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To: Interested Parties

From: Celinda Lake, Joshua Ulibarri and Christopher Panetta

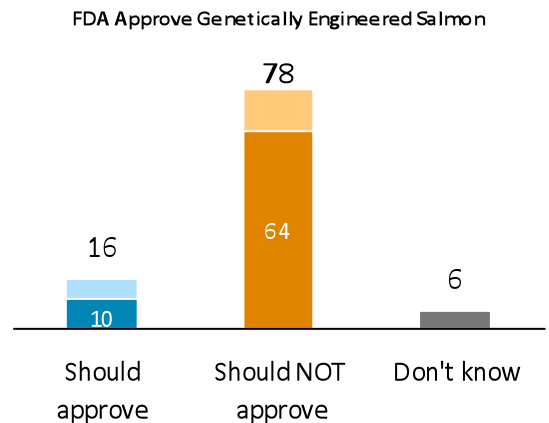
Re: Attitudes Toward the FDA's Plan on Genetically Engineered Fish

Date: September 20, 2010

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## Americans In Near Unanimity in Their Disapproval of Genetically Engineered Fish and Meat in the Marketplace

A Lake Research national survey<sup>1</sup> shows **Americans overwhelmingly believe the FDA should NOT approve genetically engineered salmon for human consumption until more research is completed<sup>2</sup>**. The intensity in opposition to the FDA's plan is both broad and deep. Overall, 78 percent of adults believe the FDA should not approve the genetically engineered salmon for human consumption, compared to just 16 percent who want to see it approved. The intensity in attitudes is overwhelmingly with those who are opposed to the genetically-engineered salmon with 64 percent of adults feeling *strongly* it should not be approved. Only ten percent feels strongly that it should be approved.



Opposition is intense and consistent across demographic and geographic groups. Notably, *strong* attitudes against the FDA's approval does not fall below 53 percent

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<sup>1</sup> **Methodology:** Lake Research Partners designed this telephone survey, and it was administered by CARAVAN® Opinion Research Corporation. Food & Water Watch commissioned the questions. The survey was conducted among a national probability sample of 1,000 adults 18 years of age and older, living in private households in the continental United States. Interviewing was conducted September 9-12, 2010. The data has a margin of error of +/- 3.1 percentage points.

<sup>2</sup> **Question Wording:** The United States Food and Drug Administration may soon approve a new laboratory-engineered salmon under a process designed to approve veterinary drugs. Engineered salmon gain weight twice as fast as normal salmon but we don't know the effect on human health. The FDA has not conducted any health or environmental studies of its own and has instead relied on the research from the technology company. Do you think the FDA should APPROVE this genetically engineered salmon for human consumption or should it NOT approve this genetically engineered salmon?

among any key demographic group, and total disapproval does not fall below 66 percent across any gender, regional, race, age, or partisan demographic group. Women, who are often the primary grocery shopper in the household and key consumer targets, overwhelmingly and intensely believe the FDA should not approve the salmon for human consumption. Seventy-three percent of women feel that way strongly and 84 percent feel that way overall (71 percent of men agree, overall). Younger (77 percent) and older Americans (79 percent) equally oppose, as do non-college (79 percent) and college educated Americans (76 percent). Democrats (79 percent) and Republicans (75 percent) are united in their opposition, and independents – a key voting bloc target – are even more against allowing genetically engineered salmon for human consumption as 83 percent feel it should not be approved. Geographically, opposition is consistent across the Northeast (74 percent), the Midwest (77 percent), the South (79 percent), and the West (79 percent).

When Americans are given more information and learn that this salmon would be the first genetically-engineered animal or fish for human consumption and that it could lead to pigs, chickens and cattle developed in the same way, opposition grows even stronger.<sup>3</sup> **A whopping 91 percent feel the FDA should not allow genetically engineered fish and meat into the market place with 83 percent who strongly feel this way.** Only 7 percent of adults in America feel the FDA should allow these genetically engineered fish and meat into the marketplace with only 5 percent who do so strongly. Support trends follow similar patterns and, in fact, total opposition to allowing these foods for human consumption does not drop below 78 percent among any group.

Joshua Ulibarri, a partner at Lake Research Partners said, “It is rare in public opinion polling to find 91 percent of Americans agreeing on any one issue. It only amplifies the findings to learn the intensity is as broad and deep as it is here. We simply haven’t seen unanimity like this on many issues this year.”

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– Joshua Ulibarri, Partner,  
Lake Research Partners

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For more information, please contact Lane Brooks at Food & Water Watch’s Washington, DC office (202-683-2500) or Joshua Ulibarri at Lake Research Partners (202-776-9066).

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<sup>3</sup> **Question Wording:** If the FDA approves this genetically-engineered salmon it will be the first time any genetically engineered fish or animal has been approved and allowed into the American food supply. Research is already underway to put engineered pigs, chickens, and cattle into the food supply once the salmon is approved, even though the FDA has conducted no safety tests of its own. What do you think? Should the FDA ALLOW these genetically-engineered meats and fish into the market before the FDA performs its own studies, or should it NOT allow it until the FDA performs its own studies?