

Comments from the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services and the Victorian Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions.

Due date of submission – 12 November 2020

The Victorian Departments of Health and Human Services and Jobs, Precincts and Regions (the departments) welcome the opportunity to respond to this application to amend the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (the Code).

Application A1202 – Food derived from herbicide-tolerant and insect-protected corn line DP23211 seeks permission for the sale and use of food derived from corn line DP23211 that has been genetically modified (GM) to provide tolerance to the herbicide glufosinate.

From the Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) Assessment report it is understood that:

- The genetic modification provides specific tolerance to the herbicide glufosinate and protection against corn rootworm.
- Food derived from DP23211 is proposed to enter in the Australian and New Zealand food supply as imported food products in the form of starch, grits, meal, flour, oil and sweetener products.
- The highly refined products are unlikely to contain any novel protein or DNA, and so would not require GM labelling. However, it is understood that any products that do contain the novel protein or DNA, such as corn meal and grits, would be subject to the GM labelling requirements under the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code, enabling consumers to make informed choices.
- Commercial cultivation of DP23211 is likely to occur predominantly in North America. There is currently no intention by the applicant to seek approval to grow this GM corn variety in Australia or New Zealand.
- FSANZ approval is required to ensure that foods derived from corn line DP23211, and products containing these foods as ingredients, may legally be imported, sold and used in Australia and New Zealand.

The departments are of the view that permission for food derived from this corn line would increase the choice of raw material available to buyers. No toxicity, allergenicity, or nutrient composition concerns were raised by FSANZ in the safety assessment. Moreover, the modes of action, the physicochemical properties and the history of safe use indicate that corn line DP23211 presents no risk to humans or livestock.

On this basis, the departments support the progression of the Application A1202.