



Ministry of Economic Affairs

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Mr. B. URL  
European Food Safety Authority  
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Cc Mr. R. van Gorcom, Member of the Management Board

Date - 29 OKT. 2015 -  
Re Request about new EFSA members

Dear Mr Url,

I am writing to you regarding a debate on 'The impact of the gentech lobby' held by the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation and the Minister for Agriculture in the Dutch Parliament on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2015.

One of the MPs brought a publication by "Testbiotech e.V." to the attention of the Minister for Agriculture. This publication deals with new members of the Expert Panel on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO Panel) of EFSA<sup>1</sup>. The publication mentions that several new members have, or in the past have had, close links to industry. The MP suggested that these links may compromise the impartiality of these EFSA members.

During the debate the Minister noted that the impartiality of EFSA members on the GMO panel has been discussed on several previous occasions. She stressed that the Dutch authorities have confidence in EFSA, and in this context she referred to various research publications (Ernst & Young, European Court of Auditors) regarding the impartiality of EFSA, and to specific measures taken by EFSA. Furthermore, she stressed the limited number of experts working in the biotechnology field, making it likely that some EFSA members will have worked in the biotechnology industry at some point in the past. The Minister is convinced that such EFSA members are still fully capable of maintaining their impartiality.

At the time, the Minister was not familiar with the publication by Testbiotech e.V., and she offered to submit it to EFSA for their response.

I am writing to you to request that you respond to the contents of the article mentioned. I thank you in advance for your time and effort in this matter.

Dr Hans Hoogeveen, JD MPA  
Director-General, Agro and Nature

(w.g.)

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.testbiotech.org/en/node/1273>

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