

Submission Cover Sheet

# Review of the Moratorium on GM Canola

**Submission Number:** 133

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**Attachments Submitted with this Submission:**

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(03) 9658 4874 or (03) 9658 4871

Dear Sir

Please stop genetically engineered (GE) canola from spreading into our food, and uphold the current Victorian ban on genetically modified crops.

I am writing to you because I feel that my democratic rights as a Victorian citizen are under threat. Just as smokers are no longer allowed to contaminate the air I breathe in enclosed spaces, I believe farmers and agricultural corporations should not have the right to contaminate my environment and my food with GE crops.

It is my democratic right to choose what I eat and to have this wrested away from me through the inevitable GE contamination of non GE food crops is democratically unjustifiable. It does not take an expert to know contamination is indeed inevitable. I grew up in the country and am well aware of weather patterns and of course our inability to control these. Just as we cannot control the spread of introduced fauna like cane toads, we most certainly cannot control the spread of introduced flora. I don't want to be a part of a global experiment on the food that I eat and feed to my family and it should be my right to make this choice.

In addition to my democratic right to choose, there is indeed growing scientific evidence that GE food crops, like herbicide- resistant GE canola, damage ecosystems and could harm our health. Just like any introduced species - as this country only too well knows - once this hazard is introduced it can never be recalled. Farmers will lose their ability to choose to grow non-GE canola.

This is particularly concerning to farmers. Australian farmers currently receive premiums and preferential market access for their canola because of its GE-free status. These premiums would be lost if GE canola were grown - and our valuable export markets, such as Japan and Europe, would be put at risk. At a time when the majority of citizens in the nations of the developed world - including Australia - are increasingly turning to the consumption of natural, pesticide free and organic foods, the Victorian government is reviewing lifting the GE crops moratorium. This strikes a humble voter as myself as a politically risky move, not to mention one which will have a long term negative economic impact on our state.

For the sake of our families' health and the protection of our environment, please ensure that the ban on commercial growing of genetically engineered (GE) canola is extended by a further five years from early 2008 and call for tighter labelling laws so that GE food has to be labelled as such.

Yours sincerely,  
Ms Amelia Flanagan