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Media Release

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Leading seed company backs GM canola adoption in WA

A leading Australian seed company has backed Western Australia's Agriculture and Food Minister Terry Redman's recent announcement for the state-wide release for GM commercial canola production.

Pacific Seeds Canola Business Manager in Australia, Justin Kudnig, said that Pacific Seeds would like to support the minister's decision, and encourages the whole industry to take a managed approach to broad-acre Roundup Ready (RR) commercial production.

"This decision is also about finally providing choice for WA Canola Growers. It will give them the opportunity to cultivate current RR varieties and access new Hybrid Technology. This will allow growers to grow Roundup Ready GM varieties and allow them to capture the agronomic and financial benefits of RR canola," Mr Kudnig said.

Preliminary 2009 WA results in Industry NVT HT trials, Pacific Seeds internal Research and Development, and Hyola Agronomy trials show current Roundup Ready Hybrids to have higher yields than open pollinated RR varieties as well as providing growers with higher potential returns over Clearfield and Triazine Tolerant varieties.

Mr Kudnig said the demand for RR Hybrid seed has been high.

"RR orders have been overwhelming and we have significant seed to supply substantial areas of WA with Hybrid RR varieties. However, with this said, RR seed orders are likely to be firmed up over the next few weeks and growers will order Hybrid seed in preference to Open pollinated seed so considerably pressure will come on supply."

He said Pacific Seeds are developing improved GM RR canola within targeted and realistic breeding time frames to provide Australian growers with improved genetics.

"Into 2011 and beyond, improved Hybrid varieties released under the Pacific Seeds "Ultimate Performance Technology" banner will be available to WA growers with the latest breeding and germplasm incorporated for optimum in-field crop performance. Preliminary results with these enhanced varieties show genetic potential with significantly improved yield advantages over Open pollinated and Hybrid RR varieties available in 2010."

"Pacific Seeds advocates a continued sustainable approach to the use of GM technology so that its advantages are optimised, prolonged and remain sustainable and that all sectors of the industry can benefit from this valuable technology.

Justin Kudnig
Canola Business Manager - Australia
Pacific Seeds Pty Ltd