

Submission Cover Sheet

Review of the Moratorium on GM Canola

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Attachments Submitted with this Submission:

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(03) 9658 4874 or (03) 9658 4871

Attention: GM Canola Review Panel Secretariate
Department of Primary Industries,
Level 19, 1 Spring Street
Melbourne 3000

Dear Members of the GM Canola Review Panel Secretariate,

I am writing to you with regard to the hearing you are about undertake re the relaxing of the moratorium on the commercial release of GM Canola crops in Victoria. I encourage you not to put at risk the reputation and financial advantage we, as citizens of the state of Victoria, have been afforded by our state's stance with regard to the release of commercial GM crops. Not only have we built up a reputation of being one of the few GM free traders in Canola in the world, but we have built a great deal of consumer confidence that our products are clean, green and of extremely high quality. Our identity in this area would disappear over night and consumer confidence fade, as it has for products supplied by the US and Canadian farming community who have invested so heavily in GMO crops.

In the studies I have done as an Environmental Scientist, it seems the demand for GMO produced crops has already peaked and is presently in decline. With the enormous rise in the demand for organic and bio dynamic foods grown without genetic manipulation and chemical residue, the consumer's desire for non polluted food source is well and truly known. People are shying away from foods that contain GMOs and that have been contaminated with products like Roundup. The resistance this also gives to associated weeds will also prove to be the bane of farmer's lives in the time to come.

I believe that as protectors of public values all those who serve the greater good for their community must constantly ask that profound question avoided by Percival on seeing the Holy Grail, "Whom does it Serve?" and by implication whom do we serve. We do not serve the interests of Bio tech companies, or media moguls, we serve the interests of the people. Whether it be from a human health perspective, an environmental health perspective or an economic perspective, we do not serve the interest of Victorian citizens if we enslave our farmer's to Bio tech companies, nor the general public who have voted with their purchasing dollar for clean green foods. But we do serve the interests of the people of Victoria if we proceed with caution, wait to see the outcome of markets and the environment with this North American and European experiment with GMOs. Why would we give away the advantage of what the last GMO free years have given us for a product of lesser value and of greater risk? I implore you to continue the moratorium until at least 2012.

Your's sincerely

Vivienne Benton

BA, Grad Dip En Sc.; M. En Sc.