

GENETICALLY MODIFIED CANOLA

**938. Hon LYNN MacLAREN to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:**

- (1) Why did the government allow commercial genetically modified canola to be grown without —
  - (a) publishing the location of GM canola so GM-free growers could take evasive action, as promised;
  - (b) requiring farmers to tell their neighbours when they were growing GM canola; and
  - (c) a farmer protection fund to automatically compensate landholders suffering economic loss, extra costs or harm from GM canola contamination of their land, resourced with a levy on each kilogram of GM seed sold?
- (2) Was the government mistaken in leaving the settlement of disputes over GM contamination to the courts and the common law?
- (3) If the government repeals the Genetically Modified Crops Free Areas Act 2003 and the Gene Technology Act 2006, is it also rescinding its adherence to the Council of Australian Governments Gene Technology Agreement of 2001 that established a national uniform system of GM regulation?

**Hon KEN BASTON replied:**

Hon Lynn MacLaren has asked an interesting question.

- (1)
  - (a) The government allowed the commercial cultivation of genetically modified canola after the 2010 audit program demonstrated that the Western Australian grains industry could effectively segregate non-GM from GM canola and deliver canola to meet market requirements. Privacy issues prevent the publication of the location of the GM canola growers.
  - (b) All GM canola growers must comply with the licence and stewardship agreement and, in accordance with this agreement, it is voluntary for GM canola growers to notify their neighbours.
  - (c) The 2005–06 review of the commonwealth Gene Technology Act 2000, concluded that common law allows for effective remedies for persons incurring damage from GM crops.
- (2) No; the 2005–06 review of the act concluded that common law allows for effective remedies for persons incurring damage from GM crops.
- (3) No.