



Senator the Hon Bridget McKenzie
Deputy Leader of The Nationals
Minister for Agriculture
Senator for Victoria

Ref: MC19-005970

Ms Niki Ford
Chief Executive Officer
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27 AUG 2019

Dear Ms Ford *Niki,*

Thank you for your correspondence of 12 July 2019, concerning the regulation of genetically modified crops in Australia. My sincere apologies for the delay in responding.

The Gene Technology Regulator has undertaken a Technical Review of the Gene Technology Regulations. The technical review recommended that one technique, known as SDN-1, be excluded because SDN-1 organisms present no different risk than organisms carrying naturally occurring genetic changes. Further information is available on the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator website at:
<http://www.ogtr.gov.au/internet/ogtr/publishing.nsf/Content/reviewregulations-1>.

The amendments have been agreed by the Legislative and Governance Forum on Gene Technology and made by the Governor-General, and will commence on 8 October 2019.

The Department of Agriculture considers there are no unmanageable risks to agricultural trade from excluding SDN-1 organisms from Australian regulation. Judging by experience with current exports and industry feedback during the gene technology reviews, government certification and industry supply chains will be able to adjust to trading partner requirements as they do with other technical requirements. If an importing country considers imposing additional requirements on Australian produce, the department's agriculture counsellors are well placed to raise awareness about Australia's robust regulatory system and, in the usual manner, to support Australia's negotiation of market access for our exports.

Thank you for your offer to meet with me to discuss the work of your organisation. Please contact my diary manager on 02 6277 7190 to arrange a suitable time.

Yours sincerely

Bridget McKenzie