



Media Release

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South Australian food producers and food consumers denied choice

Today's decision by the South Australian government to extend the ban on GM canola in South Australia is extremely disappointing for both Australia's food producers and food consumers according to Agrifood Awareness Australia Limited.

"Australian agriculture, specifically food production, has been built on innovation, research and development and the adoption of new technologies," said Ms Paula Fitzgerald, Executive Director, Agrifood Awareness Australia Limited.

"Today's decision by the South Australian government will impact all parts of the sector, including farmers' ability to compete in the global marketplace, and investment in research and development in South Australia, which is ironic given the State's significant investment in this technology," she said.

"In Canada, over 85 per cent of all canola grown is genetically modified. This canola has delivered considerable results, particularly environmental benefits, including less herbicide usage and a reduction in tillage," she said.

"Australian research suggests that the adoption of GM canola in Australia would deliver similar positive results including an increase in canola production and yields, a reduction in herbicide, and an increase in wheat production as a result of the benefits of canola and wheat crop rotations," she said.

"Australian agriculture cannot afford to miss out on exploring the benefits of new opportunities, particularly those which offer clear environmental benefits," she said.

The two canola types in question were approved by Australia's Federal Regulator in 2003 and have been the subject of moratoria in key canola growing states based on market and trade grounds. In November 2007, following extensive reviews, the Victorian and New South Wales Governments announced the removal of their moratoria.

"The Australian grains industry recognises and is committed to delivering choice. This was reinforced in the industry's statement *Delivering market choice with GM canola* which was presented to all State Government moratoria reviews," she said.

"Today's decision will leave South Australian farmers at odds with their eastern colleagues and denies choice," said Ms Fitzgerald.

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For further information contact:
Paula Fitzgerald
Tel: 02 6273 9535 or 0418 160 943