

GE salmon deferred

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On Wednesday, Sept. 22, a panel convened by the FDA deferred recommending approval of the first genetically engineered animal for sale as food in the U.S. The agency agreed to publish an environmental assessment and open a 30-day comment period before approving "AquAdvantage" salmon, a fish engineered to grow faster on less feed. FDA had already accepted industry-supplied studies that the fish will not be "materially" different from other salmon, and thus is [safe to eat](#). The research was submitted by [AquaBounty Technologies](#), the Massachusetts company that's developed the animal. Still at issue is whether the fish must be labeled as genetically engineered.

AquaBounty plans to produce its salmon eggs on Prince Edward Island (Canada), raise the fish inland in Panama, and sell the finished product in the U.S. The company claims the altered fish will lower food costs. Critics, including [Consumers Union](#), [Friends of the Earth](#), the [Center for Food Safety](#), [Food & Water Watch](#), the [Canadian Aquaculture Industry Alliance](#) and many others, say the promised benefits are unlikely. Just as Roundup Ready corn and soy and Bt cotton have profited Monsanto but neither farmers nor consumers, GE salmon will take livelihoods away from those who fish for salmon in the wild as well as other fish farmers, and retail costs will change little if at all. Furthermore, the

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GE salmon threatens the survival of endangered wild salmon, should the faster-growing fish escape. A recent UN study of global agriculture concluded that [agroecology](#) will likely do more to end world hunger than biotech "solutions". Products like GE salmon transfer more control to giant corporations at the expense of farmers, fisherfolk, and local economies.

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