

**29.06.2025**

**Submission to Kaipara District Council**

**Paul CANDY**

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**Gene Technology Bill**

**The following is my submission to Parliament in Feb 2025.**

**I urge Kaipara District Council to make a strong stand against the unregulated release of GE into the NZ environment in the Proposed District Plan.**

Submission from Paul Candy

As a life-long advocate for Organics and Regenerative Agriculture in New Zealand, I strongly oppose the deregulation of GE into the agriculture and horticultural sectors.

GE will damage our global reputation as a primary producer of clean, safe, GE-free agricultural products.

Deregulation will have far reaching negative consequences on the NZ economy, environment, food systems, health and consumer choice. The New Zealand Institute of Economic Research (NZIER) report commissioned by Organic Aotearoa New Zealand (OANZ) projected a \$10-20 billion dollar per annum drop in export demand across the whole agricultural export sector. This economic downfall will not be offset by the unregulated, untraceable commercialisation of genetically engineered products.

I fully support submissions from OANZ and Organic Farm NZ (OFNZ) Quorum Sense and Hua Parakore from the organic sector.

The unintended consequences and risks of GE far outweigh any perceived benefits. Scientific studies have proved significant harm to ecosystems, loss of

biodiversity and the cross contamination of crops and damage to microorganisms by the farming methods required to manage those GE crops.

Unregulated GE will directly affect organic producers and non-GE growers. Their farming enterprises will be compromised, and they will incur increasing costs, resulting in higher prices for organic food and therefore loss of business. Organics in NZ is a \$1bn industry which could be decimated if GE is released.

There will also be labelling issues. Consumers have the right to know whether the food they purchase contains GE. How can this possibly be guaranteed if GE is unregulated? Airborne genetically modified organisms can spread anywhere, so it is completely impossible to control their dispersal. The burden of proof must remain with those responsible for the introduction of GE, the government, should cross contamination occur. This also brings up the issue of liability...who pays compensation when GE is detected in food that is supposed to be GE free. This financial burden should also fall on the government but will most likely fall on the producer.

Personally, I would not knowingly eat genetically modified food.

I fail to see the urgency or logic in rushing this bill.

There has been zero public debate or discussion as this Bill was introduced just prior to the holiday period, with a small window for submissions. Upon speaking to many farmers and members of the public, most are unaware of its existence or intention.

The Gene Technology Bill will be heard by the Health Committee that has no expertise on the environment nor the agricultural sector. The Regulator under the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) will rely on a technology committee whose members directly benefit the commercialisation of any GE as they own patents or are involved in the creation of these biotech products. Surely this is a conflict of interest! Any science advisors to the government must be neutral and not associated with any corporate bodies or have a vested interest in GE. NZ will become a laboratory for the rest of the world to conduct their genetic experiments upon. It will be controlled by offshore corporate interests whose sole intention is to make money through GE patents, control of food production systems, animal breeding and seed reproduction.

Globally, 10 billion tons of food is produced annually of which 20% is wasted. In NZ an astounding 33% or 1/3 of all food in NZ end up in the bin! Why then,

do we need to introduce GE to solve a non-existent problem. A much safer solution would be to reduce food waste and ideally stop it from happening all together. Just because we have GE technology, and just because we can do it, doesn't mean we should.

The National Coalition government cannot ride roughshod over its citizens or farming community who make this country prosperous through their dedication and hard work. This is not an issue to be fast-tracked as it affects every New Zealander.

NZ has a unique geographical advantage over the rest of the world. The Primary Sector must remain GE free. NZ already receives premium prices for its agricultural products. We have a proud tradition of being innovative and creative and punching above our weight in every sector of the economy without the intervention of GE. Introducing GE would undermine everything great about NZ and we would just become another commodity producer with no point of difference. Why would we throw away such an exceptional and unique advantage when the world is crying out for natural wholesome food and protection of the environment? As many other countries are already using GE there is absolutely no advantage for NZ to go down the same route.

One of the key outcomes below appears to be contrary to the ACCTS signed in November 2024

#### Agreement on Climate Change Trade and Sustainability

*Improved facilitation of trade in services to ACCTS members, providing greater certainty and transparency for New Zealand exporters of sustainable agriculture and forestry consultancy, professional engineering and architecture services.*

NZ could lead the world by adopting a fully holistic approach to food, fibre and forestry production by working with and understanding the power of nature. We are only just beginning to understand the complex functions and importance of ecosystem and biological processes and the health benefits of a fully functioning natural landscape. Regenerative agriculture and organic production bring far greater benefits to soil, water, animal and human health, all the while sequestering carbon into the soil. There is an ever-increasing awareness of organic and regenerative agriculture, which has proven beyond doubt that these farming practices out-produce conventional or industrial farming without GE. Many years of scientific research has been dedicated to

producing the film *Roots so Deep* which compares conventional and regenerative farming methods on neighbouring farms. These farms were measured for biodiversity of insects, bird life, plant life, earthworm populations, microorganisms, water infiltration, pasture production, animal production, profit, GHG and methane emissions, reduction in chemical fertilisers, herbicides and many more. The process was repeated on five pairs of neighbouring farms. In every instance the regenerative farms outperformed conventional farming on every measure. Farming with nature as opposed to the war on nature will be the future of farming.

