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June 17, 2001

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Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am contacting you to express my concern about the possible commercialization of genetically engineered (GE) fish. I urge the FDA not to approve the current application by A/F Protein to sell GE Salmon.

Genetically engineered fish have the potential to be invasive species that could cause irreversible ecological damage to wild fish stocks as well as the wider marine environment. Indeed, exotic plants and animals are responsible for billions of dollars in economic losses in the US, Australia, and Europe each year. Historically, many of these species were deliberately introduced in the naive belief they would not spread where they were not wanted and that they would do only one thing (ie, the desired consequence). In complex ecosystems, almost every action has multiple consequences, some foreseen, others unintended and not even contemplated. Because unintended releases of GE salmon eventually will occur, the parallel to introduced exotics is quite exact. In my view, as a scientist, invasive GE organisms have the potential to cause even greater damage. The risk is too great to justify the potential benefit to a single company or industry.

I urge the FDA not to approve the current application by A/F Protein for GE Salmon because GE fish pose an unnecessary and unacceptable risk to the marine environment, to the US economy, and potentially to human health. Thank you.

Sincerely,



John Wages

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