

Information Notice

Vigilance with regard to the illegal import of GM zebrafish (*Danio rerio*) into the EU and the Republic of Ireland.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for the regulation of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) in Ireland under two pieces of legislation:

- Directive 2009/41/EC on the contained use of Genetically Modified Micro-organisms;
- Directive 2001/18/EC on the Deliberate release of GMOs into the environment.

In March 2017, the unauthorised sale of GM zebrafish was discovered and confirmed in Denmark. These GM zebrafish are pink and yellow in colour (owing to the presence of red fluorescent transgene and yellow fluorescent transgene respectively – see photographs below provided by the Danish Argifish Agency), and they shine under fluorescent light. While GM GloFish® are sold legally in USA and Asia, these GM zebrafish (or any other GM ornamental fish), have not been authorised for import into, or sale within the EU. Therefore, the import and trade of GM fish is illegal.

In an effort to prevent these illegal imports into the EU and the Republic of Ireland, the Agency requests all importers of ornamental fish to be vigilant. If any importer, wholesaler or retailer of ornamental fish becomes suspicious and believes that the ornamental fish advertised/offered for sale might be GM, we request that he/she brings it to the attention of the EPA for further investigation.

We also request that wholesalers make overseas suppliers aware of the unauthorised status of GM ornamental fish in the EU as well as in the Republic of Ireland.

