

Submission Cover Sheet

Review of the Moratorium on GM Canola

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Attachments Submitted with this Submission:

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Dear **GM Canola Review Panel Secretariat** - Department of Primary Industries

I write to you with great concern regarding the potential lifting of the ban on genetically modified crops in Victoria and in particular Canola. I have conducted my own personal research in to the costs and benefits of GM crops. As far as I can tell there are only a handful of beneficiaries, these are companies like Monsanto that are only in it for the short term monetary gain. Decisions like the one you are faced with require a far greater wisdom than simple economics, yes it is a consideration but I don't believe that it should be the driving force. Monsanto (and companies like it) do not care about farmers in Nhill, Dimboola or Ouyen, they do not care about cows in Gippsland, or sheep in Horsham, they do not care about land or people, nor do they care about soil, water and air - their sole concern is that of shareholders funds - these companies do not deserve a chair at the table and nor do their lobbyists or their political friends. Moreover, they do not care about farmers in any region of Australia, so long as we are buying the seed, the fertilizer and any related farming input from them all is okay. The costs of introducing GM to Australia on a widespread scale are enormous and would be a grave error of judgement on behalf of the Australian people - do not let this happen.

So, what do we need to do? Well that decision really lies with your team and the task that you have been entrusted with. This is no lightweight decision, I believe that recommending the lifting of any moratorium of GM crops in Australia is akin to releasing another batch of rabbits in Victoria, or some cane toads in QLD - both of which are decisions we would love to turn the clock back on but cannot. If GM is so great, let's label all the products, tell us where the trials are being held - release all the information and take it to the people of Victoria. The decision required of you is of such significance that I do not believe a single person or committee is capable of making without a significant amount of independent research - the emphasis on independent. A cursory glance over the internet will reveal a host of issues with GM crops in USA and Canada - talk to the farmers where this is happened, for that matter talk to the ordinary farmers here in Victoria.

I propose that you recommend the following:

- An indefinite extension the moratorium (I'll settle for 15 years)
- Major and mandatory modifications to the labelling laws so that all GM food is clearly labelled as such.
- Fully disclose the level of trials that have been undertaken, their locations and the results - then remove these crops from Australia.
- For Australia to go it's own way, clean and green - say NO to American pressure!

As a nation, we are perfectly able to make our own decisions and go our own way with our food production and consumption - do you really think your kids will thank you for allowing widespread use of GM in Australia. There is only one decision to make with regard to GM food, that is the one that considers the long term (say 300 years) and forgets the vagaries of Monsanto profit cycles and lobbying. Long after Monsanto are gone we, and our offspring will be stuck with GM crops (and blackberries). As far as I can tell there are no economic benefits of removing the ban on GM Canola for the people of Australia - there are none - and any that you come up with will be far outweighed by their costs.

Thank you

Brett Hedger