

Response to: Consultation RIS Technical Review of Gene Technology Regulations 2001

The ADIC is the national peak policy body for the Australian dairy industry and represents all sectors of the industry on issues of national and international importance. Its constituent organisations— Australian Dairy Farmers Limited (ADF) and the Australian Dairy Products Federation (ADPF)—represent the interests of dairy farmers, manufacturers, processors and traders across Australia.

Dairy Australia is the dairy industry-owned service company, limited by guarantee, whose members are farmers and the industry bodies, ADF and the ADPF.

Australian dairy ranks third in farmgate value behind beef and wheat (\$3.7 billion in 2016/17).

Over 5780 dairy farmers produce around 9 billion litres of milk a year.

The Australian dairy industry directly employs nearly 42,000 Australians on farms and in factories.

Our industry has the potential to grow substantially over the next decade to meet growing domestic and international demand.

R&D innovation is key to the ongoing prosperity of our industry.

The Australian Dairy Industry:

- **Endorses** the amendment to the Gene Technology Regulations 2001 that gives effect to listing organisms derived from the SDN-1 gene editing technique as non-GM.

Current regulation of GMOs is inappropriate for new breeding techniques.

The Australian dairy industry welcomes the scientific assessment undertaken by Australia's Gene Technology Regulator that establishes that organisms modified using the gene editing technique SDN-1 pose equivalent risks to organisms with natural mutations that are considered non-GM and should therefore be regulated in the same way.

The Australian dairy industry further welcomes legal clarity around all new gene editing techniques, allowing R&D programs to progress in a more certain regulatory framework. Further clarification is required about the use of RNAi to cause temporary changes to gene expression in light of the fact that methylated DNA can be inherited and thus would not be considered a temporary effect.

The proposed amendments will remove the Australian regulatory barrier to commercialisation of plant breeding innovations for dairy farmers in this country. While it will also signal the Australian Government's commitment to scientific, risk-based regulation to our trading partners, we note that transparency and traceability may be important to some trading partners and impact commercialisation.

Contacts

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