

I am most concerned with many aspects of the proposed FTA particularly those related to quarantine issues and GM foods.

Last week's Guardian Weekly carried an article about the disastrous results of GM cropping in Argentina where the soil is becoming polluted from the excessive requirements of weedicide to maintain cropping levels and production is falling because of the resulting destruction of soil micro-organisms and fertility. At present there is a proposed delivery of GM soya into our marketplace which will present us with the inability to choose unadulterated foods. We will not be able to protect our country from these issues under a free trade agreement.

Already we are receiving meat products from the USA which has already had one publicised event of mad cow disease. I have not seen these meat products withdrawn from the supermarket shelves. We hope to export beef to America but a free trade agreement means we have to accept anything they send us, so are our food supplies to become contaminated?

How will our small industries stand up against the power of the US? What sort of megalomania allows our prime minister to believe that we can be on equal terms with a superpower?

I believe the FTA gives superior advantages to the USA and threatens loss of our sovereignty - something which is already at risk from the WTO and other unelected organisations.

As a proud hard-working Australian I do not believe we need the FTA. Our farmers would be better off promoting our clean, green image to the European market and increasing our market share there.

Yours in haste,

Margaret Opie