



The Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos, Minister of Health

Dear Minister Duclos,

You will have received my September 14<sup>th</sup> letter regarding the National Council of Women of Canada 's support of Health Canada and CIFA retaining strong, precautionary authority over the regulation of all genetically engineered crops and adhering to their mandate to “ *prevent unacceptable risks to individuals and the environment from the use of pest control products.*”

The NCWC is very concerned that, under the system proposed by your Ministry and CIFA, many genetically engineered seeds, foods, and crops may not be part of the regulatory system, and therefore not subject to a governmental safety assessment before entering the market. Rather, developers of genetically engineered organisms will be the regulators, and through the “Voluntary Transparency Initiative” may, only at their discretion, send notices of products intended for market.

We are also aware that more up to date Health Canada regulatory guidance proposals recommend tiers of regulation fast tracking GMO reviews, requiring less information from the proponent, and a gradual exemption of many other GMO seeds.

It is of particular interest to the NCWC, that the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network (CBAN) research indicates that these proposed changes would particularly apply to more herbicide tolerant crops. And, as our earlier letter stated, “*The World Health Organization’s International Agency for Research on Cancer reported earlier this year that there is strong evidence that exposure to glyphosate is genotoxic and is probably carcinogenic to humans as well, and that workers and children are most at risk.*”

The NCWC is proud to stand strong with many other individuals and over 100 well respected groups, such as the National Farmers Union, supporting CBAN’s precautionary views on this vital matter. We are pleased that you will be meeting with their representatives this week to hear their concerns, and we are trusting that this will make a positive difference in the Ministry of Health and CIFA’s future policies regarding GMOs and genetically engineered foods, seeds, and plants.

Best wishes in your new portfolio; we look forward to working with you on these and other issues important to the health of women, children, and families in Canada.

Sincerely

Patricia Leson, President

National Council of Women of Canada

***The National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) works in the spirit of truth and reconciliation, acknowledging Canada is the traditional territory of Indigenous and Metis People. We are grateful to join with others in peace and hope, advocating for an improved quality of life for women, children, families, and society.***

