



FRUIT AND VEG CITY HOLDINGS (PTY) LTD

Registration number 2000/008935/07

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RE: FRUIT AND VEG CITY'S STANCE ON THE AVAILABILITY OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED PRODUCE IN SA

We at Fruit and Veg City are of the opinion that the availability and sale of genetically modified fruits or vegetables should be treated with caution, and we do not support the current application process to sell these products in South Africa.

It is a cause for concern that there is only limited knowledge of the implications of this technology being applied, and the long term effects on the environment and on human health has not been fully established. Just because there has not been any significant scientific proof to date that GMO's pose any serious problems, it does not mean that it is not a possibility. "Absence of evidence isn't evidence of absence", says Quintin Gargan of Genetic Concern. Responsible companies must take into account not only the technological feasibility but also the possible effect on human or animal health, financial benefits (which are debated) and environmental issues that may arise.

In our opinion, it is not natural for certain fresh fruits or vegetables to have an inordinately long shelf life, and by their very nature, *fresh* produce should be just that: Fresh. If one wants products that will last long after their natural shelf life, one might as well buy processed or canned goods, which is not the objective for us - fresh and natural produce just tastes better.

We at Fruit & Veg City do not stock any genetically modified potatoes in any of our stores, and unless customers' approval of GM potatoes should significantly increase in future, or we can prove that it is actually beneficial for humans to consume without any negative repercussions when compared to non-modified varieties, we will continue to do business as usual. We therefore are opposed to the movement to make these products available for sale to the South African public.

Yours sincerely

Brian Coppin
Managing Director: Fruit and Veg City