46 West 95 Street #3B
New York, NY 10025
March 5, 2001

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FDA Commissioner -Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

Re: Dockets No.OON-1396 & Docket No.OOD-1598

To Whom It May Concern:

We are writing regarding the FDA's January 18, 2001 revisions to its policy on genetically engineered (GE) foods. While the proposed changes have long been awaited in view of the increasing information now available about GE foods, it is disappointing that they are mainly a reaffirmation of the 1992 FDA policy on GE foods when you considered them "safe so they are not subject to mandatory pre-market safety review."

We urge that the proposed revisions require mandatory pre-market safety testing and environmental review, and mandatory labeling of GE foods, including retroactively labeling those GE foods already on the market.

Mandatory labeling is critical if consumers are to protect themselves. The presence of GE foods in products should be open to public scrutiny, not filed with an agency in Washington under a pretext of trade secret. Just as the European Union requires it of their food producers to protect consumers, so should the FDA. Your proposed voluntary notification policy ignores increasing scientific evidence of many potential risks to the health of consumers and the environment from GE foods.

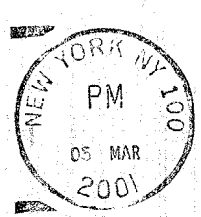
The FDA should be working to protect consumers from unknown toxins, allergens and other agents that may compromise immune responses, in addition to protecting the environment from agents of irreparable harm. With global warming now an acknowledged fact, foisting GE crops on our fragile ecosystems may cause more irreversible damage to the entire planet. Just as the feeding of animal by-products to cattle (which should only have been fed grains or grasses) has brought about "mad-cow disease," so could GE foods open another Pandora's box.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely, C 2327

Nydia Leaf & family

OOD-1598



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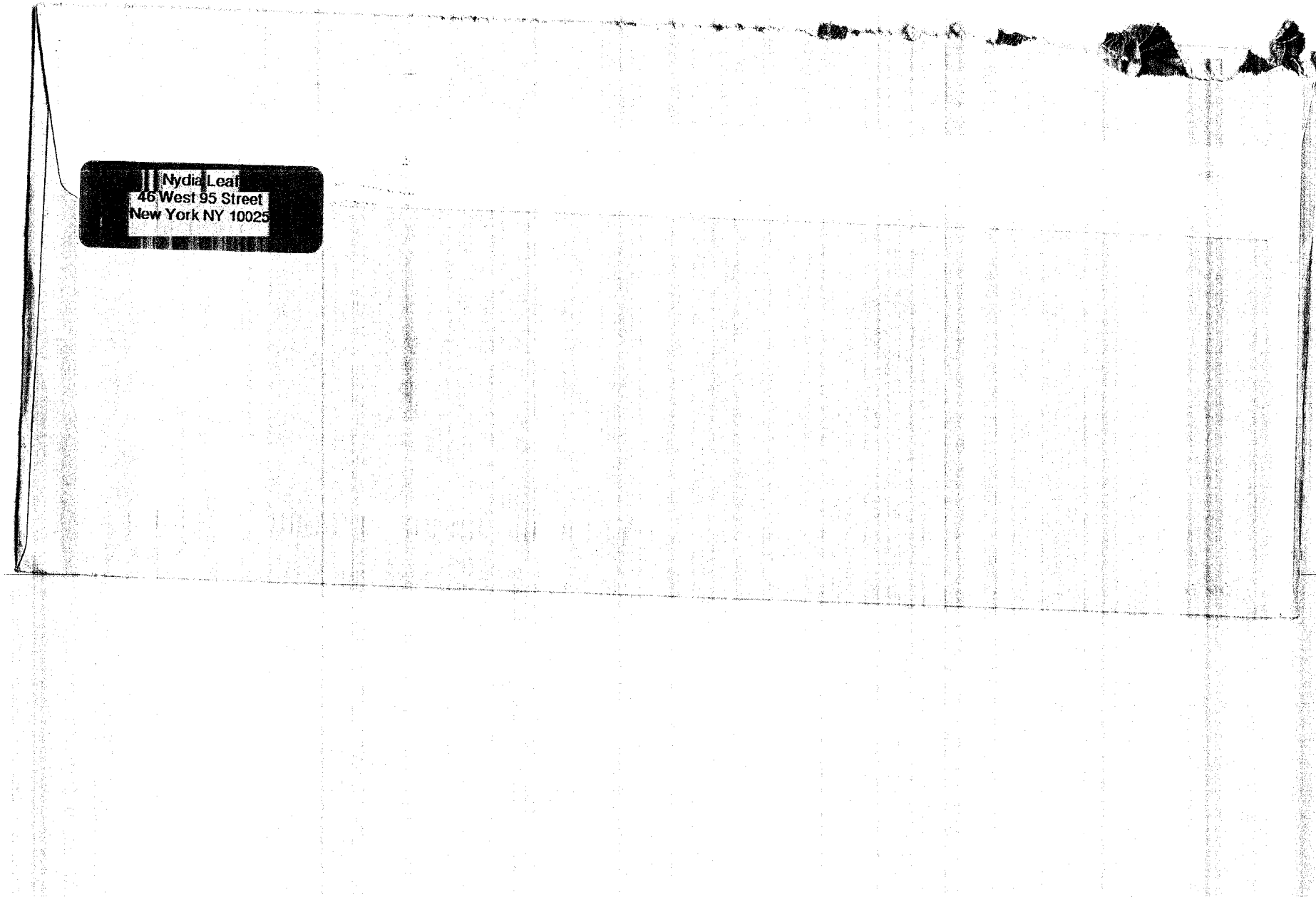
Nydia Leaf
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