

GMO wheat: Australia and New Zealand join Argentina and Brazil in approving for consumption, while US remains laggard

Food regulators approved a genetically modified wheat variety for human consumption in Australia and New Zealand, a victory in the rocky campaign to apply biotechnology to grains directly consumed as part of the diet. No GMO wheat is approved for sale in the United States.

A binational regulatory agency, [Food Standards Australia New Zealand](#) (FSANZ), approved on [May 6] the sale of imported foods made from wheat genetically modified to withstand drought and the herbicide glufosinate. At present, neither country allows the GMO wheat, developed by [Bioceres Crop Solutions](#), based in Argentina, to be grown by its farmers.

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Four nations have declared the GMO wheat safe for consumers: Argentina in 2020, neighboring Brazil in 2021, and now Australia and New Zealand. Brazil is the sixth-most populous country in the world. Last year, Bioceres said it would focus on winning approval from other key importing nations before expanding sales of the GMO wheat.

Dozens of genetically engineered crops have been approved for cultivation in the quarter-century since agricultural biotechnology was commercialized, including corn, soybeans, cotton, sugar beets, canola, and alfalfa. Many of those are used in livestock rations or as ingredients in processed foods.

Action has been much slower with food grains such as wheat and rice, consumed directly.

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