

Submission Cover Sheet

# Review of the Moratorium on GM Canola

**Submission Number:** 158

**Name of Individual/Organisation:** Emma Gurnsey

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**Attachments Submitted with this Submission:**

To obtain copies of these attachments please call the Review Panel Secretariat on  
(03) 9658 4874 or (03) 9658 4871

E. Gurnsey

21st August, 2007

The Premier  
1 Treasury Place  
Melbourne 3000

**Re: Extend the State Ban on Genetically Manipulated (GM) canola till 2013**

Dear Premier,

**Thank you for the state ban on commercial Genetically Manipulated (GM) canola since 2003.**

**We ask you to extend the GM ban for a further five years until 2013, at least.**

Our company operates a certified organic farm and dairy manufacturing facility near Bairnsdale. We produce high-quality, award winning cheeses, and have been chosen to represent young farmers nationally on several occasions.

Being certified organic, we require fully certified organic feed (predominantly grain). This grain is mainly grown in the broad acre areas in which canola is also cropped. This raises serious contamination issues. One only has to take a drive around to see all the canola flourishing on the sides of roads and rail lines. The logistics and cost of segregation will make contamination inevitable. We believe the introduction of GM crops into Victoria will seriously jeopardize our ability to remain GM free...and this is certainly not what the consumers of our product want. If this moratorium is lifted, we can no longer guarantee our products are GM free, even though we are certified organic.

My family and friends also have several concerns about herbicide tolerant canola. This crop would mean more chemical spraying, more often. We do not accept that these herbicides are safe. GM agribusinesses - Monsanto, Nufarm and Bayer – and some researchers are misleading farmers with false promises that GM grains and pastures will solve drought, heat, salty soil, bloat and allergy problems.

*We do not accept GM canola at all. GM herbicide tolerant canola will:*

- .. Pollute - Once released onto farms, GM crops can't be recalled but can spread, multiply, reproduce, and contaminate permanently. Wild radish and turnip will become a permanent reservoir of GM pollution, and more costly and difficult to manage, when they acquire herbicide tolerance from GM canola.
  
- .. Risk - Independent research is needed into the causes of: infertility reported among GM grain-fed cattle and pigs in the USA; bee Colony Collapse Disorder in the USA; and the spread of pathogens such as *Fusarium wilt* and bunchy top in Australian GM cotton;
- .. GM isn't wanted - All polls show most Australians, Europeans and Japanese shoppers reject GM foods, putting local and export markets at risk.

*I ask that you:*

- .. Extend the state ban on genetically manipulated (GM) canola until 2013;
- .. Include local government fully in your consultation processes;
- .. Only consider lifting the ban in consultation with all other states and territories as GM canola pollen and seed do not respect state or natural boundaries;
- .. Require GM canola varieties to undergo independent National Variety Trials, to compare all aspects of their performance with the best conventional varieties, prior to any decisions on the moratorium;
- .. Ensure GM-free foods remain available and that all foods produced using gene technology are fully labelled. Our family wants to ensure we can continue eating GM-free Australian foods. GM imposes risks without benefits;
- .. Reconsider the GM canola licenses issued in 2003, in the light of new scientific evidence of health and environmental impacts from GM crops and foods,

Thank you for your assistance in this matter. I ask that you please send me a written reply to my letter.

Yours sincerely,

*Emma Gurnsey*