



Press Release

GM Inspectorate confirms regulations are being adhered to

24th October 2007

287 words

In its seventh annual report released today, the GM Inspectorate for England has confirmed that there were no deliberate release field trials of genetically modified (GM) organisms during the period 1st April 2006 to 30th March 2007. In addition, the Inspectorate, based at Central Science Laboratory (CSL) near York, reported that a number of former trial sites were audited for compliance with post trial monitoring requirements, and that all were found to be meeting regulatory obligations.

The 14-page report also states that in December 2006 a new trial consent was granted for trials of genetically modified potatoes, and that an appropriate inspection and audit programme is in place to ensure compliance with the consent granted.

Under a voluntary audit programme to help seed importers ensure they are managing the risk of any accidental GM presence in the seed they import, the Inspectorate carried out 117 audits. All participating companies were found to have procedures in place to address these risks. In addition the Inspectorate reported that no incidents of unauthorised release of GMOs were identified during the period.

The GM Inspectorate is also behind a campaign highlighting the illegal trade of genetically modified tropical fish. Its aim is to raise awareness among fish retailers that, without having undergone the necessary regulatory assessments required by EU law to safeguard human health and the environment, genetically modified fish are illegal in Europe and the UK. This year brightly coloured *Danio rerio* zebrafish, which contain a gene that makes them fluoresce under UV light, had to be removed from a number of retail outlets. The suspect fish were positively identified using a diagnostic test developed at CSL.

The full GM Inspectorate report can be downloaded from the Inspectorate's website: <http://www.gm-inspectorate.gov.uk/reportsPublications/>

Notes for editors

1. The GM Inspectorate is based at Central Science Laboratory (CSL). The Inspectorate has authority under part VI of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 for inspection and enforcement of the deliberate release of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in England.
2. This is the seventh annual report of the GM Inspectorate since taking over responsibility for inspection and enforcement functions in June 2000. The report covers the period 1st April 2006 to 30th March 2007.
3. The work of the GM Inspectorate falls into three key areas – 1) inspection of sites where GMOs have been authorised for deliberate release, 2) management audits of deliberate release consent holders and 3) audits of seed producers and importers to ensure they are taking appropriate steps to prevent the adventitious presence of GM events in conventional seed. This work is undertaken to ensure that the legislation concerning the deliberate release of GMOs is complied with; it is also the responsibility of the GM Inspectorate to identify where potential breaches of consent conditions or other enforcement issues may have occurred and to investigate these on a case-by-case basis.
4. Ensuring compliance with legislation concerning GM food and feed and traceability and labelling of GMOs is the responsibility of the local authorities and the port health authorities (http://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/imports/enforce_authorities/).

Further information

For further information contact Sarah Hugo of the GM Inspectorate on 01904 462 223, or email gm-inspectorate@csl.gov.uk