

Submission Cover Sheet

# Review of the Moratorium on GM Canola

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**Attachments Submitted with this Submission:**

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## Heather Baldock

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The GM Moratorium Review Panel  
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Dear Panel Members,

### Re: GM Moratoria Review

I strongly recommend that the GM moratorium currently existing in Victoria be allowed to expire. While it has been able to allow 'breathing' space for the cropping industry, it is no longer required to prevent unfavorable market outcomes.

There have been many changes globally since the introduction of the moratorium, including an increase from 2004 of 17 countries growing commercial GM crops by 8.25million farmers to 2006 with 22 countries and 10.3 million farmers, including 6 EU nations. This clearly indicates a rapidly growing acceptance of the benefits of GM crops, global acceptance amongst consumers, and reducing trade limitations worldwide.

In addition to the 22 nations growing commercial GM crops, an additional 29 nations have granted regulatory approvals for biotech crop imports for food and fuel use since 1996, including Japan.

World trade of corn, soybean, cotton and canola is dominated by countries producing GM varieties.

In Australia the recently released Biotechnology Australia Report shows that public support for GM food crops has risen from 46% in 2005 to 73% in 2007. This equates to greater acceptance by consumers and the domestic market.

This all indicates a very rapidly growing acceptance of GM crops worldwide and that the conditions that resulted in the moratorium are no longer present and valid.

Australian Farmers do not appear to be receiving premiums for their non GM crops, as per ABARE studies which consistently show that "there is no evidence of widespread price premiums for non GM canola".

While we export about 25% of our non GM canola to Japan, Canada's GM canola holds 75% of the Japanese canola market.

ABARE study Foster & French concluded "in the main traditional import markets for canola - Bangladesh, China, Japan, Mexico and Pakistan - GM canola is generally accepted as readily as conventional canola and is priced at very similar levels".

I wish to refer here to my GM Roadshow Report ( from the round of 6 GM Forums I organized across rural South Australia in 2006) published earlier this year which shows that, of the 72% response (from 315 attendees), 80% believe Australian farmers should have access to approved GM crop varieties, with 13% opposed and 7% unsure or providing no response. 87% believe that GM crops have the potential to offer benefits, with 8% disagreeing and 5% unsure or providing no response. There has been an embracing of the development of GM crops in rural South Australia over the past few years, and with the growth of Victorian agricultural organizations becoming increasingly supportive of GM crop technology it is obvious this trend is also occurring in Victoria.

Australia already has examples of successful coexistence in the world of conventional crops – malting and feed barley, pasta and bread wheat etc.

PG Economics Research Paper states that, North America, where GM crops account for the majority of soybeans, oilseed rape, and maize, continues to have coexistence of conventional, organic and GM crops, without causing economic or marketing issues for the conventional or organic growers. Without Government intervention, the industry has developed practical and workable coexistence measures.

The latest report commissioned by the European Union concluded that coexistence is possible often with little or no additional effort by farmers depending on factors such as field sizes and the crop itself.

(Sources: International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications; Biotechnology Australia Report; Heather Baldock's GM Roadshow Report; ABARE Foster & French Study Agrifood Awareness - GM Crops and the Marketplace).

Regards,

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