

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

G/TBT/N/HKG/2
4 April 2001

(01-1712)

Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade

Original: English

NOTIFICATION

The following notification is being circulated in accordance with Article 10.6.

1.	Member to Agreement notifying: <u>HONG KONG, CHINA</u> If applicable, name of local government involved (Articles 3.2 and 7.2):
2.	Agency responsible: The Environment and Food Bureau, Government of the HKSAR Name and address (including telephone and fax numbers, e-mail and web-site addresses, if available) of agency or authority designated to handle comments regarding the notification shall be indicated if different from above:
3.	Notified under Article 2.9.2 [X], 2.10.1 [], 5.6.2 [], 5.7.1 [], other:
4.	Products covered (HS or CCCN where applicable, otherwise national tariff heading. ICS numbers may be provided in addition, where applicable): Genetically modified (GM) food
5.	Title, number of pages and language(s) of the notified document: Consultation Paper on "Labelling of Genetically Modified Food" (27 pages, in English)
6.	Description of content: To invite views on the following proposals: <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) To adopt an approach that requires that the presence of genetically modified content of any ingredient of a food product above a threshold and any significantly different characteristic of the GM content to be labelled (paragraph 4.1 in the document);(b) To set the threshold under the approach proposed in (a) at 5% (paragraph 4.2);(c) When the GM content of an ingredient of a food product exceeds 5%, to have more detailed labelling of significant modifications that have taken place under the following conditions:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The composition or nutritional value is significantly different from that of its conventional counterpart;- The level of anti-nutritional factors or natural toxicants is significantly different from that in its conventional counterpart;- The presence of an allergen that is not found in its conventional counterpart;- The intended use of the food is significantly different from that of its conventional counterpart; or- An animal gene has been introduced into food of plant origin (paragraph 4.3);(d) "GM free" and similar labels should be used with caution to avoid giving consumers misleading information (paragraph 4.4);(e) Any negative claim in a food label should be substantiated by documents certifying that an identity preservation system was in place for the ingredients used (paragraph 4.5);

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(f)	A labelling system for GM food should cover only pre-packaged food at this stage (paragraph 4.6);
(g)	<p>Three possible options for introducing a labelling system for GM food:</p> <p>A. To encourage the food trade to label GM food voluntarily following a set of guidelines issued by the Government;</p> <p>B. To provide for mandatory labelling by introducing legislative amendments; and</p> <p>C. As a first step, to encourage the food trade to label GM food voluntarily following guidelines issued by the Government and to provide for mandatory labelling by legislative amendments at a later date taking into account developments on the international front (paragraph 4.7).</p>
7.	<p>Objective and rationale, including the nature of urgent problems where applicable: To facilitate consumer information.</p>
8.	<p>Relevant documents: Consultation Paper on “Labelling of Genetically Modified Food” (27 pages, in English)</p>
9.	<p>Proposed date of adoption: Proposed date of entry into force: } To be determined. The date of adoption/ entry into force is pending the result of the consultation exercise.</p>
10.	<p>Final date for comments: 31 May 2001</p>
11.	<p>Texts available from: National enquiry point [X] or address, telephone and fax numbers, e-mail and web-site addresses, if available of the other body: The text is also available on the internet at: http://www.info.gov.hk/efb/front.html</p>