

# The Food Standards Agency and the Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Act

2023

# The Food Standards Agency



We are an independent non-Ministerial government department working to protect public health and consumers' wider interests in relation to food



Our role covers food safety and consumer interests in food, which include price, availability, and aspects of food production standards like environmental concerns and animal welfare.



Our work is underpinned by the latest science and evidence and agreed at our open Board meetings.

# Our Mission

Our mission is **food you can trust**. We want to ensure that:

- Food is safe: we all have the right to expect that the food we eat will not make us ill.
- Food is what it says it is: when people buy food, they should be confident that it is authentic and described properly.
- Food is healthier and more sustainable: we want to play our role in helping to ensure that food is healthier for people and more sustainable for the environment.



# FSA Powers – The Precision Breeding Act



## The Authorisation Process

We will create a proportionate framework for regulating PBOs.

A two tier approach was agreed and establishing a triage process to assess the safety of PBOs.

## Outcome

The process will authorise PBOs for use in food and feed that are safe for consumption.



## The Public Register

The public register will include a public record of all PBOs authorised for use in food and feed.

It may include information for particular consumers, such as information on allergens for hypersensitive consumers.

## Outcome

A variety of end users will be able to publicly access the register to view all authorised PBOs safe for placement on the market.

# FSA Powers – The Precision Breeding Act



## Traceability

All precision bred food and feed will be traceable under existing law.

We will ensure that food and feed using authorised precision bred organisms can be traced and followed through all stages of production, processing, and distribution.

## Outcome

All precision bred food and feed will be traceable under the scope of General Food Law.



## Enforcement

The FSA will establish an inspection and enforcement regime under the Act.

The FSA will work with Local Authorities and Port Health Authorities to develop proportionate plans for enforcement of PBO food and feed.

## Outcome

Compliance is secured through the obligations under the Act and through enforcement authorities.

# The Tiered Approach to the Framework

The Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes are advising us on a new **two-tiered framework** for authorising PB Food and Feed. They have been commissioned to provide scientific advice on:



The potential criteria for defining tiers



What information would be requested from applicants



Developing technical guidance

# Our Two Tiers for Assessment

## Tier 1:

All applications for PB food and feed authorisations are screened for similarity to traditionally bred varieties where the risk is understood and not of concern for consumers.



## Tier 2

Applications where the Tier 1 screening does not allow the risk to be understood, are subject to an additional step. These applications require a proportionate risk assessment to determine the level of risk for consumers.



# Current ACNFP Outputs – Triage Questions

## Composition:

- **Nutrient** – Is the PBO designed to introduce significant changes to the nutritional quality of the organism currently consumed that are likely to disadvantageous to the consumer?
- **Toxicity** – Is the PBO designed to introduce changes that are expected to elevate significantly the toxicity of any foods/feeds derived from the organism?
- **Allergenicity** – Does the PBO introduce changes that are expected to alter the allergenicity of any foods/feeds derived from the organism?

**Novelty** – Is the PBO from a species that has no significant prior history of safe consumption in the UK or EU?

**Other Safety Concerns** – Are there any additional features of the PBO that cause food/feed safety concerns?



# What are the next steps?



Stakeholder workshops were held in Summer 2022, January and April 2023 on the precision breeding framework. The findings from these workshops will inform discussions at September Board.



We will be presenting to the FSA Board in September on draft proposals for the framework.



The Secretary of State will be expected to make an affirmative Statutory Instrument (SI) on how PBOs for food and feed uses are regulated.



Progress will be transparent – full draft plans will be subject to public consultation.



We expect the ACNFP to publish further advice on data requirements later this year, followed by scientific guidance for applicants to provide greater certainty on the expectations of the assessment criteria.



Thank you for listening.