



GE Free New Zealand

In Food And Environment Inc.

PO Box 13402, Wellington, NZ

Tel: 027 479 4195

RE: Organic Products Bill

28 May 2020

Dear Primary Production Select Committee,

We would like to be heard.

This Organic Producers Bill should not proceed through the House. The Bill does not give any guidance of process with regard to the methods that ensure consumer, business, or exporter confidence. Further, the Bill criminalises and undermines organic producers, is contradictory and lacks any substance by totally omitting Organic principles.

The lack of terminology defining “organics” and/or “organic” in the Bill leaves any interpretation or variations of regulations and standards subject to the whim of the Minister.

This Bill does not specify any interpretation nor provisions regarding the growing or producing of organic foods.

The Bill omits to clearly outline key principles of Organic production namely - the prohibition of genetically modified/engineered organisms (GMO) and synthetic pesticides.

Any breaches of the purported aims of the Organic Producers Bill are already covered under the Fair Trading Act, existing legislation. The International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) regularly audit the standards of certification organisations such as NZ BioGro and Assure Quality standards. These certification standards meet and are recognised by businesses and markets both nationally and internationally. These Organisations have processes in place to deal with any non-compliance issues, and their functions do not need to be duplicated.

What is missing are the Principles in the Bill, which must be to specify and guarantee consumers, businesses, and international markets a clear and agreed outline of management standards and definition of the term “Organic”.

The definition for “Organic” should follow the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) agreed wording

“Organic Agriculture is a production system that sustains the health of soils, ecosystems, and people. It relies on ecological processes, biodiversity and cycles adapted to local conditions, rather than the use of inputs with adverse effects. Organic

Agriculture combines tradition, innovation, and science to benefit the shared environment and promote fair relationships and good quality of life for all involved.”

The key principles should cover:

- Biological husbandry, eco-agriculture, natural sustainable systems of production, and environmental diversity.
- Prohibition of the use of synthetic pesticides, genetically modified/bioengineered organisms, and/or factory-farmed animals.
- Ensure ethical treatment of animals: the use of herbal homeopathic medicines, grass fed animals, including free range pigs and hens.

We would like to support the further points raised in the Soil and Health, BioGro NZ and Organic Farm NZ submissions.

We do not support the OPB in its present form and it should be withdrawn and re-written to include the points raised in our submission.

Yours sincerely,

Jon Muller

Secretary GE Free NZ.