

Submission Cover Sheet

Review of the Moratorium on GM Canola

Submission Number: 118

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Attachments Submitted with this Submission:

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15 August 2007

I request that the panel consider my submission that the moratorium on GM canola be extended to 2013.

1. The bans on commercial gene manipulated (GM) canola have been of significant economic benefit. Australia's GM-free food supply meant:

- premiums of up to A\$120/tonne for GM-free canola abroad (ABARE, 2007)
- no added segregation, identity preservation or shipping costs needed for GM canola
- competitive advantage in global canola markets as the only GM-free canola trader

2. If the GM canola ban expires we would have the higher costs of:

- testing, identity preservation, segregation, handling, rejected shipments, some lost markets and lower confidence in Australia's clean, green, GM-free reputation for all foods;
- herbicide tolerant weeds (wild radish, turnip, charlock, ryegrass and barnyard grass) by outcrossing, from Roundup and Basta tolerant GM canola and from repeated use of these chemicals. Weed costs are borne by everyone - local councils, parks authorities, landcare groups, farmers, gardeners, etc.
- more pathogens in GM canola that need more spraying.
- farmers and shoppers would pay Bayer and Monsanto (EU, 2006).
- more monopoly ownership and control of chemicals and seeds.
- ensuring organic, biodynamic and conventional foods labeled GM-free were still available.

3. Extending the commercial GM canola ban would mean Australia could

- continue to sell all foods into any market, often at premium prices.
- keep its competitive advantage over GM growers in North and South America. They often sell grain for animal feed and ethanol, not direct human consumption, for which they suffer a price penalty.
- continue to develop GM-free conventional and organic foods.

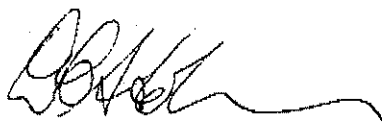
4. The moratorium on commercial GM canola should be extended until at least 2013, because;

- no other GM crops being researched could be available in the next five years. Promises of healthier foods, drought and salt tolerant crops, longer shelf life food, etc. are just hopeful promises (Glover 2005, in Corish 2005).
- over 80% of the world's canola production, in 20 countries, is GM-free. Only Canada and the USA grow GM herbicide tolerant canola and production has not increased since 1999.
- only three countries sold canola in world markets in 2006 - Canada 70%; USA 11%; Australia 19%. Australia is the only GM-free seller so we accessed all markets and got premiums of up to A\$120 (ABARE) over the past two years. We should keep our competitive advantage.
- an EU economic report shows Bayer and Monsanto benefit most from GM crops and foods. Food is not any cheaper!

It is apparent that the main beneficiary of the adoption of GM Canola will be the US Agrochemical companies. We should not allow GM crops in because of the potential for irreversible consequences, for which Victorian farmers and the economy will bear the costs.

Given the magnitude of the risks involved with GM, and the potential benefits for remaining GM free, it would be imprudent not to extend the moratorium until at least 2013.

Don Stokes



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