

Submission Cover Sheet

Review of the Moratorium on GM Canola

Submission Number: 107

Name of Individual/Organisation: Southern Farming Systems

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Attachments Submitted with this Submission:

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Submission 107

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GM Canola Review – Victoria 2008, Southern Farming Systems Submission

Southern Farming Systems (SFS) is a membership based organization with approximately 600 farmer members located in the high rainfall zone (HRZ) of southern Victoria and northern Tasmania. SFS has been operating for over a decade and specialises in field based cropping RD&E across five regions (Hamilton, Ballarat, Geelong, Bairnsdale, and Launceston).

The membership and board of SFS have considered the GM Moratoria on Canola and related issues on several occasions in recent years. We have been approached on several occasions regarding undertaking field trial work with GM material. We were unable to proceed to actual trialing due to the strict parameters relating to field testing of GM Canola, i.e. we were unable to obtain land without a previous canola usage within the required time frame.

The SFS membership has been directly consulted regarding the use of GM crops via survey and at our field days and various other membership interactions. Based on this feedback the vast majority of SFS members support the removal of the current GM canola moratoria in February 2008. As with any organization, this support is not 100% of the membership base with a small minority more reserved about our interaction with GM material.

There is also significant support for SFS including GM crops in our future trial programs across our network. We are not restricted to our four core sites and can access additional sites via our membership for trialing GM material.

Our main interest in lifting the GM Canola moratoria is to allow more extensive field testing to be undertaken for current and future GM varieties. There is significant membership interest in actually seeing how these varieties perform in the field as a guide to their future inclusion within their operations.

We have not canvassed member's opinions in terms of the broader GM issues including segregation and marketing impacts. By default if these crops fail to deliver measurable benefits in the field this post harvest issues will be irreverent as the uptake of GM crops will be limited.

In summary, Southern Farming Systems is supportive of the lifting of the GM Canola Moratoria in 2008 and would be a willing participant for field trials of GM crops, both commercial and new varieties in the future.

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