

Submission Cover Sheet

Review of the Moratorium on GM Canola

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Attachments Submitted with this Submission:

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Dear Sir or Madam

My family and I are concerned that your panel is biased towards lifting the ban on GE. I understand that your review will only focus on the economic impact of the GM ban. Please read our opinion here below. This opinion is shared by many other fellow Australians:

1. As an Australian, I'll be forced to buy products imported from Europe or NZ to make sure they are GE free, if the ban is lifted. There are other Australian like me who do not want to run the risk of eating food with GE contamination. The same kind of corporations that convinced our grandparents that cigarettes are OK are trying to convince us that GE is progress!! If I want to go on overseas holidays, I'll prefer to go to countries that are banning GE, such as Europe and NZ. I'll avoid going to North America. Other international tourists or consumers will do the same. They would prefer to buy non-Australian products or travel for tourism elsewhere, if we do not extend the ban on GE.

2. Honey bees are dying in North America: This may be caused by GM crops. Without bees, it is harder to pollinate. The Americans are not a good example to follow in food and agriculture.

> *3. The economic impacts of the bans on commercial gene manipulated
> (GM) canola* were very positive. Australia's GM-free food supply
> resulted in:

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> * premiums of up to A\$120/tonne for GM-free canola abroad (ABARE,
> 2007);
> * no chronic GM contamination problems in export shipments;
> * 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;

> * high shopper confidence in the quality of our food supply;

> * we saw that most GM crops are stalled eg: the area of GM canola
> globally stalled in 1999 (ISAAA, 2007).

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> *4. If the GM canola ban is lifted, we would have the higher costs of:*

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> * 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 labelled
> GM-free were still available.

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> *5. Extending the commercial GM canola ban would mean Australia could:*

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> * 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.

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

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> * 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!

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> An RIRDC report on GM canola by Anderson and Jackson says:

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> "Hence net economic welfare for Australia would be US\$28 million per
> year higher as a result of GM adoption, less any negative value

> domestic consumers place on not knowing if they may be consuming GM
> products. With the EU moratorium, the net economic welfare benefit to
> Australian producers and consumers of GM adoption in this case is
> estimated to be US\$15 million per year. While that is \$13 million less
> than if there is no EU moratorium, it still represents a net gain from
> joining the adopters of GM varieties of these four crops even if the
> EU moratorium remains in place.* However, the average Australian farm
> household income would decrease with GM adoption - even with rice and
> wheat included - if the EU moratorium remains.* ... Even then, several
> States of Australia have continued to delay approval because they
> perceive insufficient economic benefit from GM crops to warrant the
> cost of the necessary co-existence system (which will fall more on
> non-GM producers, the smaller the share of GM varieties in total
> output) and the expected loss that would result from a downgrading of
> their status as a 'clean, green, safe food' supplier domestically and
> abroad."

I look forward for your response.

Sincerely
Charles Farah

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