
- All potential open reading frames created by the transformation event were assessed by bioinformatics analysis, and found to share no biologically relevant identity with known toxins or allergens.
- The herbicide metabolite produced by the activity of the PAT protein after application of the glufosinate herbicide has been previously assessed by FSANZ in a previous application and is already present in the food supply.
- The safety assessment concluded that seed from MS11 was compositionally equivalent to seed from conventional canola varieties, and is therefore as nutritionally adequate as varieties already in the food supply.

Approval of foods derived from MS11 will broaden the availability of canola products in the food supply and will not significantly affect trade or consumers. We note that any foods derived from MS11 that contain novel DNA or proteins will be required to be labelled under Standard 1.5.2 of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code.

Overall, no public health or safety concerns were identified by the safety assessment. Food derived from MS11 was considered to be as safe for human consumption and as nutritionally adequate as food derived from conventional canola varieties.

On the basis of this understanding, the departments support the progression of the Application.

---

<sup>1</sup> Phosphinothricin N-acetyltransferase

<sup>2</sup> Barnase (bacterial cytotoxic ribonuclease)

---