



MEDIA RELEASE

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Farmers stunned at True Food Farce

Farmers from across Australia are stunned by today's Greenpeace celebrity and chef stunt suggesting Australian food is unsafe with the release of the "2011 True Food Guide"

"It is astonishing that food advocates would suggest Australian farmers are growing unsafe and untested crops," said Heather Baldock, Producers Forum National Convenor, SA farmer and mother of three.

"GM crops have been grown, traded and consumed around the world for 15 years, including in Australia," she said.

"GM cotton, grown since 1996, has delivered substantial benefits to cotton growers, including local cotton communities, through a significant, 80% reduction in pesticide use," said Jeff Bidstrup, GM cotton grower.

"Australia's cotton industry is very proud of the positive environmental changes it has made over the last decade and gene technology has played a critical role in this," he said.

Gene technology allows researchers to alter one or two genes, in a plant's 30,000 genes, to provide the plant with in-built pest and disease resistance. Future GM crops will contain healthier oil profiles, enhanced starch to protect against diseases such as bowel cancer, and plants with in-built resilience to prolonged periods without water - critical for the Australian environment.

"All new technologies can present doubts, but I urge parents across Australia to look to science-based information on this topic, not celebrities and costumes," said Mrs Baldock.

"Sadly, consumers are moving further away from our farm gate and their knowledge of agriculture and food production is dwindling," she said. "As an Australian farmer, my priority is to deliver safe, affordable food in an environmentally-friendly manner to sustain my farm, my family and the future of Australian food production.

"I urge parents to see beyond public relations stunts and campaigns, and look to Australia's farming and food producing history. Farmers produce safe food – that's our commitment," she said.

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