

Submission to the Inquiry into mechanisms for compensation for economic loss to farmers in Western Australia caused by contamination by genetically modified material

Dear Committee,

I do not support any new levy on growers or an unnecessary compensation scheme for economic loss due to contamination by GM material.

Overwhelming support worldwide by the scientific community has supported the science that genetically modified crops are safe, promote environmentally sustainable agriculture and provide a tool for farmers to deal with climate change while feeding the world.

A levy of the sort proposed inherently implies that GM technology is suspect and, in my view, supports a non-GM stance. The government would look foolish if they took this stance and seems to appear to me more concerned with supporting a non-scientific view of the technology and garnering urban votes. I fear for the future of sustainable agriculture that utilises GM technology in this state and where this will lead in the future if this is the sort of understanding held by many in government today and this levy is supported.

Many countries in the world including ours have GM and non- GM growers farming side by side without issue over many years. Why complicate this and place an even larger levy burden on farmers who are building businesses without subsidies or it seems even much government support now.

Western Australian farmers are innovative and resourceful, but every dollar is needed to battle the cost-price squeeze in our changing climateand, a warming climate is a proven scientific reality. We need to be able to fund and sustain our businesses in volatile times and levies should only be paid for this reason.

Regards,
Raylene Burns