

# Hon Lianne Dalziel

**Minister of Commerce, Minister for Food Safety,  
Associate Minister of Justice, MP for Christchurch East**



13 December 2007

## **Media Statement**

### **Two reviews planned for A1/A2 milk debate**

Food Safety Minister Lianne Dalziel has announced the appointment of international expert Dr Stuart Slorach to head an independent review into the risk management decision-making processes adopted by the New Zealand Food Safety Authority (NZFSA) in regard to the food safety implications of A1/A2 milk.

"I am very pleased that a person of Dr Slorach's eminence has agreed to undertake the work. The role calls for a person with particular regulatory expertise and international standing in food safety – attributes held by a very limited pool of potential candidates," Lianne Dalziel said.

"Dr Slorach has extensive experience in this area. He was Chair of the Management Board of the European Food Safety Agency (EFSA) during its critical establishment phase, and Chair of the international food standards setting agency, the Codex Alimentarius."

Dr Slorach chaired an independent enquiry set up by the Norwegian government into the outbreak of E.coli O103:H25 in Norway in early 2006 and, since December 2006, has been a member of the Scientific Committee of the Abu Dhabi Food Control Authority.

Dr Slorach's appointment follows NZFSA's announcement in October that it would commission a review to look at the science behind the A1/A2 milk debate and NZFSA's processes that led to its conclusion that all milk is safe. These would be conducted as two separate reviews, Lianne Dalziel said. The first, by Dr Slorach, would look at the NZFSA risk management decision-making processes and the second would re-examine the available scientific research relating to A1/A2 milk. NZFSA is currently working with the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) in relation to reviewing the science. EFSA has access to a wide range of scientific expertise in risk assessment and is well placed to undertake such a review.

"The two reviews are quite different in terms of scope and necessary expertise. The review of the science requires an extensive range of skills and knowledge and we are finalising the Terms of Reference and potential reviewers for this. The issue is of interest worldwide, not just for New Zealand and I am hopeful we will be able to make an announcement on this review shortly."

The Terms of Reference for the review of NZFSA's risk management decision-making processes have also been considered by the State Services Commission.

Dr Slorach, will begin work on the review immediately. A copy of his CV together with the Cabinet paper and full details of the Terms of Reference for the review can be found on NZFSA's website at: <http://www.nzfsa.govt.nz/publications/hot-topics/hot-topic-a1-and-a2-milk.htm>

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All Lianne Dalziel's media statements and speeches are at [www.beehive.govt.nz/dalziel](http://www.beehive.govt.nz/dalziel)

## **Additional information**

### **Curriculum Vitae for Stuart A. Slorach**

Stuart Slorach worked for the Swedish National Food Administration for over 30 years, initially as Associate Professor of Toxicology (1972-1983), then Professor and Head of the Food Research Department (1983-1990) and from 1991-2005 as Deputy Director-General. He was Chair of the Management Board of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) from 2002-2006. Dr Slorach participated actively in the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) and its subsidiary bodies for many years and was Chairperson of the CAC from 2003-2005. He has been a member of the OIE Animal Production Food Safety Working Group since 2004 and its chairman since 2005. He has also worked as a consultant to FAO and WHO on projects aimed at improving food safety in developing countries and has participated in two meetings of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA).

### **Terms of Reference : Review of NZFSA's Risk Management Framework for making decisions on consumer protection**

The expert consultant will

- (i) Assess the appropriateness and applicability of NZFSA's Risk Management Framework for making decisions on consumer protection.
- (ii) Undertake an evaluation of the applicability and appropriateness of the NZFSA Risk Management Framework in regard to:
  - a) varying levels of uncertainty in available scientific information and/or risk assessments;
  - b) establishing priorities for policy development and risk management action;
  - c) balancing scientific information on risks with other risk management inputs such as the health expectations of society and the likely cost/benefit of potential control measures;
  - d) the establishment of food safety standards where appropriate;
  - e) the context of international trade rules and New Zealand's international obligations; and
  - f) allocation of decision-making and standard development functions within the organisation, and the business structure for such activity.
- (iii) Compare the Risk Management Framework as applied in New Zealand with international (Codex) guidelines on best practice.
- (iv) Compare the application of the NZFSA's Risk Management Framework in New Zealand with similar risk management systems in other countries.

- (v) Consider and report, in light of the report *Beta-casein A1 and A2 in milk and human health* prepared by Professor Boyd Swinburn, on the application of the principles of the Risk Management Framework in respect of the process by which NZFSA came to the decision to continue to take the position that milk is a good source of nutrition and is safe to drink.
- (vi) Assess the transparency and communication of decisions made in regard to A1-A2 milk, particularly in light of the delayed release of the lay summary prepared by Professor Boyd Swinburn and his non-availability to respond to media queries resulting from the release of his report.
- (vii) Consider whether, in light of the Swinburn report, further steps should have been taken by NZFSA, including referring the report to other Government agencies.
- (viii) Consider and report on the application of the principles of the Risk Management Framework in respect of other recent high-profile risk management and standard setting activities undertaken by NZFSA; in particular the strategy for control of *Campylobacter* in poultry, aspartame as a food additive, the imported foods regime (including for food from China), and the standard development for Roquefort cheese made from raw milk.

**The expert consultant will take into account:**

- (ix) Published and internal NZFSA documentation of systems and processes
- (x) Current New Zealand legislation and guidance
- (xi) Published documents on risk management systems for (and of) other national food agencies

**A review report is to be prepared and presented that contains:**

- (xii) A description of the NZFSA system
- (xiii) A description of international best practice in the area
- (xiv) A comparative analysis of the NZFSA system against best practice
- (xv) Commentary on the application in recent risk management decision-making matters.