

GENETICALLY MODIFIED CROPS

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

- (1) Has there been any breach of compliance with genetically modified regulations?
- (2) If yes to (1), what are the details?
- (3) Have two packets of GM lupin varieties gone missing from the University of Western Australia?
- (4) If yes to (3), what has been done to investigate this issue and prevent a similar incident occurring?
- (5) Who will be liable if any escape from GM trials causes economic loss, as per market loss in the US from GM wheat contamination?

Hon KEN BASTON replied:

I thank the honourable member for notice of the question.

- (1) The Australian Office of the Gene Technology Regulator is the responsible organisation. The OGTR monitors compliance with the Australian gene technology legislation and provides the Australian Parliament with a quarterly report outlining the results of these activities.
- (2) I understand there have been no reported breaches in my jurisdiction.
- (3) The Department of Agriculture and Food has been advised by the OGTR that the University of WA initially reported some possible missing GM lupin seeds but these have subsequently been accounted for.
- (4) Not applicable.
- (5) It is not possible to say who would be liable for any loss in such a situation. Liability would depend on where any fault lay, which would ultimately be a matter for a court to decide.