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7 July 2003

Mr. Andrew McKenzie, Executive Director
New Zealand Food Safety Authority
68-86 Jervois Quay
PO Box 2835
Wellington

Dear Mr. McKenzie

I write to request urgently information about the test results on the latest discovery of genetically modified corn discovered in Gisborne. Particularly, we are seeking answers to the following questions:

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- (1) How was the corn identified as a variety approved for human consumption?
The information we seek here includes—
 - a. What markers were assayed?
 - b. What assay(s) were used for the different markers?
 - c. How many markers were assayed in the product and raw material?
 - d. In addition to the total number of markers the Gisborne corn has in common with the approved varieties, how many of the tested markers were on different chromosomes? We are trying to clarify how many chromosomes the Gisborne and approved varieties have in common.
 - e. Was it determined whether the Gisborne corn was heterozygous for any or all markers tested?
 - (2) How many other commercially produced, trialled or released, or developed but not released, varieties of corn have been engineered using the same marker or set of markers used to confirm the Gisborne variety as one that was previously approved for human consumption?
 - (3) How many of those listed in (2) have been approved for human consumption?
 - (4) Given that the source of the contamination is still uncertain, do the tests confirm that the unmodified majority is unrelated to the variety from which the modified material arose? If the tests do confirm this, then—
 - a. How were those tests conducted?
 - b. How many markers, spread over how many different chromosomes, were used to draw these conclusions?
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We realise that this must be a very busy time for the Authority. The job before you now is very difficult, as well as the topic being very sensitive. We hope that we might be able to contribute in a constructive and timely way through the review of these tests. Hence, please either mail the material or send electronic copies to jack.heinemann@canterbury.ac.nz.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jack A. Heinemann". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Assoc. Prof. Jack Heinemann
Director

copies to: Dr. Barry O'Neil, MAF Biosecurity