

24 June 2013

FDA Advisory
2013-014


**SUBJECT: THE SAFETY OF GENETICALLY-MODIFIED FOODS
PRODUCED THROUGH MODERN BIOTECHNOLOGY**

On September 5, 2002, the DOH issued a Press Statement on the Safety of the Genetically Modified (GM) Food (<http://www.doh.gov.ph/press/September052002.htm>). The FDA hereby reiterates that all GM food products derived from modern biotechnology that are currently on the market have passed food safety assessment based on the UN FAO/WHO CODEX Alimentarius *Risk Analysis of Foods Derived from Modern Biotechnology* (CAC/GL 44-2003) and *Guidelines for the Conduct of Food Safety Assessment of Foods Derived from Recombinant-DNA Plants* (CAC/GL45-2003). All food derived from GM crops in the market have met international food safety standards and are as safe as and as nutritious as the food derived from conventional crops for direct use as food, feeds and for processing.

Statistics shows that in 2012, 17.3M farmers in 28 countries planted 170.3M hectares of farm lands to GM crops, which is 6% or 10.3M hectares more than in 2011. Data also showed that in 2012, 82% of total land area planted with cotton was planted to GM cotton. The global adoption rate for GM soya, GM corn and GM canola, was 75%, 32% and 26%, respectively, in 2012. (Clive James, Global Status of Commercialized Biotech/GM Crops: 2012)

Different GM crops that are propagated or are undergoing limited or multi-location field trial possess certain traits, like herbicide resistance, pest resistance, improved disease resistance, drought resistance, or biofortified with Pro-vitamin A, and have certain genes integrated in the genome. This means that the safety of these specific GM crops should be assessed on a case-by-case basis, following the CODEX Alimentarius guidelines for determining their safety, including toxicity, allergenicity and nutritional quality, or assessment of any nutritional or health claim.

It is not possible to make general statements on the safety of all GM foods. As the National Competent Authority, the FDA supports the robust science-based evaluation system of CODEX Alimentarius Commission using data and information from field trials as well as laboratory tests. For processed food, the main focus of food safety review is on the objective characteristics of the product and on any health or nutritional claims. The focus of evaluation is on the food product and not on the technology used to produce the product.


KENNETH Y. HARTIGAN-GO, MD
Director General