

Submission Cover Sheet

Review of the Moratorium on GM Canola

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Attachments Submitted with this Submission:

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Victoria reviews GM canola ban

To the Review Panel,

As a longstanding consumer of organic and biodynamic produce, I am most concerned that lifting the moratorium on GM canola and other GM crops will have far-reaching and irreversible economic effects on Australia's sustainable and growing organic industry. Increasingly, local and overseas consumers are turning to organic produce, and Australia leads the world in providing toxic-free natural food to both local and lucrative overseas markets. This has been assisted by the moratorium on GM crops, which has ensured that organic produce grown in Australia is not compromised by GM contamination from neighbouring or regional crops. Evidence shows that countries that allow GM crops have contaminated organic agriculture, and therefore have lost their market superiority and claim to be 100% organic (BBC news, 1999; Barboza, 2001; Cropchoice news, 2001; Miller, 2001; TWN, 2002; Marino, 2004; Belcher, Nolan & Phillips, 2005).

There is no justification for jeopardising our clean and green produce by ending the moratorium on GM crops. GM crops have not been found to have higher yields or require less chemical inputs by farmers, nor is there any evidence that consumers want or are willing to risk eating such produce. In many cases, GM crops have failed remarkably to live up to the claims made by the manufacturers (BBC news, 1999; TWN, 2002; Benbrook, 2003; Sharma, 2004). Hence, who exactly would benefit from lifting the moratorium on GM canola and other GM crops?

Australia will not be alone in continuing its moratorium on GM crops, and indeed will maintain its independence from multinational corporate control of seeds and agricultural procedures by pursuing our unique advantage of producing uncontaminated produce in our healthy environment. Just as we retain the right to defend our strong quarantine rules, so should we safeguard our agriculture from the uncertainties and risks of GM crops.

The moratorium on commercial GM canola should be extended until at least 2013.

Genevieve O'Connell
Environmental and health campaigner

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