



Media Release

GM Valentines wish – choice for all!

14 February 2008

The Producers Forum wants Valentines Day to mark a new phase in the debate about approved GM canola varieties.

“Valentines Day is traditionally about greetings, love, pairing and promises,” said Maree McKay, New South Wales Convenor, Producers Forum.

“We have been promised GM canola since 2004, but this choice is still being denied in some States, so today we’re calling for a national coupling with governments and the community to provide this choice.

“GM canola has been successfully grown in Canada since 1996 and the results – both environmental and economic – are extremely positive.

“Ten million farmers, on 100 million hectares, have provided billions of meals using GM produce for friends and families around the world.

Mrs McKay said there is far too much misinformation about GM in Australia at the moment - driven by unrepresentative activists.

“We respect the right of everyone to have choice – and we are simply asking for the opportunity to have choice with the canola varieties we grow. The Australian grains industry clearly has the systems available to manage GM canola and deliver choice in the marketplace.

“The activists ignore the fact that in the drought in 2006 Australia imported Canadian GM canola to meet local food and feed demands. They also conveniently overlook the extensive use of GM varieties by the cotton industry, and the day to day use of GM cottonseed oil by consumers.

“We welcome an open dialogue on gene technology – but the mistruths, anti-science rhetoric, stunts and scare-campaigns being peddled by GM crop opponents go too far,” she said.

“In terms of international markets, Japan buys four times as much Canadian GM canola as Australian canola, so for anyone to say that Japan will only accept non-GM canola is simply not true.

“Australia has one of the world’s most rigorous gene technology regulatory regimes - the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator - which fully assesses GM crops for human health and environmental safety. We congratulate the Victorian and NSW Governments in their recent progressive and logical decisions, and urge other States to allow farmers the right to choose to access approved canola varieties, then the true spirit of Valentines Day will be upheld,” she said.

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The Producers Forum is a national group of agricultural producers. For further information see www.producersforum.net.au