



27 November 2007

CROPLIFE AUSTRALIA WELCOMES GM CANOLA DECISION IN NSW

CropLife Australia welcomed today's announcement by the NSW Minister for Primary Industries, Ian Macdonald, that NSW farmers will be allowed to grow genetically modified (GM) canola if they choose to do so.

CropLife's CEO, Paula Matthewson, said this decision will provide NSW farmers with an important new tool to help them compete on international markets while meeting community expectations for environmentally sustainable agriculture.

"CropLife members commend the NSW Government for recognising the importance of choice in agricultural markets and the Australian grains industry's ability to deliver choice to the market with GM canola.

"In giving growers the right to choose approved GM canola as well as conventional varieties, the Government is helping them to be more productive and deliver significant environmental benefits through better weed management and low till agricultural practices.

"The State moratorium legislation was enacted to protect Australian markets in 2003; however it has become clear over the past four years that the moratorium has done the opposite and had a detrimental effect on Australian competitiveness. Costs of the State GM moratoria have been conservatively estimated by the University of Melbourne to be worth \$157million."

Ms Matthewson noted that, as with the development of all new crop varieties, it may take a number of years for GM canola to become widely grown in Australia.

"CropLife members will play their role by promoting and facilitating stewardship so that Australian farmers have the information they need to ensure the successful and sustainable production of GM canola well into the future.

"CropLife also looks forward to contributing to the further development of any legislation relating to crop biotechnology in the State with a view to ensuring that it does not create a disincentive to innovation and investment.

"This important decision by Minister McDonald and the NSW Government will allow significant agronomic, environmental and productivity benefits to become available to Australian growers, the wider grains industry and consumers."

CropLife Australia is the peak body representing the producers of crop protection and crop biotechnology products in Australia.

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