

Health Canada Approves GM Pigs for Eating

In January, Health Canada approved a genetically engineered (genetically modified or GM) pig for human consumption. The pig was genetically engineered using the gene editing technique of CRISPR-Cas9, with a claim to be resistant to a common pig virus. There are no GM animals sold as food in Canada. (A very limited amount of GM Atlantic salmon was sold, unlabelled, 2017- 2023, but production was entirely stopped in 2024). Meat from GM animals will not be labelled in Canada.

cban.ca/pigs



Take Action:

Stop this GM pig from being sold. Ask your local butcher shop, grocery store, or farm to **sign our pledge not to sell GM meat**.

US Government Approves GM American Chestnut Tree for Release into the Wild

In August, the US Department of Agriculture approved the release of genetically engineered American Chestnut trees into US forests. If final US government approvals are given, these GM trees **would be planted in the wild and would put endangered American Chestnut trees in Canada at risk of GM contamination**. If planted, this GM tree would be the first-ever genetically engineered plant released into the open environment, with the purpose to spread freely through ecosystems. cban.ca/trees



Take Action:

Sign your instant letter to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change Canada to **stop this GM tree in Canada**.

GM Purple Tomatoes and Pink Pineapples Sold in Some Stores

Some major Canadian grocery chains are selling controversial, unnecessary GM fruits and vegetables without clear product labelling. In April, some Loblaw and Giant Tiger stores began selling a **GM purple tomato** from the company Red Sun Farms. In July, Farm Boy was selling unlabelled GM pink pineapples. cban.ca/ProtectOurProduce



Take Action:

Ask your grocery store to **commit to a non-GMO produce section**.

TAKE ACTION

cban.ca/take-action



WHAT ARE GMOS?

Genetic engineering – also called genetic modification (GM) – is a set of laboratory techniques used to create genetically modified organisms or GMOs. GMOs are living organisms that have been genetically modified to have new characteristics.

Unlike traditional breeding, genetic engineering directly changes the genetic makeup (DNA) of an organism, bypassing normal plant or animal reproduction. Genetic engineering includes techniques that make changes to DNA by inserting genetic material from the same or unrelated organisms; deleting DNA sequences; or introducing genetic material to silence genes or make other changes.

New genetic engineering techniques called **gene editing, such as CRISPR**, introduce genetic material that acts as an “editor” to change DNA, with or without adding DNA from other species. Gene editing can produce changes in areas of the genome that are otherwise protected from mutations.

The Canadian government has removed regulation for most gene-edited plants and seeds if they have no DNA from other species. This means that many gene-edited plants, seeds, and foods can enter our food system, seed system, and environment **without any government safety assessments or independent science, and no notification to consumers, farmers or gardeners.**

Genetic engineering techniques such as CRISPR can cut DNA in the wrong spots and create unintended mutations. Intended genetic changes can also cause unintended effects because genes and their proteins, for example, do not act in isolation but act in complex networks.

There is no scientific consensus on the safety of GM foods. Releasing GMOs into our food system and environment is an ongoing experiment, still in need of testing and evaluation.

GM FOODS ON THE MARKET IN CANADA

Crop	Trait	Where on the shelves
01 CORN	Insect resistant, herbicide tolerant	Corn flakes • Corn chips • Corn oil and other corn ingredients in processed foods • Corn syrup Eggs, milk and meat* • Some sweet corn • There is no GM popcorn
02 CANOLA	Herbicide tolerant	Canola oil • Eggs, milk and meat*
03 SOY	Herbicide tolerant	Soy oil • Soy protein • Soy lecithin • Eggs, milk and meat*
04 SUGAR BEET (WHITE)	Herbicide tolerant	Sugar
05 ALFALFA	Herbicide tolerant, low-lignin	A small amount is grown to feed dairy cows and other farm animals. Not grown for sprouts.
06 PAPAYA	Virus-resistant	Whole papaya from US or China • Fruit juices
07 PINEAPPLE (PINK)	Pink coloured flesh	Whole pineapple, in a few grocery stores
08 TOMATO (PURPLE)	Deep purple colour	Whole purple tomatoes in plastic boxes, brand “Empress” from Red Sun Farms

*Many animals used to produce eggs, milk and meat are fed corn, canola and/or soy

GM FOODS COMING SOON?

Food	Trait	What
STRAWBERRIES	Longer harvest season, longer shelf life	Whole strawberries
APPLE	Non-browning	Bagged sliced apples sold in the US
POTATO	Non-browning, less acrylamide	Innate brand “White Russet” sold in the US
PIGS	Virus-resistant	Pork and pork products

cban.ca/gmfoods