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### **MADGE asks CSIRO for GM wheat code**

MADGE has asked CSIRO for the gene silencing DNA code in their GM wheat. Professor Jack Heinemann's report of yesterday showed the likelihood of perfect matches with human DNA.

"We want to know exactly which genes of our children could be silenced by a genetically engineered sandwich" said Madeleine Love, researcher at MADGE Australia, a volunteer community grassroots group of mothers and others researching in food.

Plants store their energy in starch; we store ours in glycogen. These fundamental energy storehouses are similar across most living organisms, and are constructed by similar enzymes. CSIRO has silenced the genetic material for one of these enzymes in wheat.

"CSIRO's invented trick is to make the plant respond to a product of its own DNA as though it is a virus".

"This wheat was being developed before we knew how plant genetic material enters our bloodstream and interacts with our own genes."

"We don't want our childrens' cells thinking that life essential products are the enemy, nor do we want off-target effects. We don't want off-target effects across the entire biosphere."

Heinemann's report not only looked at matches with the equivalent human enzyme, but off-target matches across the entire human genome finding 11 perfect matches in the first 70 pages of a 700 page list of significant matches.

"Heinemann said yesterday that matches of 21 nucleotides don't have to be perfect to silence genes. As few as 7 matches, in the right part of the gene, can have the same effect."

Heinemann is a genetic engineer based at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch NZ, and is a UN Biosafety Expert.

“It’s disappointing that the Safe Food Foundation had to look outside Australia for a molecular biologist for this research, on risks of this particular form of genetic technology, in this world first. Most of these scientists in Australia are developing GM products. For alternative comment the media are using scientists speaking outside their field of expertise using the transparent rhetoric of GM promoters.”

CSIRO haven’t yet responded to MADGE’s calls for the code.

**Contact:**

**Researcher: Madeleine Love (03) 5762 1250**

**MADGE Spokesperson: Fran Murrell 0401 407 944**