



For Immediate Release: 23 February 2010

Meeting FSANZ

MADGE Australia, a voluntary group of individuals concerned about GM foods and crops, met with Chief Scientist Dr Paul Brent and the 'GM science team' on 28th January in Canberra at the FSANZ offices.

[Every member of federal and state parliaments of Australia has been informed under parliamentary privilege of details of this meeting.]

We met with a number of staff with degrees and doctorates in science, but there was no evidence to support Dr Brent's claims* that the FSANZ GM food safety evaluations are independent and rigorous.

Like a few other countries, FSANZ bases its evaluations on material provided by the GM crop developer. In the case of GM Roundup Ready Canola, the developer is Monsanto, a company that came last (581st) on an ethical rating list of multinational corporations behind Haliburton and Philip Morris.

<http://www.covalence.ch/index.php/ethical-rankings/across-sectors/>

MADGE has been reviewing the Monsanto GM canola material for 1½ years, and it reveals: contaminated samples, altered and disregarded protocols, study design that makes meaningful results impossible, failure to reference and report on necessary study details, failure to supply required information as well as acknowledgement that they failed to supply that information.

The FSANZ assessment document contained multiple technical errors, revealed essential missing data, and failed to accurately report the material supplied by Monsanto. There is no evidence that FSANZ systematically read through the Monsanto material.

There were no independent characterization or safety studies on GM RR canola used in the assessments - we know of none that exist to this day.

Pro-GM interests have attempted to find small holes in independent GM food studies, while being simultaneously unaware of (or failing to report on) the gaping chasms in material supplied by the GM crop developers.

The meeting supported views that GM foods have the potential to cause health problems and are not properly assessed for safety. FSANZ needs to undergo formal public scrutiny procedures.

FSANZ Act 1991

3 Object of Act

The object of this Act is to ensure a high standard of public health protection throughout Australia and New Zealand by means of the establishment and operation of a joint body to be known as Food Standards Australia New Zealand to achieve the following goals:

- (a) a high degree of **consumer confidence** in the quality and safety of food produced, processed, sold or exported from Australia and New Zealand; [it doesn't have a goal of providing safe food]
- (b) an effective, transparent and accountable regulatory framework within which the food industry can work efficiently;
- (c) the provision of adequate information relating to food to enable consumers to make informed choices;
- (d) the establishment of common rules for both countries and the promotion of **consistency** between domestic and international food regulatory measures without reducing the safeguards applying to public health and consumer protection. [in practice 'consistency' means consistency with the unregulated USA, not Norway]

* Letter to West Australian 4th February 2010

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