

3 June 2022

J Bruning

via FYI.org.nz

email: [fyi-request-19299-86846186@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-19299-86846186@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear J Bruning,

**Official Information Act Request – Projects employing regulated gene bio technologies**

I refer to your request dated 9 May 2022 for the following:

**Please can you supply the following information for projects employing regulated gene biotechnologies:**

**1. Please list all projects undertaken from August 2019 -August 2021 that have received approval for the research under the HSNO Act sections 38-42 inclusive.**

**2. Please list all projects undertaken from August 2019 -August 2021 that have been denied approval for the research under the HSNO Act sections 38-42 inclusive.**

We wanted to first explain to you the basis under which AgResearch operates within the approvals regime in the sections of the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act which you have identified.

AgResearch maintains a number of approvals under the Act for research work with identified species within containment. To that end, AgResearch doesn't generally seek or obtain approvals from the regulator (currently the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), previously the Environmental Risk Management Authority (ERMA)) for individual projects. Rather, our individual projects conducted in our containment facilities, including projects employing biotechnologies, involve organisms which AgResearch is permitted to work with in its containment facilities.

The EPA maintains publicly searchable records of approvals under the Act which have been granted to AgResearch, available from <https://www.epa.govt.nz/>.

After inquiring of relevant people at AgResearch, we don't believe that we have had approvals denied by the EPA during the period you have identified.

We have however been able to identify a list of specific projects in the biotechnology field which we conducted during the period you have identified and which utilised approvals granted under the sections 38 to 42 of the Act. We trust this will meet your request.

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The Official Information Act requires that we advise you of our decision on your request no later than 20 working days after the day we received your request. Unfortunately, it will not be possible to meet that time limit in relation to the release of the list of projects and we are therefore notifying you of an extension of the time to make our decision, to 5 July 2022.

This extension is necessary in order to enable us to consult with the stakeholders involved in the projects identified in the list. The list includes a range of projects, funded from a range of sources including from several private sector stakeholders, hence our need to consult with them prior to making our decision.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact me at 03 321 8800.

Yours faithfully,



**Nick Barraclough**  
Team Leader - Legal