

Media Release



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TIME FOR WA TO LOSE ITS “WAIT AWHILE” TAG ON GM CROPS

Today’s announcement by the New South Wales and Victorian Governments that they are ending their moratorium on Genetically Modified canola crops reinforces the Western Australian industries position that our Government should follow suit.

WAFarmers President Trevor De Landgraft said “WA growers have not only been left behind by their overseas competitors in recent years, but now also face the real risk of falling behind their interstate colleagues if the State Government persists with its moratorium.

“WAFarmers welcomes the leadership shown by the New South Wales and Victorian Governments and will watch with interest to see how things pan out in relation to the 2008/09 cropping season.

“This development provides some much needed impetus to drive Minister Chance’s GM Stakeholder Reference Group, which has floundered of late due to a lack of direction,” Mr De Landgraft said.

Recent reports from ABARE and several academic institutions clearly demonstrate the environmental, economic and social benefits of GM technology.

“These highly credible reports now need to be given the serious consideration they deserve.

“Australia’s regulatory system is acknowledged as the most thorough in the world and provides the assurances needed in relation to human and environmental health and safety.

“There is no reason that the WA Government should not follow the leadership demonstrated by their interstate counterparts and keep WA growers on an equal footing in relation to access to technology.”

WA growers face unique challenges through climate change, poor quality soils, and salinity; which are being addressed by Western Australian researchers. To lose this level of expertise because of opportunities that will arise in the eastern states and will not be available locally because of the continuation of the State moratorium would be a disaster.

“Like growers, WA researchers need to be supported by the State Government,” said Mr De Landgraft.

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For further information contact:

Jess Roscic

Marketing and Communications Officer

*(08) 9486 2100
0428 840 960*