

FRANKENFISH SCRIPT

The FDA tonight is considering whether to allow genetically engineered salmon to be sold in stores for human consumption. (It's) The first time such a move has been considered and even though the industry and FDA scientists say it's safe, critics are not convinced.

Our report on it tonight from NBC's Tom Costello

At a fish farm in Canada, scientists are turning these tiny Atlantic Salmon eggs into a sort of super-fish injecting them with a growth hormone from Chinook Salmon, that causes them to grow twice as fast, meaning twice the harvest.

The company, Aqua Bounty says the science can help relieve over fishing and put more salmon on dinner plates.

Ronald Stotish (Aqua Bounty) "In terms of the appearance, the taste, the texture and the biology, the salmon is the same."

But consumer health and environmental groups have dubbed the salmon Frankenfish, and Ben and Jerry's ice cream has launched a "Something's Fishy" campaign against the salmon and any genetically altered animals for consumption.

"Today it's a fish we're talking about, but very soon it will be a genetically engineered pig, a chicken..."

At a fish market in DC today, mixed reactions:

- Woman: "Just... Common sense. I think it's not supposed to healthy."

- Man: "Would I eat genetically enhanced food? We're already doin' it in a lot of stuff, we do it now with processed foods."

But since no one has ever eaten genetically engineered fish before the concern is the potential hidden dangers, especially since so many people have such violent allergic reactions to fish. **[1:33]**

FDA researchers have already determined the salmon is safe to eat but the chief scientist at Consumers Union which publishes consumer reports today told the FDA it's relying on sloppy science.

Michael Hansen (Consumer Union) "The basic point is is what little data there is there suggest that there could be an allergy problem, and allergies can be serious and life threatening."

If the full FDA gives its go ahead, the salmon could be in America's grocery stores within two years.

Tom Costello, *NBC News*, Washington