

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO**

**Supplementary Budget Estimates 2012-2013, 17 & 19 October 2012**

**Question: E12-058**

**OUTCOME 1: Population Health**

**Topic: FSANZ - GMO**

**Type of Question: Written Question on Notice**

**Number of pages: 1**

**Senator: Senator Siewert**

**Question:**

Can you confirm that, in May 2013, FSANZ anticipates approval of food derived from herbicide-tolerant Soybean DAS-44406-6? (If approved, 2,4-D tolerant GM soy could be present, unlabelled, in infant formula and other processed food).

Will FSANZ halt the approval process for herbicide-tolerant Soybean DAS-44406-6 while independent safety studies are undertaken?

**Answer:**

Food Standards Australia and New Zealand (FSANZ) has undertaken an assessment of the safety of food derived from herbicide-tolerant soybean DAS-44406-6 and, in accordance with that assessment, has prepared a draft variation to Standard 1.5.2 – Food produced using Gene Technology, in the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code, to permit its sale and use. Public comment on the draft variation has now closed. The Board will make a final decision in early 2013. If it approves the draft variation, that decision will be notified to the COAG Legislative and Governance Forum on Food Regulation (the Forum). The Forum has 60 days to advise FSANZ whether or not a review of the decision is required. If no review request is made, FSANZ will gazette the variation by early May 2013.

The FSANZ Application Handbook lists the information required for the safety assessment of foods produced using gene technology. A comprehensive data package was submitted by the Applicant which fully addresses all relevant information. Should new information come to light, either during the assessment process or following an approval, which would alter FSANZ's conclusions in relation to the safety of food derived from herbicide tolerant soybean DAS-44406-6, then appropriate regulatory action will be taken.