

GENETICALLY MODIFIED WHEAT — RESEARCH

656. Hon Lynn MacLaren to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:
- (1) How much funding is allocated to genetically modified (GM) wheat research in agricultural research and development for 2013–14?
  - (2) What proportion of the \$100,000 in research grants in the 2013–14 budget for the Rural Business Development Corporation will be allocated to GM wheat research?
  - (3) How much public money was allocated to GM research and development over the past 15 years?
  - (4) What have been the returns to Government from its GM research investments over the past fifteen years?
  - (5) How much has Roundup Ready GM canola contributed to the costs of controlling glyphosate-tolerant weeds?
  - (6) What are the estimated costs of managing herbicide-tolerant weeds in 2013–14 to:
    - (a) Government; and
    - (b) farmers?
  - (7) How much research and development funding has been allocated in 2013–14 for the development of ecologically sustainable agriculture?

**Hon Ken Baston replied:**

- (1)–(2) Nil
- (3) Between 1998/99 and 2006/07, the Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia (DAFWA) spent a total of \$3,873,600 on genetically modified (GM) cotton research and development (R&D). Since 2007, this GM cotton R&D has been conducted in collaboration with the Cotton Cooperative Research Centre or with industry on a cost-recovery basis.

In addition to cotton R&D, DAFWA spent \$60,000 in 2008/09, \$460,000 in 2009/10, and \$222,000 in 2010/11 on development related to the commercialisation of GM canola in Western Australia.

In 2010/11, the State Government allocated \$9 million for the New Genes for New Environment (NGNE) facilities. The NGNE initiative was designed to enable the evaluation of the world's best candidate GM traits from both public and private research organisations under Western Australian conditions in a highly contained and safe testing environment. There have been two GM crop trials at NGNE, and DAFWA anticipates more in the future. These trials will be conducted on a fee for service basis.
- (4) The only financial return DAFWA receives is in relation to GM cotton through the sale of lint and seed produced. Due to the age of these transactions it is not currently feasible to provide details of payment amounts, however, a briefing can be provided to the Hon. Member if required
- (5) This information is not yet available for Western Australia.
- (6) (a) DAFWA's Integrated Weed Management (IWM) project comprises three full time equivalent staff members devising, designing, researching and extending the means to manage herbicide tolerant weeds. This is a direct cost in the region of \$250,000 per annum.  
(b) Direct costs experienced by farmers to manage herbicide tolerant weeds are difficult to estimate.
- (7) Approximately 50 per cent of the R&D conducted by the DAFWA Integrated Weed Management project is directed towards the development of ecologically sustainable agriculture — consolidated funding of approximately \$350,000 per annum.