

Ministre des  
Travaux publics et des  
Services gouvernementaux  
Receveure générale du Canada



Minister of  
Public Works and  
Government Services  
Receiver General for Canada

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0S5

Ms. Maureen Carter-Whitney  
Research Director  
Canadian Institute for Environmental Law and Policy  
729 St. Clair Avenue West, Suite 13  
Toronto, Ontario M6C 1B2

The Reverend Dr. Karen Hamilton  
General Secretary  
The Canadian Council of Churches  
47 Queen's Park Crescent East  
Toronto, Ontario M6K 1B9

Dear Ms. Carter-Whitney and Dr. Hamilton:

I am writing in response to your petition regarding the accountability for the labelling of genetically modified organisms. The petition was forwarded to me by the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development, Mr. Scott Vaughan.

Public Works and Government Services Canada's (PWGSC) involvement in responding to your questions is limited to the mandate and role of the Canadian General Standards Board (CGSB), which is an organization within PWGSC. The Board offers client-centred, comprehensive standards development and conformity assessment services in support of the economic, regulatory, procurement, health, safety and environmental interests of our stakeholders—government, industry and consumers. In 1999, CGSB was engaged to develop the National Standard of Canada CAN/CGSB-32.315.2004, *Voluntary Labelling And Advertising of Foods That Are and Are Not Products of Genetic Engineering*. In this respect, the Department was responsible for managing the consensus process that led to the development of the standard referenced in your petition.

As a result of our role in standards development, PWGSC provided input to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and Agriculture and Agri-food Canada related to the development of the voluntary standard referred to in your petition.

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As noted in the response sent to you by my colleague, the Honourable Gerry Ritz, departments and agencies with a role in food safety are responsible for considering, on an ongoing basis, whether there have been any developments which would warrant a change to the standard CAN/CGSB-32.315.2004.

The responses to questions 1, 2 and 3, which have been sent to you by the Honourable Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board, reflect PWGSC's input. I understand that the response to question 4 is being sent to you by the Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, Minister of Health.

I appreciate your interest in this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rona Ambrose". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Rona" and last name "Ambrose" clearly distinguishable.

Rona Ambrose

c.c.: Mr. Scott Vaughan  
Commissioner of the  
Environment and Sustainable Development

The Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Health

The Honourable Gerry Ritz, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and  
Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board