Many of the current issues relating to insect pests and diseases have developed with conventional/industrial farming practices. Increased use of herbicides, pesticides, fungicides, artificial fertiliser, synthetic nitrogen and cultivation have destroyed the soil microbiology which is paramount for soil health. Compaction, monocultures, over grazing and leaving bare ground, which causes erosion, are all conventional farming practices that can be rectified without the introduction of GE.

Most modern human illnesses like obesity, diabetes, cancer, cardiovascular disease etc can be traced to loss of nutrient density in food caused by the degradation of soil biology. GE will not address or solve the mismanagement of soil. Only healthy soil microbiology can restore the natural balance.

The health risks to people are well documented especially regarding GE Soy. Increased levels of Phytoestrogens have caused developmental issues in girls' menstrual cycles and testicular issues in boys. There is nothing to say the unintended consequences from GE to human health will stop there. As a parent of now adult children, I am deeply concerned about the impact on their future and future generations.

Perhaps in an isolated and controlled environment there may be some human health conditions which may benefit from gene editing.

Once GE is released into the environment it cannot be returned, ever.

New Zealand should not kowtow to pressure from overseas trade partners to adopt GE. We are not 25 years behind the times as this government claims, we are light years ahead and, in a position, to lead the world into a sustainable, organic regenerative future.

The current National coalition mantra of “Fast Track” shows their general ignorance of these complex natural systems. Their reliance on a technological fix is misguided, short sighted and tantamount to environmental terrorism.

### **My recommendations.**

I oppose the Gene Technology Bill in its entirety and recommend it is abandoned. The HSNO Act, as it stands, has protected our environment, export sector and consumer choice, so must remain.

If this Bill is not abandoned, I recommend a consultation period of no less than 12 months for full genuine public consultation. If the Bill is defeated, then I recommend a Binding Referendum making NZ a GE Free zone for perpetuity.

I also recommend that NZ transitions to a more holistic approach to land management, production and ecosystem function as there are significant long-term advantages for health and wellbeing of both the environment and people.

Science, Innovation and Technology Minister Judith Collins should resign from this portfolio as she has no knowledge of complex environmental relationships. The timing and introduction of the GE Deregulation bill is both underhand and undemocratic. The minister’s actions are short sighted, ill-informed and blatantly out of touch with the natural world.

**KILL THE BILL!**

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Candy', with a stylized, cursive script.

Paul Candy



## Meagan Walters

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**From:** Paul Candy <Paul.Candy@fonterra.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, 30 June 2025 7:28 pm  
**To:** District Plan Review  
**Subject:** Re: Opposition to GE technology

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Hi Meagan,

Thank you for your reply.

My response to question 1

1. **Submitter must advise the relevant options that apply to them regarding the Trade Competition questions:**
2. a. I could not gain an advantage in trade competition through this submission.
2. **Submitter must advise the relevant option/s regarding being heard at a Hearing** (this can be worded however the submitter likes as long as it is clear to the reader):
3. a. I **do not** wish to be heard in support of my submission.

Your help is greatly appreciated in the submission process.

Kind regards

Paul Candy.

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**From:** District Plan Review <districtplanreview@kaipara.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 30, 2025 3:54:56 PM  
**To:** Paul Candy <Paul.Candy@fonterra.com>  
**Subject:** RE: Opposition to GE technology

Thank you for your email.

Unfortunately, we are not yet able to accept your submission as under the Resource Management Act 1991 there are statutory questions that you need to answer please.

I have listed the questions below – please respond to this email with the answers to the questions and then I will be able to lodge your submission:

For a submission to be entered into our submission system, the following **highlighted** information must be provided:

1. **Submitter must advise the relevant options that apply to them regarding the Trade Competition questions:**
  - a. I could not gain an advantage in trade competition through this submission; **OR**
  - b. I **could** gain an advantage in trade competition through this submission

If (b.) above is the option chosen, then the submitter must also advise one of the following options:

- i. I am directly affected by an effect of the subject matter of the submission; **OR**
  - ii. I **am not** directly affected by an effect of the subject matter of the submission
2. **Submitter must advise the relevant option/s regarding being heard at a Hearing** (this can be worded however the submitter likes as long as it is clear to the reader):
- a. I **do not** wish to be heard in support of my submission; **OR**
  - b. I do wish to be heard in support of my submission;
- If the submitter chooses (b.) above; they can also advise the following if they want to:  
I would be prepared to consider presenting my submission in a joint case with others making a similar submission at any hearing

Ngā mihi  
Meagan



**Meagan Walters | Planning Administrator**

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**From:** Paul Candy <Paul.Candy@fonterra.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, 29 June 2025 3:33 pm  
**To:** District Plan Review <districtplanreview@kaipara.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** Opposition to GE technology

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Kaipara District Council members.

Please see attached submission opposing GE Technology.

Kind Regards

**Paul Candy**

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