



Annual Report on HSNO Act Approval
GMF000041 (application GMF06001)
Bt Brassica *Field Test (Facility No 5356)*.

Facility 5356 Operator: Peter Landon-Lane

July 2012

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A report prepared for
The Environmental Protection Authority,
Ministry for Primary Industries, Te Rūnanga o
Ngāi Tahu, Te Taumutu Rūnanga and
Ngā Kaihautu Tikanga Taiao.

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1. Executive summary

The New Zealand Institute for Plant and Food Research Limited (“Plant & Food Research”) is a New Zealand-based science company formed in December 2008 as a result of the merger of Crop & Food Research and HortResearch. The company provides research and development that adds value to fruit, vegetable, crop and food products and has over 900 staff based at sites across New Zealand as well as in Europe, the USA and Australia.

On 25 May 2007, the Crop & Food Research application to carry out a field test in containment of genetically modified brassica (GM brassica) was approved with controls under the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms (HSNO) Act 1996 (HSNO approval GMF000041).

On 23 December 2008, a breach of controls was identified that one cut GM brassica plant (Kale) from the field trial had developed a flower stem and at least one flower on that stem had opened in the field. Flowering was not permitted under the HSNO approval controls. Immediately on discovery internal and external investigations were undertaken, risk mitigation measures were implemented and MPI issued a Critical Situation Report (CSR) and Compliance Order for future management of the field trial sites. Plant & Food Research formally ceased all work under HSNO approval GMF000041.

A Plant & Food Research Project Management Team was established to oversee monitoring of the field trial. All positions were also reassigned in accordance with changes to Plant & Food Research’s internal policy which is designed to enhance oversight of field trial operations. Following completion of MPI Compliance Order requirements of September 2010 the trial site now lies fallow and is being monitored monthly in accordance with the Plant & Food Research Containment Manual.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to fulfil the requirements of HSNO approval GMF000041 control 7.7 for the GM Brassica field trial. The report describes activities associated with the field trial over the twelve month period to 30 June 2012.

3. Management Responsibility

In July 2010 PFR’s Board of Directors approved a new Environmental Compliance Policy and Structure Plan. Implementation of the plan established a high level risk management framework allowing for the effective management of containment facilities across the Institute. Under this framework the following positions were established during 2011 and remain applicable to Facility 5356.

Operator

Peter Landon-Lane
Chief Executive Officer, Plant & Food Research

Deputy Operators

Bruce Campbell
Chief Operating Officer, Plant & Food Research
Michael James
Chief Financial Officer, Plant & Food Research

Operator Delegate

Andrew Granger

General Manager, Breeding & Genomics, Plant & Food Research

The Operator, Deputy Operators and Operator delegate are ultimately responsible for operational oversight, financial and staff resourcing to ensure effective management of the GM field trial site.

Containment Response Team

Andrew Granger

General Manager, Breeding & Genomics, Plant & Food Research

Philippa Stevens,

General Manager, Bioprotection, Plant & Food Research

Roger Bourne,

Corporate Communications Manager, Plant & Food Research

Angelene Holton

National Biosafety and Environmental Compliance Manager, Plant & Food Research

Provision of advice on the structure and operating procedures used in the facility ensuring they are technically appropriate to meet containment and operational requirements. This team manages PFR's response to significant incidents involving MPI registered facilities and reports these incidents to MPI.

Nominated Manager

Angelene Holton

National Biosafety and Environmental Compliance Manager, Plant & Food Research

Responsible for independent monitoring of Compliance Order requirements, auditing, annual reports required for the GM field trial site, reports to the Operator and delegates, containment sector and facility managers, MPI and the EPA.

Containment Sector Manager

Kirsty Boyd-Wilson (note replacing Colin Eady in June 2012)

Scientist, Plant & Food Research

Responsible for liaison with nominated manager and field staff and ensuring processes needed for QMS are established, implemented and maintained.

