

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH PORTFOLIO**

**Supplementary Budget Estimates 2015 - 16, 21 October 2015**

**Ref No:** SQ15-000864

**OUTCOME:** 1 - Population Health

**Topic:** GM Feeding Studies Statements

**Type of Question:** Written Question on Notice

**Senator:** Siewert, Rachel

**Question:**

Food Standards Australia New Zealand has self-published two statements on its website that are critical of a published and peer-reviewed study by Carman et al (A long-term toxicology study on pigs fed a combined genetically modified (GM) soy and GM maize diet. 2013):

- a) Who wrote the FSANZ response?
- b) What relevant qualifications did the authors have?
- c) Were there any contributors to the FSANZ response from outside FSANZ? (either as authors or reviewers)? Please identify these external contributors, as well as any affiliations.
- d) Has FSANZ responded to subsequent correspondence from Dr Carman and Howard Vlieger, identifying a number of incorrect statements in FSANZ's response?
- e) Was FSANZ's work based on peer reviewed literature? If yes, are these referenced in the response?
- f) Why didn't FSANZ require extensive data to be provided to them in relation to the pig toxicology piece?

**Answer:**

- a) Refer to response to SQ14-000101, part e).
- b) Refer to response to SQ14-000101, part h).
- c) No.
- d) Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) is aware that Dr Carman and Howard Vlieger have claimed that a number of the statements made by FSANZ about their published study are factually incorrect.

FSANZ investigated all these claims and its commentary remains correct. FSANZ acknowledges that it incorrectly attributed one picture only and has corrected the single error.

- e) Most of FSANZ's criticism was of the design, conduct and reporting of the study and therefore was based on the professional judgement and expertise of FSANZ staff who have extensive knowledge of the conduct and assessment of animal toxicity studies.
- f) The deficiencies identified in the study were so significant it was unlikely to have added to FSANZ's assessment.