

# How to recognise GM food

## First, the good news...

Fruit and Vegies are GM free. Most cereal crops grown in Australia are GM free. We have wonderful delicious locally produced food and it's worth celebrating. The only Australian crops to be wary of are GM cotton and GM canola after it is harvested in November this year.

- The only GM crop being grown in Australia at the moment is cotton, and only two products are for human consumption: cottonseed oil and cotton linters (may be in bulking agent 460), although the left over pesticide producing cotton trash has been fed to animals.
- Find out what your chips are cooked in. "Formula 40" is GM cottonseed oil – most other brands will be GM.
- If you buy food labelled "Product of Australia" the "significant ingredients" will be sourced from Australia and (except for cotton) should be GM free – until November 2008 when the first crop of GM canola comes to harvest.

## Now, the bad news...

The first Australian GM canola crop could be in our foods as soon as November 2008 . There is a lot of imported GM food coming into our country, mostly from the Americas. It is in Australian made and imported products on our supermarket shelves, and unfortunately is being fed to our animals from time to time.

- The main international GM crops are Soy, Corn, Canola and Cotton. If you avoid ingredients from these crops, and products from animals fed on these crops, you and your family can avoid GM food, with a few small exceptions. But a handful of soy flour or soy lecithin is thrown into almost every processed item on the supermarket shelves, so this cuts out a lot of your consumer choice. You can either seize this opportunity to make delicious Anzac biscuits out of Australian ingredients, or you take the word of a producer.
- Many producers have declared themselves GM-free, particularly those with a healthy image, and up-to-date lists will be available soon. Arnotts and Goodman Fielder are two such companies. Ring the information numbers on the packaging. You have to ask the question "Were any of the ingredients derived from a genetically modified crop?" and persist until you get a direct answer.
- GM corn can be in your food under many names – maize starch/syrup, corn starch/syrup, glucose syrup(corn) – think laterally.
- Watch out for the cotton products, canola from the Americas (and from Australia in a few months), sugar from beets and potato starch.

There is no way to recognise animal products fed on GM – labeling at all ends is grossly inadequate - ask your butcher or local producer. Until things improve, buying grass-fed meat and organic dairy and poultry is the only way to be sure.