

RECOMMENDATION 21:

That the Government of Canada work diligently within the international community to achieve international agreement on the definitions of genetically modified (GM) or biotech products, science-based standards of producing GM products that the international community can recognize, and the labelling rules that are required.

The Government is working across a range of international forums to develop a science- and rules-based international regulatory framework for products of biotechnology. For example, the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety has already established definitions for "living modified organisms" and "modern biotechnology." The joint Food and Agriculture Organization and World Health Organization body, the Codex Alimentarius Commission, is advancing discussions toward an international agreement on the definitions and standards for food products derived from biotechnology. Canada has taken a leading role in the Codex Committee on Food Labelling to develop internationally agreed voluntary guidelines for the labelling of "foods obtained through certain techniques of genetic modification/genetic engineering."

RECOMMENDATION 22:

That the Government of Canada, in conjunction with the provinces, seize every possible opportunity to enhance cooperation between Canada and the EU on regulatory policy in the areas of health, safety, environment, and technical standards, and share Canada's regulatory experience with European decision makers and, where appropriate, the public at large. These efforts should be directed through Canada's overseas posts, industry associations active in Europe, and Canadian participation in international organizations in which standards are discussed, developed and monitored.

The Government agrees that Canada should seize every possible opportunity to enhance cooperation with the EU on regulatory policy and other issues in the areas of health, safety and environmental and technical standards. To build mutual confidence and promote the common understanding required for cooperation, Canadian officials engage their European Commission counterparts on a wide range of regulatory matters in both bilateral and multilateral forums. Bilaterally, discussions take place under the Canada-EU Veterinary Agreement and the Canada-EU Mutual Recognition Agreement. A Canada-EU biotechnology dialogue was initiated in 1999, bringing together regulators in this field. High-level environmental consultations have been held annually. On the multilateral front, discussions are ongoing in a range of sectors (e.g. chemicals, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, foodstuffs). All of these contacts provide Canadian