Containment Facility Manager

Ralph Scott

Scientist, Plant & Food Research

The Facility Manager ensures supervision, maintenance and monthly monitoring of the field site to meet QMS and Compliance Order requirements.

Management Oversight

During 2011 – 2012 all key compliance milestones were recorded as part of Plant & Food Research internal reporting system. Completion of milestones has been reported to the Board of Directors at each monthly interval. Milestones established for the GM *Brassica* field trial include completion of monthly inspections of the field site, perimeter fence checks and spraying regime, completion of an Annual Report to the EPA, MPI and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and Te Taumutu Rūnanga by 31 July of each year and six monthly internal audits.

Project Management meetings and training sessions were held on 2 February and 6 September 2011. Updates on the GM field trial site have been provided to the Biosafety Advisory Committee meetings held on 7 July and 3 November 2011, and 22 February 2012.

The Chief Operating Officer and Portfolio Manager of Plant & Food Research undertook GM field trial site visits on 12 April and 23 June 2011 respectively, while the National Biosafety and Environmental Compliance Manager visited on 22 July, 29 August, 23 & 29 September, 5 October, 6 November 2011, 9 January, 25 February and 19 July 2012. New sector managers for the facility were inducted on site requirements 20 July 2011 and 19 July 2012.

4. Field site activities for July 2011 – June 2012

There is no research activity being undertaken at the field trial site. All experimental work on this trial ceased in 2008. Disinfection of the shed on the site and its remaining equipment contents occurred between 7 and 9 May 2012 on approval from MPI.

All monthly reporting deadlines for monitoring of the GM field trial were met between July 2011 and 30 June 2012. During this 12 month period the site was inspected internally by PFR staff, trained users and management staff a total of 70 times. MPI inspectors also inspected the site on one occasion with another inspection due on 31 July 2012.

The MPI-EPA New Zealand containment standard requires the Operator to ensure that internal audits are conducted six monthly. In accordance with this requirement internal audits were completed on 29 August and 9 September 2011 and 27 February 2012. The field trial site was also externally audited by MPI on 8 November 2011. No corrective actions were issued.

5. Any unanticipated events or issues with controls

Unanticipated events during the reporting period included a 6.0M and 5.8M earthquake which struck on 23 December 2011. The GM field trial site was checked by the containment facility manager on the day of these events and on 5 January 2012. There was no ground damage or liquefaction occurring at the site and the security fencing remains fully intact.

During this period it was recommended that checks be made on the external security gate by Armourguard Security which was actioned by the Site Facilities Manager on 21 November 2011.

6. Educational and public awareness activities

There have been no educational or public awareness activities undertaken at the field trial site.

7. Māori relationship development

PFR's engagement with Māori is based on the principle of "kanohi ki te kanohi, rangatira ki te rangatira – face to face, chief to chief". In this context PFR is developing on-going relationships with the Ngai Tahu HSNO Committee which over the last two years has occurred through the CEO and Chief Operating Officer. On the 14th of July the Māori Relationship Advisors also had an introductory meeting with the Ngai Tahu HSNO committee Chair at the Otakou Marae, Dunedin, and a follow up meeting with the rest of the committee on the 30th of July at the Ngai Tahu offices in Christchurch.

The purpose of the meetings is to establish a relationship through the kanohi ki te kanohi process, that ensures an open, honest relationship endures. This relationship will continue to develop over time with genuine engagement and as a partnership.

8. Proposed activities for July 2012 – June 2013

No further GM research work will be undertaken on the field trial site for the foreseeable future. The trial site continues to be monitored monthly by the surveillance team under the guidance of the management team in accordance with Plant & Food Research Containment Manual developed for the field trial, controls in the HSNO approval and the MPI Compliance Order issued on 8 September 2010.

The 12 month monitoring period for the MPI Compliance Order was completed on 15 November 2011. The site continues to be monitored monthly under a standard regime until deregistration of the site is completed and new plans are determined and implemented for the site.

9. Scientific publications

No scientific publications have been produced over this reporting period.