



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

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www.defra.gov.uk

Your ref:
Our ref: RF6827
Date: 19 September
2014

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: DETAILS OF CONTACTS BETWEEN Defra AND THE SCIENCE MEDIA CENTRE SINCE 1 JANUARY 2014 ON GMOs AND THE AGRI-TECH STRATEGY

Thank you for your request for information about all communications and meetings between Defra and the Science Media Centre on GMOs and the Agri-tech Strategy since 1 January 2014. We received this 14 August 2014. As you know we have handled your request under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs).

Following careful consideration, we have decided not to disclose some of this information. I enclose a copy of the information which can be disclosed:

- e-mail correspondence between the SMC and Defra about GMOs, mainly press briefings and reports
- attachments to one email relating to the Seralini rat-feeding study.

To confirm, we do not hold any information within the scope of your request that relates to the Agri-tech Strategy.

A very small part of the information you requested is being withheld as it falls under regulations 12(3) and 13(1) (third party personal data) of the EIRs, as the information constitutes personal data relating to third parties. This data consists of names and contact details of people sending or receiving the correspondence disclosed, plus comments in emails about certain individuals. Regulations 12(3) and 13(1) of the EIRs provide that personal data relating to third parties is exempt information if disclosure would breach the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA).



We consider that disclosure of this information is likely to breach the first data protection principle in Schedule 1 to the DPA, which relates to the fair and lawful processing of personal data, in two ways. First, disclosure would not constitute 'fair' processing of the personal data, second, disclosure would not satisfy any of the conditions for data processing set out in Schedule 2 to the DPA. Therefore, we have concluded that this information is exempt from disclosure under regulation 12(3) and 13(1) of the EIRs.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the [FOIA or EIRs], and in keeping with the government's Transparency Agenda, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless exempt. Therefore, the information released to you will now be published on www.gov.uk together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context. Please note that this will not include your personal data.

We attach Annex A, which explains the copyright that applies to the information being released to you. We also attach Annex B giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received. If you have any queries about this letter, please contact us.

Yours sincerely

Defra FOI and EIRs Team

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Annex A

Copyright

The information supplied to you continues to be protected by copyright. You are free to use it for your own purposes, including for private study and non-commercial research, and for any other purpose authorised by an exception in current copyright law. Documents (except photographs) can be also used in the UK without requiring permission for the purposes of news reporting. Any other re-use, for example commercial publication, would require the permission of the copyright holder.

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Annex B

Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision under section 17(7) of the FOIA or under regulation 18 of the EIRs, as applicable, within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to Mike Kaye, Head of Information Standards, Area 4D, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3JR (email: requestforinfo@defra.gsi.gov.uk) and he will arrange for an internal review of your case. Details of Defra's complaints procedure are on our website.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, section 50 of the FOIA and regulation 18 of the EIRs gives you the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Please note that generally the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted Defra's own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF