



**MEDIA RELEASE**

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## FARMERS SUPPORT GM WHEAT RESEARCH

Australian farmers know that GM crops released so far are safe for humans and the environment. Overwhelmingly, reports and studies from around the world show that to be true.

This has led the Producers Forum to question the motive for Greenpeace releasing a report on GM crops which is highly critical and contrary to the experience of farmers worldwide who actually grow GM crops.

“This is also why, once given the chance, so many Australian farmers have opted to incorporate GM varieties of cotton and canola into their farming systems,” says Heather Baldock, Producers Forum National Convenor.

On a global basis, wheat yields have not increased at the same rate as yields in maize, so farmers are promoting the need for more R&D into wheat production as well as use of the GM tools that have made maize production so popular overseas.

Australian farmers who have grown GM crops have found that it is a boon to the sustainability of both their own farming systems and the environment.

“All my neighbours have supported my switch to GM cotton varieties,” says Jeff Bidstrup who has 16 years experience growing GM cotton in Queensland. “With GM technology we achieved an 85% reduction in pesticide use and improved water use efficiency setting the industry on a path to a secure future which benefited everyone – farmers, communities, the environment and consumers,” he said.

Rod Birch grew GM canola in WA for the first time in 2010 and was so impressed by the weed control and the yields that he increased the acreage sown to GM canola in 2011. “GM canola is a good news story,” he said. “It has widened our management options and also helps reduce our carbon footprint.”

Mrs Baldock said that there are wheat varieties in the R&D pipeline which have nutritional, health, environmental and production benefits.

“Such developments can contribute to a more viable farming sector, help in the management of our environmental responsibilities including the production of less greenhouse gases and enable a larger contribution to global food security,” Mrs Baldock said.

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*The Producers Forum is a national group grain, oilseed, dried fruit, cotton, dairy, and beef and sheep producers from Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and West Australia. For further information visit: [www.producersforum.net.au](http://www.producersforum.net.au)*