

MEDIA RELEASE

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## New Zealand researchers condemned for genetically modifying cows

The genetic modification of cows to produce hypoallergenic milk is a gross disregard for the laws of nature, and subjects sentient animals to cruelty merely to satisfy human greed.

**Chief Executive Officer, Helen Marston**, said today *“The news, reported by news.com.au illustrates another example of cruel and unnecessary animal experiments which is certainly not essential nor life-saving.”*

<http://www.news.com.au/national/genetically-modified-cow-produces-hypoallergenic-milk/story-fncynjr2-1226486243179>

*“Cows milk is neither a healthy nor an appropriate food – unless you are a calf! We have access to an abundance of healthy protein-rich foods, including soy, nut milks, and legumes, which do not cause the widespread allergic reactions often linked to dairy consumption.”*

Ms Marston concluded: *“The animals currently used for food and fibre already produce to their capacity, and current intensive housing facilities fall very short of fulfilling adequate welfare standards. The manipulation of these animals to produce an even higher yield is merely a further assault on their already exploited bodies.”*

### Background:

While genetic modification occurs naturally and is indeed the basis for natural selection and, in turn, evolution, the intervention of humans in the process comes at great cost. The following concerns have been cited by Christiansen and Sando<sup>1</sup>

- Reproductive techniques such as superovulation, insemination and embryo transfer can cause stress.
- Production of large offspring causing difficult births.
- Increased incidence of genetic anomalies.
- Insertion of foreign DNA can lead to unpredictable responses from totally unrelated genes.
- Manipulation of genes may prevent the expression of stress responses.
- Engineering a loss of genetic diversity may make animals less resistant to newer diseases.

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<sup>1</sup> Christiansen, S.B. , & Sando, P. (2000). Bioethics:limits to the interference with life. *Animal Reproduction Science*, 60-61. 15-29.