

Proposed Research Outline

Genetically Modified Food Labelling in Selected European Countries

1. Background

1.1 The purpose of this research paper is to provide the Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene with information regarding genetically modified (GM) food labelling in selected European countries.

2. Proposed outline

2.1 Introduction

2.2 A detailed discussion of the regulatory framework of GM food labelling, including:

- (a) legislation on GM food labelling;
- (b) regulatory authorities involved in GM food labelling;
- (c) labelling regulations and policies;
- (d) traceability requirements, including the effect of the co-existence of GM crops and non-GM crops;
- (e) enforcement methods; and
- (f) public views.

2.3 Analysis comparing the various features of the regulatory framework in the selected European countries.

3. Proposed places to be studied

3.1 The Research and Library Services Division (RLSD) proposes to study the regulatory framework in the following countries:

- (a) The United Kingdom (UK);
- (b) Ireland;
- (c) Denmark; and
- (d) France.

3.2 The UK has adopted the European Union (EU) Regulations on GM food labelling and traceability for products containing GM ingredients since 2004. Local authorities are responsible for the enforcement and implementation of policies relating to labelling and traceability.

3.3 Authorities in Ireland have implemented national regulations in the enforcement and execution of provisions of the EU Regulations on GM food labelling and traceability. Surveillance on GM food is conducted on a regular basis to reveal misleading labels.

3.4 In Denmark, although legislation on the EU Regulations on labelling and traceability has been enacted, few GM products are marketed as consumers perceive such products to have little benefits. Under a law passed by the Danish Parliament in June 2005, producers of non-GM crops who believe that their production has been contaminated can apply to the government for compensation.

3.5 In France, apart from the EU Regulations on GM food labelling, the French authority has its own regulations on negative labelling and an inter-ministerial group to study whether food products transformed or prepared by hotels, restaurants and institutions are required to be labelled as such, although those food products are not required to be labelled under the EU Regulations.

4. Proposed completion date

4.1 RLSD proposes to complete the research by September/October 2006.

Research and Library Services Division
Legislative Council Secretariat
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