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*Note:* See also the media release of 16 August detailing a separate poll with respect to New Zealand remaining a GM Free Food Producer. This subsequent poll does not specify any limit on how long the restriction on GM food production should last whereas that described below asks whether the restriction should operate only until there is export market acceptance of GM food and indicates the support New Zealanders would have for the nation remaining a GM Free Food Producer once given information about market acceptance of GMOs in Europe.

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SUSTAINABILITY  
COUNCIL of NEW ZEALAND



## **80% Support for NZ Growing only GM Free Food**

Media Statement      Embargoed until 5pm 23 July 2003

An overwhelming majority of New Zealanders support New Zealand remaining a nation that grows only GM Free food.

The Sustainability Council today released a Colmar Brunton poll showing 80% favour New Zealand 'remaining a GM Free food producer at least until our export markets accept GM food'.

The Council cited this result in support of its proposal announced today that New Zealand remain a GM Free Food Producer for the next five years. This would mean no commercial production of GM food following expiry of the moratorium in October. However, it would have no impact on GM medical applications and would not hold back GM research.

"There is a robust economic case for New Zealand remaining a GM Free food producer for at least the next five years" said Sustainability Council Chair Sir Peter Elworthy. "The risks to our conventional food exports far outweigh any gains available from growing GM food in the near future."

"The risks are contamination of conventional food and contamination of New Zealand's clean green brand. A Government sponsored BERL study reported that 'Between 20% to 30% [of consumers in major export markets] state they would cease purchasing New Zealand commodities if New Zealand released GMOs'."

"Europe is our largest food export market and a European Commission poll shows 71% of Europeans do not want to eat

GM foods. East Asian consumers are also very sensitive to GM content as was shown earlier this month when 'routine testing' by a Japanese pizza maker revealed 0.05% GM contamination in New Zealand grown corn."

"There is no commercial production of GM food in New Zealand. New Zealanders and our export markets are crystal clear they want it to remain that way."

"Proper national interest analysis has yet to be undertaken for other types of GM release. This work needs to be completed before ERMA decides if any non-food releases should go ahead. Fortunately, these potential non-food releases will nearly all remain in the research phase for a number of years so there is time to consider this post October."

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[www.sustainabilitynz.org](http://www.sustainabilitynz.org)

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**1. GM Free Food Producer:** The Sustainability Council proposal is set out in a new document entitled: *GM Free Food Producer*.

**2. Polling Reference: Colmar Brunton Poll for Sustainability Council**

Poll conducted between 4 and 9 June 2003 with a sample size of 500 and a margin of error of 3.5%. *Question:* "There is no commercial production of genetically modified food in this country. Europe is our biggest export market and 71% of Europeans say they do not want to eat genetically modified food. Should New Zealand remain a GM free food producer at least until our export markets accept GM food?"

*Responses:* Yes: 80%, No:10%, Don't know: 9% and Refused: 1%.