

STRINGENT SAFETY TESTS IN PLACE FOR GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOODS

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The recent controversy surrounding the safety testing of potatoes at the Scottish Rowett Research Institute again emphasises the importance of the regulatory procedures for ensuring that products that enter the market have been thoroughly tested.

Scientists have known for some time that certain health issues surround lectins. If known toxic materials are introduced in foodstuffs, then it is possible that the resulting foodstuff may also be toxic. Research and Development and regulatory processes are designed to identify these potential issues and ensure that such products do not enter the market.

EuropaBio, the European Association for Bioindustries, wants to make clear that in the current case no commercial product was at stake and that nobody has ever intended to place this type of genetically modified potato on the market.

In order to appropriately analyse the scientific data from Dr. Pusztai's study, the results should be made available for objective assessment through the peer review and publication process in a reputable scientific journal.

Biotechnology crops are some of the most regulated products in the world. The European Union and its Member States have a strict regulatory framework in place to ensure the safety of work with these crops throughout the research, development and marketing of crop products.

The purpose of the regulations is not to hinder legitimate academic research, but to ensure that it is carried out in a safe manner and to ensure that, when products are developed to enter the market, they are safe for both health and the environment.