



Media Release

27<sup>th</sup> November, 2007

## Producers Forum welcomes announcement

The Producers Forum has welcomed the lifting of the moratoria on the commercial growing of GM canola by the New South Wales and Victorian Governments, saying that farmers in those states can now move ahead to compete on an even footing with other farmers around the globe.

Comprehensive studies and reports have repeatedly shown that there are no health risks, and that there is no premium for continuing to farm without the technology. Indeed, the Australian cotton industry has reaped overwhelming environmental and social benefits over the decade it has used approved GM varieties.

Earlier this year, the grains industry produced the document, "Delivering Market Choice with GM canola" that defined its preparedness to provide choice to industry and the market. The statement recognizes the integrity, capacity and demonstrated ability of the Australian grain supply chain; that choice for all supply chain participants is key; and that there is a commitment to deliver choice along the supply chain.

NSW Convener Maree McKay said that the release of the Pratley report last week from Charles Sturt University showed the value of GM canola to Australian farmers. She went on to say, "But this is not just about economics. It is about our right to choose the technology we can use. GM canola has been proven to be as safe and healthy as conventional canola for humans, and is much more benign on our environment. Australian farmers are mature enough to make their own decisions. Having the choice to access to GM canola is good news for our farmers."

Chris Kelly, the Victorian Convener, said it was wonderful news and he was delighted that canola could again play a major part in his rotations. He said "We have a proven ability to segregate all manner of crops and deliver market choice. For a decade our competitors have had a production and competitive advantage over us in supplying canola to the major food companies, now we too can supply these markets without one hand tied behind our back."

But WA Convener John Snooke is more subdued, claiming his state's farmers will become the poor relations and that canola production will continue to struggle. "WA farmers led the no-till revolution, but now it seems with the WA government's out-dated stance on GM technology, we are going to be left behind. How can we be denied a beneficial technology to which Eastern States growers and the rest of the world have access?" he said

Contacts: NSW Maree McKay Mob 0428443515  
WA John Snooke Mob 0417964362  
Vic Chris Kelly Mob 0409508122  
Qld/National Jeff Bidstrup Mob 0427063270

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)