

LABELLING OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOOD

WHAT DOES THIS LEAFLET COVER?

This leaflet is intended to give basic information to food manufacturers, caterers and other interested parties, on labelling of food which is produced from or contains ingredients produced for GMOs.

WHAT IS A GMO?

A genetically modified organism (GMO) is an organism in which the genetic material has been altered in a way that does not occur naturally by mating and/or combination.

WHAT FOODS ARE GENETICALLY MODIFIED?

Worldwide there are many GMOs used in food production but in the UK only the following are approved and legally permitted to be present:-

- Monsanto's Roundup Ready Soya Beans
- Novartis maize
- Monsanto's maize
- Agr Evo France T25 maize
- Novartis Bt11 maize

LABELLING REQUIREMENTS

All labelling must comply with the general requirements prescribed by the Genetically Modified Food Regs (NI) 2004. For products consisting of or containing GMOs, operators i.e. anyone involved up to the point of delivery to the ultimate consumer shall ensure that:-

- For pre-packed food, the words 'this product contains genetically modified organisms', or 'this product contains genetically modified' shall appear on the label.
- For non pre-packed food offered to the final consumer, the words 'this product contains genetically modified X' shall appear on or near the display of the product.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED FREE

Products consistently free from GM Material can be labelled as such but its use is discouraged.

Remember, it is an offence to apply a false description to any food and could result in a fine of up to £20,000.

HOW DO I COMPLY?

The following recommendations are made:

Manufacturers - You should contact all raw materials/ingredient suppliers to obtain written confirmation whether any GM Soya or Maize has been used. Keep records of your enquiries and review the situation periodically.

Caterers - You should check all incoming ingredients and contact suppliers to seek details of any products which contain GM Soya or Maize. Keep a record of this check (e.g. retain a label file) and review it periodically. Ensure that relevant information about GM ingredients is transferred onto menus, labels etc.

TRACEABILITY OF GMOS

For products consisting of or containing GMOs (e.g. Soya), written documentation is required to be passed on throughout all stages of the supply chain. The documentation shall state which of the food ingredients is produced from GMOs. In the case of products for which no ingredient list exists, it should indicate that the food is produced from GMOs. Each operator in the supply chain must retain copies of the written documentation for a minimum period of five years.

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