

GENETICALLY MODIFIED CROPS — CALCUTT REVIEW

1694. Hon Lynn MacLaren to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:
- (1) Does the Minister intend to commission a review of the *Genetically Modified Crops Free Areas Act 2003* (the Act), as recommended by the Calcutt Review in 2009?
  - (2) If yes to (1):
    - (a) will a parliamentary committee be invited to conduct the review;
    - (b) have the terms of reference, timing and scope of the review been decided; and
    - (c) when will the Minister publish these details and call for public comment?
  - (3) Does the Minister intend to hold a workshop on the future of the Act this year, as reported by the ABC on 29 May 2013?
  - (4) If yes to (3):
    - (a) who will conduct the workshop;
    - (b) will it be open to the general public; and
    - (c) how will its findings and conclusions be implemented?
  - (5) Does the Minister intend to repeal the Act without a review?
  - (6) If the Act were repealed, what law does the Minister propose would regulate the orderly release of genetically modified (GM) crops and other organisms in Western Australia?
  - (7) Has the Minister noted all the findings of Greg Calcutt's 2009 review of the Act?
  - (8) Does the Minister agree with Calcutt's findings that:
    - (a) the Act "continues to perform the function for which it was enacted"; and
    - (b) the Act "continues...to have a place in the gene technology regulatory framework"?
  - (9) How many grain farmers are there in Western Australia?
  - (10) How many grain farmers in Western Australia have grown GM canola?
  - (11) How many grain farmers in Western Australia currently grow GM canola?
  - (12) Has the Minister taken note of Finding 4 of the Calcutt Review, that consideration should be given to the desirability of providing accurate information about the location of GM crops to producers who might be affected by them and to ways of providing that information?
  - (13) What has the Minister or the Department of Agriculture and Food done with respect to Finding 4?
  - (14) How does the Department of Agriculture and Food provide information about the location of GM crops to producers who might be affected by them?
  - (15) Will the Minister direct the Department of Agriculture and Food to report on the suitability of Western Australia's Sensitive Sites system, including its maps, as a way to publish the location of both GM and sensitive areas?

**Hon Ken Baston replied:**

- (1)–(8) The Commonwealth Gene Technology Act 2000 and the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator (OGTR) regulate dealings with genetically modified (GM) crops in Australia. The object of the Commonwealth Act is to protect the health and safety of people, and the environment, by identifying risks posed by or as a result of gene technology, and by managing those risks through regulating certain dealings with genetically modified organisms. The Western Australian GM Crops Free Areas Act is solely based on marketing. I believe we need to question whether government should still perform that role. I am currently taking advice on options regarding the GM Crops Free Areas Act.
- (9) There are approximately 4 700 cereal farms in Western Australia.
- (10)–(11) The Department of Agriculture and Food (DAFWA) does not have this information and suggests the Honourable Member direct the query to Monsanto.
- (12)–(15) DAFWA does not provide information about the location of commercial GM crops. The DAFWA Sensitive Sites system is a voluntary registration process designed to identify the location of agricultural production systems particularly sensitive to impact from activities on nearby land. A compulsory registration process would create privacy issues.

