

Comments from the Norwegian Scientific Committee for Food and Environment (VKM) on the application for genetically modified maize MON 95275 for food and feed uses, import and processing under Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 (application EFSA-GMO-NL-2022-173)

Comments to EFSA:

VKM gave a comment to EFSA in the scientific hearing of EFSA-GMO-NL-2017-139 (Maize MON 87411, also containing DvSnf7):

"VKM questions whether there is sufficient knowledge on the safe use of RNAi in GM-plants"

EFSA replied:

"EFSA is aware of the particularities that the risk assessment of RNAi-based GMPs can pose. EFSA has taken several actions to determine whether the existing risk assessment approaches for GMPs are appropriate for the risk assessment of RNAi based GMPs or require complementary or alternative approaches. An overview of EFSA's activities on the risk assessment of RNAi-based GMPs is given in Papadopoulou et al. (2020)".

Regarding EFSA-GMO-NL-2022-173, maize MON 95275, the applicant has performed a bioinformatic evaluation of the DvSnf7 sequence against the *Zea Mays* transcriptome. No potential off-target effects were identified.

In general, VKM finds this type of bioinformatic evaluation necessary for the risk assessment of GMPs containing RNAi.

VKM therefore recommends EFSA to include specific considerations in the guidance regarding different properties of GMPs containing RNAi, e.g., sequence screening for off-targets in the modified plant. This would be beneficial to ensure a common understanding between product developers and risk assessors regarding the type and extent of data needed to perform a risk assessment.