

**16<sup>th</sup> April 2013**

**To Whom It May Concern**

**Re: United Kingdom Retailers Abandon Non-GMO Soy**

**ABRANGE is the Association of Non-GMO grain producers and represents annually over 5 million metric tons of Non-GMO soy and soy derivatives imported into Europe and the UK. We were puzzled by four United Kingdom retailers' decision to switch from Non-GMO to GMO soy for the reason of lack of supply and concerns expressed about product integrity.**

**We believe the retailers' decisions have been based upon incorrect information. Since December last year, one of the large suppliers of Non-GMO soy to the UK has been communicating to the market and engaging directly with retailers that they would no longer be supplying Non-GMO soy because future supply could not be assured.**

**This assertion is, however, not accurate. This year, Brazil has enjoyed a record soybean harvest over 82 million metric tons, bigger than the United States and definitely large enough to more than provide Europe's entire soy meal demand, including the United Kingdom's. The percentage of Non-GMO soy is estimated to be around 25% of the current crop.**

**Brazil is and will remain the world's leading producer of Non-GMO soy with increased sustainability. Brazilian Non-GMO soy is being produced and supplied to the UK through well established and fully developed supply chains, supported by mature quality assurance systems that guarantee a maximum of 0.1% adventitious GM contamination.**

**The current situation, which United Kingdom retailers have been lead to believe is do to reduced quantities and availability of Non-GMO soy actually has nothing to do with the soy being GMO or Non-GMO; it is the result of a slow down in Brazilian exports, which is due to increased pressure on Brazilian export facilities caused by increased demand for all types of exports from Brazil. There is a shortage of berths for mooring ships in virtually every Brazilian port. In some cases, ships must que for 30-40 days just to dock and load. This is not due to lack of Non-GMO product in the harbour warehouses nor due to the logistics required to deliver product to the port, but to lack of available berths for mooring ships caused by spiralling export demand.**

**This situation is temporary, as exporters are actively seeking solutions to circumvent the export slow down.**

**Although one large supplier of non-GMO soy has withdrawn from the market, others continue to supply, and assure that they are still quite capable of consistently delivering material to UK customers. Thus, it would appear that the circumstances triggering the UK retailers' decisions may be at least partially the consequence of inordinate dependence on one supplier whose willingness to continue to supply the market has waned for reasons that are not fully apparent. Considering national affiliations, this change could well have as much to do with interest in opening the UK to imports of GM soy from the USA than to the temporary slow down in Brazil.**

**A recent poll by the FSA indicated that 67% of UK citizens prefer milk, eggs, poultry and meat produced with non-GMO feed. In light of this, it is surprising that UK retailers have used the current, temporary shipping slowdown, and the consequent temporary increase in the cost of all soy (GM and Non-GM) as the basis for shifting to GM soy for animal feed. Certainly, mainland European retailers are responding to these consumer preferences by signalling a strong commitment to Non-GMO animal feed and by making strenuous efforts to even expand the Non-GMO soy supply chain, To conclude, last week's surprise announcements from Tesco, Sainsburys, Marks & Spencer and the Co-op seem to be based on a misleading notion regarding the availability of Non-GMO soy, which is purely circumstantial. Notwithstanding the temporary slow down in Brazilian export facilities, there is excellent availability of Non-GMO soy.**

**Yours faithfully**



**Cesar Borges de Sousa**

**President**



**Ricardo Tatesuzi de Sousa**

**Executive Director**