

Submission Cover Sheet

Review of the Moratorium on GM Canola

Submission Number: 60

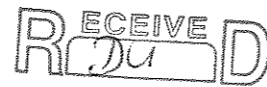
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Attachments Submitted with this Submission:

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(03) 9658 4874 or (03) 9658 4871



To: GM Canola Review Panel Secretariat
Department of Primary Industries
Level 19, 1 Spring Street
GPO Box 4440
Melbourne VIC 3001

14 August 2007

Dear Panel Members

I am extremely concerned about the deep financial implications of allowing the moratorium on GM canola in Victoria to expire, and I believe that the ban should stay in place until at least 2013 to enable more discussion and information in the general community. Among my circle of friends and family, I have come across no-one who wishes to eat GM foods of any kind, and they are fearful for the well-being of their children and grand-children should GM crops be introduced into Australia.

Economic impacts of the ban on genetically-manipulated canola:

- As most people are aware, organically grown food is increasingly in demand; it is growing faster than any other food category. (I personally see this occurring in my own locality.) Consumers demand organic foods and are willing to pay a fair price for the careful and sustainable production methods entailed in growing organic crops. Retaining the ban on GM canola ensures growers a high-value crop.
- Australian canola growers enjoy a competitive advantage in the global market with their GM-free canola oil for human consumption, earning premiums of up to \$120 per tonne in Asia and Europe.
- There is a great economic advantage in having high-quality, non-GM product, inspiring shopper confidence.

Economic impact of allowing ban to expire:

- Should the moratorium on growing GM canola expire, monopoly ownership of GM canola (by Bayer and Monsanto), plus their control of chemicals and seeds, would lead inevitably to higher costs to farmers and shoppers, owing to lack of competition.
- More pathogens in GM canola necessitate increased spraying and therefore extra costs.
- Owing to GM herbicide resistant canola requiring heavy spraying, there will inevitably be increases in allergies and other medical reactions in the population, causing greater financial costs.
- Losing Australia's 'clean, green, safe' reputation would obviously lead to diminished export (and local) income to growers. This would not be in our country's economic interest.

Consequences of extending the moratorium on commercial GM canola:

- We retain the competitive advantage of having a GM-free product, fit for human consumption. (GM growers in the Americas, selling GM products for animal consumption, suffer a price penalty.)
- With GM-free canola we maintain the option of selling into any market.
- We continue the development of conventional foods and see the organic food market continuing to boom.
- I have yet to meet anyone who *demands* GM foods. On the contrary, people *want* clean, safe conventional and organic foods. Extending the moratorium ensures that the customer is satisfied and growers realise financial potential.

Reasons for extending the moratorium on commercial GM canola until at least 2013:

- Reports from EU indicate that only Monsanto and Bayer benefit from GM crops and foods, which are not cheaper for consumers.
- I feel it would be a very sensible move to watch for potential effects in those populations who have agreed to consume GM product, while we retain our GM-free status. Effects in humans would develop over several generations, and there would be enormous economic costs to

nations whose people started to develop unwanted symptoms through eating genetically manipulated foods.

- Unlike faulty products, genetically manipulated foods cannot be recalled. GM canola pollen would blow all over our land and cross with weeds, contaminating conventional crops. (See the Dept. of Agriculture , Alberta, Canada, report on how the whole Canadian canola crop was contaminated in just two years.) So it is imperative that the moratorium here is extended, because the unforeseen consequences of contamination of conventional crops could be as costly to our economy as, say, cigarette smoking or multiple epidemics.

Yours truly,

R. Davies

Copies to: Mr John Brumby, Premier of Victoria
Clerk of Committees, Tasmania
Minister for Primary Industries, Tasmania
GM Crop Moratorium Review Secretariat, NSW
Mr Morris Iemma, Premier of NSW
Mr Mike Rann, Premier of South Australia